2Samuel 4

2Samuel 4:1–4   **The Assassination of Ishbosheth**

Outline of Chapter 4:

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines:

Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	

Introduction: 2Sam. 4 is a short chapter about the assassination of Ishbosheth. After Abner went over to David's side, and encouraged the various tribes to back David, the war between Ishbosheth and David appeared to come to a standstill. Two trusted generals of Ishbosheth gain entry into his home in this chapter and they murder Ishbosheth in bed while he is sleeping. Then they behead him and carry his head ot David, expecting a reward of some sort. David, instead, executes them for their evil.

The first 4 verses gives us some background information, without really furthering the action. You will recall that Abner was killed in the previous chapter; and that Ishbosheth never knew that Abner had gone over to David's side. As far as he knew, Abner delivered Michal to David and then was murdered in some plot. So, when we open up this chapter, Ishbosheth knows about Abner's death and is afraid. Furthermore, the rest of Israel is disturbed. Their leader does not appear to be leading them; and their lead general, Abner, is suddenly dead (something which would confuse and terrify the few who that Abner had defected and the many who did not know this.

In this chapter, we meet two of Ishbosheth's top generals—Rechab and Baanah—and we are given a moderately detailed background of these two: their father's name, where they were from, and why exactly they are Benjamites. There is also one verse which tells us about Mephibosheth (v. 4); about how he is Saul's grandson through Jonathan and we are told how he became lame as a child.

In vv. 5–7, we have the assassination of Ishbosheth by Rechab and Baanah; they gain entrance into his house on some ruse in the middle of the day, when they know Ishbosheth to be sleeping; and then they murder him in his sleep. They then behead him and take his head to David, expecting some kind of reward (either a top position in David's military or some sort of monetary reward). In vv. 9–11, David explains to them the error of their thinking. He recounts the Amalekite who came to him, claiming to have killed Saul. Now, Saul was, in Saul's mind, David's enemy; and David was living outside of Judah because Saul continually pursued him. However, David was not going to kill Saul, as Saul is God's anointed. Therefore, when a man comes to David bragging that he had killed Saul, David put this man to death. After informing these men of this, David then has these two men executed for their evil.

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Matthew Henry breaks this chapter up into 2 sections; let me slightly change that and present:

Matthew Henry's Outline of 2Samuel 4

1.   Introductory and background material. **2Sam. 4:1–4**
2.   Two of his own servants slew him, and brought his head to David. **2Sam. 4:5–8**
3.   David, instead of rewarding them, put them to death for what they had done. **2Sam. 4:9–12**

From Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4 introduction. Slightly edited.

Return to Chapter Outline   **Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines**

As I begin to study a chapter in Scripture, questions plague me; and for this chapter, there were two questions:

My Initial Questions Concerning 2Samuel 4

1.   Why do we find this chapter in the Word of God? Is there anything here other than historical narrative? Do all we learn from this chapter is, what happened to Ishbosheth and how David reacts? This is obviously a question which should occur to me (and you) for any chapter of Scripture.
2.   Secondly, I asked myself, **why is Mephibosheth mentioned in this chapter**? We will run into him later; so why is his background given here. Why not give his background when we learn more about him and what David will do for him? Why does God the Holy Spirit find it necessary to mention Mephibosheth right here in this chapter of 2Samuel?

Let me frankly admit that, even after the first pass through of this chapter, where I did my initial exegesis of the Hebrew (roughly 50 pages of Hebrew exegesis and basic explanations for the historical information found in this chapter), I still could not answer these two questions. However, as I begin my second pass through of this chapter, it is all beginning to fit together; so let me ask you, are you Abner, Ishbosheth or Mephibosheth? Which of these men would you like to be? I will pose this question to you two more times, when we get to v. 4 and when we complete this brief chapter.

Return to Chapter Outline   **Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines**

Ishbosheth hears about Abner's Death

Slavishly literal: Moderately literal:

And so hears son of Saul that died Abner in Hebron; and so drops down his hands. And all Israel was confounded [or, *terrified*].

2Samuel 4:1

When [Ishbosheth], the son of Saul, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, his courage failed [him] [lit., *his hands dropped*] and all [the rest] of Israel was confused [and terrified].

When Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, heard that Abner had been murdered in Hebron, his courage failed him and all the rest of northern Israel was likewise confused and terrified.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:	Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts (using the Douay-Rheims translation; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation, respectively). When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's, I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). Now and again, I update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou,* etc.).
Latin Vulgate	And Isboseth the son of Saul heard that Abner was slain in Hebron: and his hands were weakened, and all Israel was troubled.
Masoretic Text	And so hears son of Saul that died Abner in Hebron; and so drops down his hands. And all Israel was confounded [or, *terrified*].
Septuagint	And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled.
Significant differences:	Although this is a fairly easy thing, context-wise to get, the proper name here is confounded. It is *Ashbashul* in the Syriac; 4QSamª has *Mephibosheth;* and it is likely that the MT never had a proper name here.[1] As you study the text, it is clear that this should be *Ishbosheth* (Mephibosheth is Jonathan's son, not Saul's son); furthermore, most of this narrative, apart from v. 4, is about the assassination of Ishbosheth. Apart from the confounding of this name, the ancient texts are in close agreement—here, and throughout most of the chapter.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Ishbosheth felt like giving up after he heard that Abner had died in Hebron. Everyone in Israel was terrified.
The Message	Saul's son, Ish-Bosheth, heard that Abner had died in Hebron. His heart sank. The whole country was shaken.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	When Saul's son Ishbosheth heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost his courage, and all Israel was alarmed.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	When Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed.
Young's Updated LT	And the son of Saul hears that Abner is dead in Hebron, and his hands are feeble, and all Israel have been troubled.

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[1] See *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible;* translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, pp. 239–240.

The gist of this verse?   Of course, the rest of Israel, including Ishbosheth, hear about Abner's death. They are both afraid and confused; and Ishbosheth loses his nerve.

2Samuel 4:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma´ (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHĠ*]	*to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to die; to perish, to be destroyed*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
ʾĂbᵉnêr (אַבְנֵר) [pronounced *uᵇvᵉ-NAYR*]	*my father is Ner* or *my father is a lamp,* and is transliterated *Abner*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Chebᵉrôwn (חֶבְרוֹן) [pronounced *khebᵇv-ROHN*]	*association, league, joined;* transliterated *Hebron*	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: When [Ishbosheth], the son of Saul, heard that Abner had died in Hebron,... Abner's death was not something that could be kept secret. His is traveling with a band of 20 men. These men are going to be somewhat confused, as they have a treaty with David, and this treaty appears to be broken (they are, at first, confused about Joab's killing of Abner).

Now, after David's memorial to Abner, it becomes clear to these men—and perhaps clear after a period of a few days or weeks—that David had nothing to do with Abner's death. However, there is no doubt going to be a period of a few days or more, where these men are unsure of what to do. These are Abner's most trusted men; and it is probable that they are all aware of Abner's alliance with David. To observe the killing of Abner no doubt initially confused them and some of them (if not all of them) possibly fled for their lives.

Bear in mind that, the word will eventually get out of David's sincere grief over Abner's death. Could one of these men understood what was going on and attended the funeral? We have no idea as to what they did as individuals. Some may have fled to Ishbosheth; some to northern Israel; and some may have stayed in Hebron. My guess is, these men were scattered when Abner was unjustly murdered (does this sound at all familiar to you?).

We know that, in some way, Ishbosheth finds out that this happened. My guess is, some of the men who were with Abner went back to Ishbosheth and told him the basic details: Joab murdered Abner at the gate of Hebron. Since cell phone usage appears to have been quite spotty in that part of the ancient world, and because newspapers do not appear to have existed, if something happens in Hebron, no one east of the Jordan will know about it unless a person from Hebron physically travels across the Jordan and tells them. What makes the most sense is, one (or more) of these 20 went straight to Ishbosheth.

As we have seen, Abner will be given an honorable burial; and David will genuinely mourn his death. At that point, it will be clear to all observers that this was not some clever political plot by David to remove Abner from this life. We do not really know how fast or exactly what information went to Ishbosheth. He may know about David's mourning and he may not. All we know for certain is, Ishbosheth knows that Abner has been killed in Hebron.

If you were among these 20 men, what would you have done? Your general is assassinated by one of David's top generals, even after an alliance is forged between Abner and David. Some will stick around to gain more information; but my thinking is, most would quickly leave the area, as they might be next.

2Samuel 4:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וְ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râphâh (רָפָה) [pronounced *raw-FAW*]	*to sink, to relax, to loosen and let drop, to let down, to cast down, to let fall* in the Qal	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7503 BDB #951
yâd (יָד) [pronounced *yawd*]	generally translated *hand*	feminine plural noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Translation: ...his courage failed [him] [lit., *his hands dropped*]... We have no previous connection between Abner and the army which Saul originally led. There is no indication that Ishbosheth is a brave warrior. In fact, there is no indication that he has any military experience whatsoever. It is very likely that he spent little or no time in the military, and that was fine by him.

What just happened requires Ishbosheth to take a leadership position—yes, I realize that he is the king of northern and central and eastern Israel, but he is not really much of a leader. He needs to step up to the plate at this time, and he is unable to do so. The strength of Ishbosheth is Abner, and Abner is dead. This reaction by Ishbosheth—wherein his courage fails him—indicates to me that he does not really know that Abner aligned himself with David; that Ishbosheth thinks that the blow up between him and Abner has blown over; and that he still has (until Abner's death) a faithful, albeit pissed off, general under him. Ishbosheth was supported completely by Abner; without Abner, Ishbosheth is nothing. Most importantly, Ishbosheth knows this. Abner brought Ishbosheth to a safe place after the Philistine victory and his father's death (1Sam. 31). Abner organized an army and gained support for Ishbosheth as king, a feat which required several years. Ishbosheth does not know how to do any of this; he is king by virtue of birth, but he has no natural leadership abilities; so with Abner dead, Ishbosheth does not know what to do—his hands drop.

> Gill makes a very accurate observation of this portion of v. 1: *his hands were feeble: not only in a natural sense, being quite dispirited at hearing such news; but in a civil sense, having lost his main support and strength, he being president of his council, and commander of his forces, and in whom he placed all his confidence: and if he knew nothing of his being at Hebron, it must surprise him to hear of his dying there; from whence he might conclude, that since he was there without his knowledge, it could not be in his favour, some plot was forming, and schemes laying with his rival to*

dethrone him; or if he knew of it, and understood it in this light, that he was endeavouring to make peace between him and David, and upon advantageous terms to him, of which now he might entertain no hopes; he was dispirited, and might conclude that Joab was against any terms at peace, and therefore had dispatched him.[2]

2Samuel 4:1c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*]	*every, each, all of, all; any of, any*	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yisᵉrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced *yis-raw-ALE*]	transliterated *Israel*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
bâchal (בָּחַל) [pronounced *baw-KHAHL*]	*to be overwhelmed, to be confounded; to tremble, to be terrified; to suddenly perish, to suddenly be destroyed*	3ʳᵈ person masculine plural, Niphal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #926 BDB #96

Translation: ...and all [the rest] of Israel was confused [and terrified]. We have a verb which means several different things, and several of the meanings are applicable here. All of Israel is overwhelmed, confused, confounded and terrified that Abner has been killed. Abner was just there or he had sent messages, indicating that he felt they should realign themselves with David, and now, David's top general, Joab, has killed Abner. It is going to take a little time before Israel understands that this was political intrigue and not David's doing (see 2Sam. 3:37).

The reference to *all Israel* refers to the northern, central and eastern tribes of Israel (pretty much, everyone except for Judah and Simeon). A few of these elders knew of Abner's defection, as they had recently met with his representatives and had been encouraged to support David. Beyond this, they know that Abner went to Judah, and that he was killed there. This would be quite confusing for David's supporter to be murdered in David's territory.

There would be the soldiers of Israel, who, up until this time, were in a civil war against David; and now, their lead general has been assassinated; so they do not know what their future holds and they are troubled over these events. Furthermore, some may have heard rumors of Abner's defection; they were aware of the sudden slowdown of the war effort; and this confused them. It is a classic case of, *who do you really believe and what is really going on?*

There are also going to be others—the majority of Israel—many of whom support a Sauline dynasty, and many of whom recognize that Ishbosheth's power is in Abner; all of whom recognize Abner's importance to their military. Many of these would be afraid, as they worry that the army of Judah will overrun them.

> Clarke aptly notes: *Abner was their great support; and on him they depended; for it appears that Ishbosheth was a feeble prince, and had few of those qualities requisite for a sovereign.*[3]

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[2] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:1.

[3] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:1.

In war, people are generally apprehensive—particularly when the war may spill out onto their own streets. They look to their political and military leaders for strength and direction, and this was not forthcoming from Ishbosheth; and now, their only true natural leader was dead.   This is going to severely increase their apprehension. And even though the war had come to a halt, for many, it felt like the calm before the storm. So, yes, all Israel was confounded, overwhelmed and terrified.

Application: When you are on the right side of history; when you understand historical trends; when you have your faith in Jesus Christ and in His Word, you are less likely to be confused and apprehensive about historical events as they unfold. Ishbosheth has been promoted far over his abilities; he has no doctrine; he has no clear faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel and no clear connection to the God of Israel; so, he is without courage. The people from northern Israel who backed him are confused and/or terrified at the death of Abner.

Okay, what should they know? It is clear, by God's revealed revelation, that David is the next king of Israel, and that he will supplant Saul. Even Saul knew this and so testified in a loud voice[4] before his army (1Sam. 24:20). So, that David would rule in place of Saul was not a secret; it was not a doctrine which only a few knew about. The people of Israel and Ishbosheth should all know that David would become king, and that the events of history would lead him to this point. They could decide, do they want to back God's choice for king, or someone else? Therefore, as these events of history unfold which lead to David ruling over all Israel, none of these people should be upset or terrified or confused.

Application: The more doctrine that you know, the more you understand the trends of history; and the less likely historical events will shatter your faith.

You may be concerned here of the injustice of Abner's death. Abner is finally coming around to God's plan, and, suddenly, God allows him to be removed from this life. What is that all about? That, my friend, is a warning to both you and I. Abner knows what's up; and he has known that David would supplant Saul for a long time. For whatever reason, Abner spent most of his life outside God's directive will. He is Saul's uncle; therefore, he is going to be around Saul's age or older (you are aware, I assume, that your uncle can be younger than you?). His choice to back David has come rather late in life. He will be unable to enjoy fulfilling God's plan for his life, as his life is over.

Application: How old will you be before you realize that you have a relationship to God and that God has a definite plan for your life? How many years do you want to spend outside the Land of Promise, serving Ishbosheth, a worthless king? Are you going to finally get your life in order when it is almost over? Make no mistake—we only have so many years on this earth. At what point do you get with the plan of God? The only thing that should concern you more than the death of Abner is the death of Ishbosheth. Abner, at least for a few months, was on the right side of history. However, Ishbosheth was never on the right side of history; and it is his death we will witness next.

I should stop to explain that verse. 2Sam. 3:37 reads: So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king's [will] to murder Abner ben Ner. *That day* does not literally mean *within a 24 hour period of time*. For those who attended Abner's funeral, it was clear that David mourned his passing; they knew that by the pomp and ceremony and by what David said concerning Abner. However, realize that there are shock waves going out from Hebron. Some of Abner's men no doubt ran for their lives and scattered all over Israel (some would not return to Ishbosheth, because they think he may know of their alliance with David). So, this first trickle of information is, Joab, David's top general, kills Abner. Some of these men may not have understood what was going on, and when they relayed this message, the people of Israel will be confused as well, if not terrified. If David puts Abner to death after making an alliance with him, then what will David do to northern Israel? Now, later, within a few weeks, it becomes clear to all that David did not order the execution of Abner. This is acceptable for our understanding of *in that day,* as such a phrase could refer to a period of time. At the funeral,

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[4] Recall that David stood off a far distance from Saul when he revealed himself to Saul. Saul could hear his voice, but not visually recognize him. Therefore, what they say to one another has to be by yelling back and forth. Saul's entire army hears Saul's testimony.

at that time, those in attendance recognized that David truly mourned Abner's passing; however, it would have taken time for that information to have gone out to all Israel.

When I examine verses like this (this is my first pass through the material; I work and rework the material several times), I often wonder, how will the other commentators treat this? Will they recognize that 2Sam. 3:37 and 4:1 require some explanation? Will they recognize that a contradiction could be perceived here? I must admit to being surprised that Clarke, Darby, Gill, Henry, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Keil and Delitzsch, Scofield and Wesley all let this get by them without making a comment, observation, or explanation.

The Backstory on Rechab and Baanah

And a pair of men—captains of troops—were a son of Saul. A name of the one Baanah and a name of to the second, Rechab; sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from sons of Benjamin (for also Betroth is reckoned upon Benjamin;...)	2Samuel 4:2	**[There] were two men—raiding party leaders—[who] were [under the command of] Saul's son [Ishbosheth]. One's name [was] Baanah and the other's name [was] Rechab. [They were] sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from the tribe [lit., *sons*] of Benjamin (for Beeroth [is] also considered an addition to Benjamin;...**

Now there were two men who were troop leaders for Saul's son, Ishbosheth: Baanah and Rechab. These men were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from the tribe of Benjamin (for Beeroth was taken in as a part of Benjamite territory;...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Now the son of Saul had two men captains of his bands, the name of the one was Baana, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Remmon a Berothite of the children of Benjamin: for Beroth also was reckoned in Benjamin.
Masoretic Text	And a pair of men—captains of troops—were a son of Saul. A name of the one Baanah and a name of to the second, Rechab; sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from sons of Benjamin (for also Betroth is reckoned upon Benjamin;...)
Peshitta	And Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baana, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite of the children of Benjamin (for Beeroth also is reckoned to the Benjamites;..
Septuagint	And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin;...
Significant differences:	Now and again, the absolute status quo verb *to be* can be rendered *had, belongs to, is to;* so the difference in rendering in the LXX is just a matter of translation in the first sentence. Likewise, *other* is a reasonable rendering for *second*. The final preposition is a pisser to render literally in this verse; and the LXX chose not to. I have included the Latin to show you that Jerome essentially did the same thing. Both the Syriac and Latin call these troops *raiding bands*. Although this may be accurate, we do not know for certain.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV   Ishbosheth had put the two brothers Baanah and Rechab in charge of the soldiers who raided enemy villages. Rimmon was their father, and they were from the town of Beeroth, which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin.

The Message   Ish-Bosheth had two men who were captains of raiding bands--one was named Baanah, the other Recab. They were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, a Benjaminite. (The people of Beeroth had been assigned to Benjamin...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding parties. One was named Baanah, and the other was named Rechab. They were the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth from the tribe of Benjamin. (Beeroth was considered a part of Benjamin,...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV   Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon a man of Benjamin from Beeroth (for Beeroth also is counted part of Benjamin;...

LTHB   And Saul's son had two men, troop commanders, one's name *being* Baanah, and the other's name Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin (for Beeroth also is counted to Benjamin.

Young's Updated LT   And two men, heads of troops, have been to the son of Saul, the name of the one is Baanah, and the name of the second Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin (for also Beeroth is reckoned to Benjamin...

The gist of this verse?   There are two men who head up military divisions under Ishbosheth: Baanah and Rechab, who are both sons of Rimmon, who was from Beeroth, a city which belonged to Benjamin. This verse just gives us ancestral information on these two men.

2Samuel 4:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וֹ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shᵉnêy (שְׁנֵי) [pronounced *shᵉn-Ā*]	*two, two of, a pair of, a duo of*	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*]	*a man; a husband; one of virile age; an inhabitant of, a citizen of* [when followed by a genitive of a place]; *companion of, solider of, follower of* [when followed by a genitive of king, leader, etc.]; *anyone, someone, a certain one, each, each one, everyone*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
sar (שַׂר) [pronounced *sar*]	*chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978

2Samuel 4:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gᵉdûwd (גְּדוּד) [pronounced *gᵉDOOD*]	*troop, band [of soldiers], division, detachment; marauding or raiding band of men; an incision, cutting [of the skin]; furrow [of a field]*	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1416 (& #1417–1418) BDB #151
Although the Latin and Syriac render this word as *raiding bands,* and even though it should be understood in this way in Kings 11:24 and Hosea 7:1, this word is found 33 times in the Old Testament and generally, it is not used in this way (see Gen. 49:19 1Chron. 7:4 2Chron. 26:11).			
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3ʳᵈ person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: [There] were two men—raiding party leaders—[who] were [under the command of] Saul's son [Ishbosheth]. This is a difficult verse to translate; however, the absolute status quo verb *to be* can sometimes be rendered *to have*.[5] It is interesting that Ishbosheth is now called *the son of Saul* over and over again by the author.

Although the word translated *raiding party* can simply refer to a division of soldiers (see the Hebrew exegesis above), the heartlessness of these men makes this assumption reasonable (the Latin and Syriac both render this word in this way in this verse). Clarke comments: *Whether Ish-bosheth kept bands of marauders, whose business it was to make sudden incursions into the country places, and carry off grain, provisions, cattle, etc., we know not; but such persons would be well qualified for the bloody work in which these two men were afterwards employed.*[6] In other words, by virtue of that kind of work that these men did for Ishbosheth, they were well qualified to be cold-blooded killers.

From what we have observed, it appears that it was normal for a large group of men to act as a roving body of raiders, who would strike other villages, cities or even other raiding parties, kill them and take all of their things. In fact, let's look at some examples:

Ancient World Raiding Parties

Passage	Incident
1Sam. 13:15–18	When Saul's army was small and when men were deserting in droves, the Philistines occupied Mishmash and they sent out raiding parties from there to surrounding cities. More than likely, this is how they got their living provisions.
1Sam. 27:8–12	When David fled Judah, he went to the king of Gath who allowed David to live in Ziklag, a city controlled by Gath at that time. David set up a base camp there, but went out and raided nearby heathen, killing all of them, and taking all of their things.

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[5] My Dead Sea Scrolls Bible reads: 4QSamᵃ and the MT use different constructions to indicate possession. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible;* translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, p. 240.

[6] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:2.

Ancient World Raiding Parties

Passage	Incident
1Sam. 30:1–2	A raiding party of Amalekites struck David's camp when he was marching with the Philistine soldiers. This raiding party took all of the possessions of David and his men, and then burned their camp to the ground.

The word for *troop* or *raiding party* is not found in 1Sam. 27 (or any of its cognates); however, it is clear that is what David is doing.

This apparently seems to be an ancient world phenomena with similar groups functioning even today (Sadam's invasions of the Kurds; various tribes throughout Africa). The morality of David's bands which went out was discussed further in 1Sam. 27. A brief recap is, David was out of fellowship, out of God's geographical will; and therefore, much of his behavior was not going to reflect God's character.

2Samuel 4:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced *shame*]	*name, reputation, character*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
ʾechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced *eh-KHAWD*]	*one, first, certain, only;* but it can also mean a *composite unity;* possibly *particular*	numeral adjective with the definite article	Strong's #259 BDB #25
Baʿănâh (בַּעֲנָה) [pronounced *bah-ğuhn-AW*]	*in distress; son of distress;* transliterated *Baanah*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1196 BDB #128

This appears to be equivalent to Baʿănâʾ (בַּעֲנָא) [pronounced *bah-ğuhn-AW*]. Strong's #1195 BDB #128.

Translation: One's name [was] Baanah... Although there are several men with this same name in Scripture; this man is the most well known, as this chapter will carry with it a narrative about him.

There are several men in Scripture with the name *Baanah*.[7]

The Baanah's of Scripture

Listed under Strong's #1195 in BDB:

1) The son of Ahilud, Solomon's commissariat officer in Jezreel and the north of the Jordan valley. 1Kings 4:12
2) Another of Solomon's officers. 1Kings 5:16
3) Father of Zadok who assisted in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah. Neh. 3:4

Listed under Strong's #1196 in BDB:

Baana or Baanah = "in affliction"

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[7] Taken from *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* courtesy of e-sword; Strong's #1195–1196. Supplemented with *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 128.

The Baanah's of Scripture

1) A Benjamite, son Rimmon, who with his brother Rechab murdered Ish-bosheth. For this, killed by David, mutilated bodies hung up over the pool at Hebron. 2Sam. 4:2, 5, 6, 9
2) A Netophathite, father of Heleb or Heled, one of David's mighty warriors. 2Sam. 23:29 1Chron. 11:39
3) The head of a family of exiles returning with Zerubbabel. Ezra 2:2 Neh. 7:7 (possibly equivalent to Neh. 3:4 listed above).
4) A chief of the people. Neh. 10:28

Although Gesenius also differentiates, he notes that these two Strong numbers are probably equivalent.

2Samuel 4:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וׁ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced *shame*]	*name, reputation, character*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
shenîy (שֵׁנִי) [pronounced *sheh-NEE*]	*second, the second; two, both, double, twice;* When only two items are named, it can be rendered *[the] other*	adjective singular numeral ordinal with the definite article	Strong's #8145 BDB #1041
Rêkâb (רֵכָב) [pronounced *ray-KAWᵝV*]	*band of riders; horseman, rider;* transliterated *Rechab*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7394 BDB #939

Translation: ...and the other's name [was] Rechab. Baanah's brother is Rechab.

There are 3 different men with this name in Scripture; and it is used as a gentilic adjective as well.

The Rechab's in Scripture

1) Father of Jehonadab in the time of king Jehu of the northern kingdom of Israel (noun proper masculine). 2Kings 10:15, 23 Jer. 35:6, 8, 14, 16, 19
2) Father of Malchijah, a leader of the district of Beth Haccerem and repairer of the wall of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah (noun proper masculine). Neh. 3:14
3) One of the 2 captains whom Ishbosheth took into his service and who conspired to murder him (noun proper masculine). 2Sam. 4:2, 5, 6, 9
4) Descendants of Rechab (although called an adjective proper, it is a masculine proper noun in the given passage as well). This is given the same Strong's #. 1Chron. 2:55

The source for this is *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* courtesy of e-sword; Strong's #7394 supplemented by *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 939.

Like his brother, this is the Rechab who receives the most airplay in Scripture.

It is interesting that Baanah is named first here, and second throughout the remainder of this chapter. I would guess that he is named first as the eldest; however, Rechab is named first, as their plot was probably his idea and he, no doubt, convinced Baanah to participate.

2Samuel 4:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Rimmôwn (רִמּוֹן) [pronounced *rihm-MOHN*]	*pomegranate;* transliterated *Rimmon*	masculine singular proper noun; also refers to a location and to a Syrian deity	Strong's #7417 BDB #942
Bᵉʾêrôthîy (בְּאֵרֹתִי) [pronounced *bᵉ-ā-ro-THEE*]	*wells; an inhabitant of Beeroth;* transliterated *Beerothite*	gentilic adjective; singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #886 BDB #92

Translation: [They were] sons of Rimmon the Beerothite... This man, Rimmon, is named only in this chapter, and only in conjunction with Rechab and Baanah.

There are a number of different Rimmon's in Scripture; several of them being places rather than a persons. This is the word for pomegranate, and since they were abundant in the Land of Promise, other things got that name as well.

The Rimmon's in Scripture

1) The deity of wind, rain, and storm, worshipped by the Syrians of Damascus (noun proper deity). 2Kings 5:18
2) A Benjamite of Beeroth, the father of Rechab and Baanah, the murderers of Ishbosheth (noun proper masculine). 2Sam. 4:2, 5, 9
3) The Rock; a cliff or inaccessible natural fastness in which the 600 Benjamites who escaped the slaughter of Gibeah took refuge (noun proper locative). Judges 20:45, 47
4) A town in the southern portion of Judah allotted to Simeon (noun proper locative). Joshua 15:32 19:7 1Chron. 4:32 Zech. 14:10
5) A Levitical city in Zebulun located approximately 6 miles north of Nazareth (noun proper locative). Joshua 19:13

The source for this was: *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* courtesy of e-sword; Strong's #7417 as well as *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon;* Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; pp. 941–942.

Rimmon is called a Beerothite, which simply means that he lived in the city of Beeroth.

2Samuel 4:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Binᵉyâmîn (בִּנְיָמִן) [pronounced *bin-yaw-MIN*]	transliterated *Benjamin,* it means *son of [my] right hand*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1144 BDB #122

Translation: ...from the tribe [lit., *sons*] of Benjamin... Baanah and Rechab are both Benjamites. So that there is no confusion, this statement will be qualified to some degree in the next phrase.

2Samuel 4:2f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
gam (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*]	*also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover*	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
Together, they can mean *for even; though, even, although [concealing a fact]*.			
Bᵉʼêrôth (בְּאֵרוֹת) [pronounced *bᵉ-ā-ROTH*]	*wells;* and is transliterated *Beeroth*	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #881 BDB #92
châshab (חָשַׁב) [pronounced *khaw-SHAHBᵛ*]	*to think, to regard, to be accounted, to count, to determine, to calculate, to be imputed, to be reckoned; to be taken for, to be like*	3ʳᵈ person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #2803 BDB #362
ʼal (עַל) [pronounced *ǵahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
Binᵉyâmîn (בִּנְיָמִן) [pronounced *bin-yaw-MIN*]	transliterated *Benjamin,* it means *son of [my] right hand*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1144 BDB #122

Translation:...(for Beeroth [is] also considered an addition to Benjamin;... Being a Beerothite simply means that Rimmon was from Beeroth (and probably his sons as well). However, someone reading this passage from near

that time frame would think, *isn't Beeroth a city which belongs to the Gibeonites?* The author of this book will point out that the Gibeonites who lived in Beeroth actually fled the city at one time in Israel's recent past.

We have a lot of different writers of Scripture. This particular writer (David?) seems to be rather meticulous about the history and background. He calls these men Benjamites from Beeroth; but, apparently, there would have been some people from this time period or near to this time period who would question this association. Now, is there anything that we should get out of this? My thinking is, this passage indicates that some writers like to present many of the background details; and, many writers do not. Throughout the book of 1Samuel, we have had to stop and explain this or that passage; explain how it coincides with previous passages; or offer up hypotheses as to what the background might have been (in order to make the passage more plausible, logical, or whatever). This is simply a quirk of this particular writer. Maybe this is information which David gleaned from his conversation with these men. We already know that the Bible does not record the entirety of some conversations. In this chapter, it seems as though these men say one thing, and then David goes off on them. However, there is likely to be some introduction, or some personal information offered and/or asked for.

...and so flee the Beerothites Gittaim-ward and   2Samuel   **...because the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and so they are there as far as the day the this).**   4:3   **they have been there until this day).**

...since the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and they have been living there until this day).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic text	...and so flee the Beerothites Gittaim-ward and so they are there as far as the day the this).
Septuagint	...and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.).

Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The people who used to live in Beeroth had run away to Gittaim, and they still live there.
The Message	...ever since they escaped to Gittaim. They still live there as resident aliens.)

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	...even though the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim. They still live there today.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	...the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been sojourners there to this day).
WEB	...and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and have lived as foreigners there until this day).
Young's Updated LT	...and the Beerothites flee to Gittaim, and are there sojourners unto this day).

The gist of this verse?   The Gibeonites, called Beerothites here, fled to Gittaim and have lived there as aliens to this day.

2Samuel 4:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bârach (בָּרַח) [pronounced *baw-RAHKH*]	*to go [pass] through, to flee; to hasten, to come quickly*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1272 BDB #137
Beʾêrôthîy (בְּאֵרֹתִי) [pronounced *be-ā-ro-THEE*]	*wells; an inhabitant of Beeroth; transliterated Beerothite*	gentilic adjective; masculine plural noun	Strong's #886 BDB #92
Gittâyim (גִּתָּיִם) [pronounced *ghiht-TAW-yihm*]	*two winepresses; transliterated Gittaim*	proper singular noun/location; with the directional hê	Strong's #1664 BDB #388

Translation: ...because the Beerothites fled to Gittaim... When Joshua began to conquer the Land of Promise, he came across a people who deceived him: the Gibeonites. They sent representatives to meet with Joshua, to make a treaty with him; however, they represented themselves as a people from a far distance away, and not as from one of the next territories Joshua was about to conquer. By deceit, they convinced Joshua to make a treaty with them, which is the story of Joshua 9. They lived in 4 cities primarily: Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath-jearim (Joshua 9:17). This people lived in peace with Israel.

Now, at some point in time, we are told that these Beerothite fled Beeroth. However, we are not told when this occurred or what precipitated this mass exodus. Below are a few theories as to what possibly transpired.

Why the Gibeonites Left Beeroth and Fled to Gittaim	
Scripture	**Incident**
1Sam. 13:15–18	At one time during Saul's reign, the Philistines moved into central Israel and raided nearby cities. Although there are only 3 raiding parties and 3 cities named (And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned to the way to Ophrah, to the land of Shual—1Sam. 13:17), this simply indicates that the Philistines struck east, west and north from their camp in Michmash.
1Sam. 31:1–7	The Philistines defeated Saul and his army, and lived in many of the cities belonging to Israel (1Sam. 31:7). This would have taken taken place near Beeroth.
2Sam. 21:1–2	King Saul went on a crusade at one time to destroy Gibeonites; it is possible that the men of Beeroth fled Beeroth at this time.

Throughout the time of Saul, he was at war with the Philistines (1Sam. 14:52), so the Philistines could have invaded the city of Beeroth at any time during his reign. Since we have so many wars recorded in the book of Judges, the desertion of Beeroth could have occurred even as far back as then.

In any case, this fleeing may have recently taken place, and it may have occurred several hundred years previously. If I was a betting man, I would put my money on Saul being the one who caused them to move. Since Beeroth is in the territory of Benjamin, then Benjamites would have moved in as Gibeonites moved out. Since the

Gibeonites were taken in as allies, albeit under deception; Benjamites probably occupied Beeroth even before the Gibeonites left in droves.

We do not know exactly where Gittaim is. My *Macmillan Bible Atlas* places Gittaim in the original territory of Dan; probably because Gittaim seems to be associated with Lod and Ono in Neh. 11:33–35.[8] Personally, I would place it inside the territory of Judah, which is closer, and is in agreement with Neh. 11:33, which *suggests* (but does not require) that Ramah and Gittaim are relatively close. Clarke suggests the Gittaim is equivalent to Gath (just as Ramathaim is equivalent to Ramah).[9] Since we have a separate city named Gittaim in Neh. 11:33, which appears to be in the correct general area, I believe that Clarke is wrong on this one. In any case, the exact location of Gittaim is not that big of a deal; it just has to be somewhere the Beerothites would reasonably flee to if under attack (and any of these possible locations fit that bill).

It is actually kind of interesting that this author is so particular here, giving us a great many details that we may skim through and think, *well, what is this all about? I don't need to know any of this*. Let me see if I can help you to understand—there are times when some dispute the historical facts of Scripture, and they are quick to point out either apparent internal contradictions or contradictions with archeology. If this one sentence was not here, someone could later say, *and here is another contradiction; this city was controlled by the Gibeonites, who are not Israelites, but a part of the original heathen from this area; therefore, it is a contradiction to say that Benjamites came from the city of Beeroth*. This author goes to great pains to explain just exactly what happened here, and why we have Benjamites living in a city which was formerly inhabited by Gibeonites. We obviously do not find this sort of detail in every narrative. Most authors do not stop and say, *oh, by the way, here is a little background on this particular city*. However, there are probably a large number of alleged historical inaccuracies in the Bible that could have been explained, had the author of that narrative portion stopped and explained some of the history behind his narrative. My point is, we don't find this detail very often; however, that does not mean that we have some sort of a contradiction or inaccuracy; we just don't have every piece of information from time to time that would completely explain this passage or that. For this reason, we must occasionally develop an hypothesis to explain more thoroughly this or that difficult passage. This detailed passage indicates to us that, there is a back story, there is some history, which would help to flesh out some details. We may be privy to this history (as we are here) and we may not be privy to it.

2Samuel 4:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced *shawm*]	*there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing*	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
gûwr (גּוּר) [pronounced *goor*]	*visitors, temporary residents, sojourners*	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #1481 BDB #157
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ǵahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day; time; today* (with a definite article); possibly *immediately*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

[8] *The MacMillan Bible Atlas;* 3rd Edition; Aharoni, Avi-Yonah, Rainey, and Safrai; MacMillan; ©1993 by Carta; p. 129.

[9] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:3.

2Samuel 4:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*that; this*	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...and they have been there until this day). That the Gibeonites escaped to Gittaim in the past (when specifically is not told to us) and that they are still there to this day, is the point of this verse—meaning the time when the author of Samuel recorded this history.

This verse completes that parenthetical explanation.

The Backstory on Mephibosheth

And to Jonathan a son of Saul a son stricken of [two] feet. A son of five years he was in a coming in of a message of Saul and Jonathan from Jezreel. And so lifts him up his nurse and so she flees and he is in her fleeing [in haste and/or fright] to flee, and so he falls and so he is made lame. And his name, Mephibosheth.	2Samuel 4:4	**And Jonathan, Saul's son, [had] a son crippled in [his] feet. He was 5 years old, when a report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nanny lifted him up and she fled, but it came about in her haste to flee, he fell and became lame. His name [is] Mephibosheth [also known as Merib-baal].**

And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was crippled. The son was 5 years old when the report about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nanny lifted him up and she fled, but in her haste to flee, the child fell and became lame. His name is Mephibosheth (he is also known as Merib-baal).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And to Jonathan a son of Saul a son stricken of [two] feet. A son of five years he was in a coming in of a message of Saul and Jonathan from Jezreel. And so lifts him up his nurse and so she flees and he is in her fleeing [in haste and/or fright] to flee, and so he falls and so he is made lame. And his name, Mephibosheth.
Septuagint	And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.
Significant differences:	In the Hebrew, *five years old* is expressed as *a son of 5 years*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul's son Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth, who had not been able to walk since he was five years old. It happened when someone from Jezreel told his nurse that Saul and Jonathan had died. She hurried off with the boy in her arms, but he fell and injured his legs.

The Message	It so happened that Saul's son, Jonathan, had a son who was maimed in both feet. When he was five years old, the report on Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and ran, but in her hurry to get away she fell, and the boy was maimed. His name was Mephibosheth.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	In addition, Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled. When the boy was five years old, the news about the death of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled to Gittaim. She was in a hurry when she left, and he fell from her arms and became disabled. His name was Mephibosheth.)
HCSB	Saul's son Jonathan had a son whose feet were crippled. He was five years old when the report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she was hurrying to flee, he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

LTHB	And Jonathan the son of Saul had a lame son, he was a son of five years when the news of Saul and Jonathan came out of Jezreel; and his nurse lifted him up and fled; and it happened as she hurried to flee, that he fell and became lame; and his name *was* Mephibosheth.
NKJV	Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *who was* lame in *his* feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name *was* Mephibosheth.
Young's Updated LT	And to Jonathan son of Saul *is* a son—lame; he was a son of five years at the coming in of the rumour of *the death of* Saul and Jonathan, out of Jezreel, and his nurse lifts him up, and flees, and it comes to pass in her having to flee, that he falleth, and becomes lame, and his name *is* Mephibosheth.

The gist of this verse?	The author gives a bit of a back story on Jonathan and his son, Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth, when his nanny heard that Saul and Jonathan had been killed, was taken in haste away from his place (probably in Gibeon?), and that he was seriously injured when being whisked away.

2Samuel 4:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yᵉhôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yᵉ-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

2Samuel 4:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Shâˈûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
bên (בֵּם) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
nâkeh (נָכֶה) [pronounced *naw-KEH*]	*stricken; physically stricken: crippled, lame, maimed; figuratively stricken: contrite, dejected*	masculine singular adjective; construct form	Strong's #5223 BDB #656
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced *REH-gel*]	*foot, feet*	feminine dual noun; pausal form	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

Translation: And Jonathan, Saul's son, [had] a son crippled in [his] feet. There is one remaining person in the house of Saul, and that is Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, Saul's grandson. This young man is crippled. He would be about 10–12 years old when the historical events of this chapter take place.

It seems as though the name and person of Mephibosheth just comes out of left field here. This chapter is essentially about the murder of Ishbosheth, and, for what appears to be no reason at all, the author suddenly starts talking about Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son. Actually, when I first began this chapter, I both wondered, why do we find Mephibosheth here; and I also wondered, *will any other exegete ask the same question?* After my second pass through on this chapter, I then turn to the commentators to see if they suggest anything which I have missed. However, there are actually several reasons for this:

Why is Mephibosheth Mentioned Right Here?	
Commentator	**Explanation**
Barnes	*This mention of Mephibosheth seems to be inserted here partly to show that with the death of Ish–bosheth the cause of the house of Saul became hopeless, and partly to prepare the way for the subsequent mention of him 2Sam. 9:1–13 16:1–4 19:25.*[10]
Gill	*This story of Mephibosheth, and of his nurse's flight with him, and what happened upon it, is here inserted on occasion of the flight of the Beerothites (2Sam. 4:3), but chiefly to observe in what condition Saul's family now was, and what encouraged the murderers of Ishbosheth to be guilty of the crime they were, since when he was taken off, there was none but this lame child of that family.*[11] That this occurred simultaneous with the flight of the Beerothites makes a great deal of sense. This would fix the Beeroth exodus as a result of the Philistine victory over Saul.
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	*This is mentioned as a reason why, according to Oriental notions, he was considered unfit for exercising the duties of sovereignty.*[12]

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[10] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:4. Even though Barnes is way off, he at least recognizes that there must be some reason for Mephibosheth's name to appear here; Clarke does not even acknowledge this odd insertion.

[11] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:4.

[12] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* from e-sword, 2Sam. 4:4.

Why is Mephibosheth Mentioned Right Here?	
Commentator	**Explanation**
Keil and Delitzsch	*Before the historian proceeds to describe what the two Beerothites did, he inserts a remark concerning Saul's family, to show at the outset, that with the death of Ishbosheth the government of this family necessarily became extinct, as the only remaining descendant was a perfectly helpless cripple.*[13]
Kukis	One reason Mephibosheth is mentioned here is simply an historical note: there are three men who could be reasonably seen as Saul's heirs: Ishbosheth (Saul's surviving son), Abner (Saul's uncle) or Mephibosheth (Saul's grandson by Jonathan). Any one of these men could be seen as potential kings; however, Abner has been assassinated by Joab; Ishbosheth will be assassinated while he sleeps; and Mephibosheth is a cripple.
Kukis	Mephibosheth will serve as a picture of the believer, who is hopeless and helpless; whereas David is a type of Christ. So, throughout Mephibosheth's life, God (by means of David) will step into his life and play an important role.
Kukis	This, by the way, is not the only reason Mephibosheth's name comes up. He is more in this chapter than an historical footnote. Let me ask you, would you like to be heir to the throne without any leadership ability? After all, how many people think they would make a great president? Would you like to be second in command, but the true leader of a country? Or would you like to be heir to the throne, but crippled at an early age, removing any possibility that you might one day lead your country? Which flaw are you most willing to live with? Interestingly enough, the man with the least going for him is going to apparently end up with the best life.
Kukis	Finally, Mephibosheth indicates to us that these chapters are set up chronologically (except for, perhaps, the final chapters of 2Samuel). We do not have the story of Mephibosheth which takes up 1 chapter, and follow out the entire arc of his relationship to David. It is broken up into different phases, corresponding to different historical events.
Wesley	*This history is inserted as that which encouraged these men to this wicked murder, because Saul's family was now reduced to a low ebb; and if Isbosheth was dispatched, there would be none left, but a lame child, who was altogether unfit to manage the kingdom, and therefore the crown must necessarily come to David by their act and deed; for which they promised themselves no small recompense.*[14]

I must admit that more exegetes thought about this inclusion of Mephibosheth than I expected to. What is interesting is, there appear to be at least a half a dozen good reasons to include Mephibosheth in this narrative.

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[13] Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword; 2Sam. 4:4.

[14] John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 4:4.

2Samuel 4:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
châmêsh (חָמֵשׁ) [pronounced *khaw-MAYSH*]	*five*	masculine numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced *shaw-NAW*]	*year*	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b^e (בְּ) [pronounced *b^{eh}*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97

The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered *when [such and such happens]*. It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sh^emûʿâh (שְׁמוּעָה) [pronounced *sh-moo-ĠAW*]	*message, tidings, a report; instruction, teaching, doctrine; rumor*	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8052 BDB #1035
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w^e (or v^e) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y^ehôwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN*]	alternate spelling; transliterated *Jonathan*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Yiz^er^eʿêl (יִזְרְעֶאל) [pronounced *yiz^e-r^e-ĠAIL*]	*God will sow; that which God planted;* it is transliterated *Jezreel*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3157 BDB #283

Translation: He was 5 years old, when a report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. We are going to get some information about one of Saul's remaining family, his grandson Mephibosheth through Jonathan. Jezreel is where the Israelites were camping prior to facing off with the Philistines. As you will recall, the Philistines attacked, the Israelites retreated; and Saul and his sons were killed in battle.

I suggested at that time that a runner, who was set there to observe the battle, saw that Saul and Jonathan had died, and ran to his appointed city or cities to report this and to warn the people.

2Samuel 4:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâsâʾ (נָשָׂא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*]	*to lift up, to bear, to carry*	3rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
ʾâman (אָמַן) [pronounced *aw-MAHN*]	*nourisher, supporter, foster-father, foster-mother, nurse, nanny*	feminine singular, Qal active participle; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #539 BDB #52

The verb itself has to do with being *faithful, trustworthy and dependable;* the person here is someone that can be trusted and depended upon.

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nûwç (נוּס) [pronounced *noose*]	*to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away]*	3rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630

Translation: His nanny lifted him up and she fled,... As we might expect, Jonathan would have had a servant involved in the raising of his child. As is often the case, a very strong bond is forged between the nanny and child. She is looking to protect and to save this child just as a mother would. Speaking of which, Jonathan's wife is not mentioned in this context. Primarily what the author is telling us is, Jonathan's son became lame, and this is the back story. Where his mother was or what she was doing is not part of this story.

What is commonplace in the ancient world is, everyone in the line of the king is killed, so prevent a leader from leading the people in a revolt.

2Samuel 4:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

2Samuel 4:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châphaz (חָפַז) [pronounced *khaw-fahz*]	*to run away in fear, to retreat in alarm, to flee in haste, to flee in fright; to move away from because of trepidation; to make haste*	Qal infinitive construct with the 3rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #2648 BDB #342
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nûwç (נוּס) [pronounced *noose*]	*to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to hasten quickly [away]*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5127 BDB #630

Translation: ...but it came about in her haste to flee,... The Philistines have just beaten the Israelites and they have killed Saul and Jonathan, so this woman is in a panic. Saul has never lost a battle with the Philistines before, so the people there were not expecting this to happen. Getting everything together to escape was hurried. The escape route was probably not going to be a road or a place where they would be easily discovered.

You may recall that I spoke of runners back in this chapter; this verse is another verse which supports that someone from the battlefield, or who observed the battle from afar, ran to this town to tell what had happened.

2Samuel 4:4e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*]	*to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâçach (פָּסַח) [pronounced *paw-SAHKH*]	*to be made lame; to cause a dislocation*	3rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6452 BDB #820

This verb also means *to pass over, to spring over; to spare; to pass by*. The initial idea is roughly the same: *to skip over [something];* but this verb branched out into two sets of meanings, each with its own cognates. Both BDB and Gesenius differentiate between these two sets of meanings.

Translation: ...he fell and became lame. In the rush to get out of there, somehow Mephibosheth fell and became lame. Perhaps he stepped on something, fell down something. I recall jogging once, and it was night, and I was running next to a drainage ditch, and I saw this dark spot that I stepped into, and there was a drop of about 5 feet; luckily, I was not hurt, but breaking a leg under those circumstances would have been easy to do. In the ancient world, breaking a bone could deform you or disable you for life.

What Josephus tells us is that his nurse carried him on her shoulders, which was the custom of those days (as is the custom today), and that he fell from her shoulders, while she was running.[15]

	2Samuel 4:4f		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced *shame*]	*name, reputation, character*	masculine singular noun with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Mᵉphîybôsheth (מְפִיבֹשֶׁת) [pronounced *mĕhf- eĕ-BOH-shehth*]	*dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; from the mouth, a shameful thing; exterminating an idol;* transliterated *Mephibosheth*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
The alternate form of this proper noun is *Merib-baal*.			

Translation: His name [is] Mephibosheth [also known as Merib-baal]. There seems to be a very different approach with respect to this narrative in contrast to others. This author is giving us a lot of background information. In this phrase, we learn the name Mephibosheth, Jonathan's 5 year old son. You may recall that in many Hebrew names, we find *bosheth* (= *shame*) replacing the name *Baal,* which only means *lord;* however, apparently, at some point in time, it became a very common name for a heathen deity. I am thinking that the second notion, that this refers to a heathen deity, became more and more common, until the other usage was much more rare. One problem with that approach is, throughout the book of Judges, we have mentions of *Baal* worship (Judges 2:13 3:3, 7 6:25, 28 etc.). My Dead Sea Scrolls Bible suggests that someone went into the Hebrew text and actually made these changes in some books around the Second Temple period.[16]

> The NIV Study Bible comments on this: *[His] name was originally Merib-Baal (apparently meaning "opponent of Baal"; see 1Chron. 8:34), perhaps to be spelled "Meri-Baal" (meaning "loved by Baal"), but was changed by the author of Samuel to Mephibosheth (meaning "From the mouth of the shameful thing")*.[17] Although we are certain of these names standing for the same person, and that there is some relationship between *baal* (*lord*) and *bosheth* (*shame*); we do not really know exactly who made the change or why.

When I read various explanations, such as the one above, I ask myself, *is this true in every case? Are there men with **Baal** in their names who do not have their names changed in the book of Samuel?* What follows for the next page and a half may seem like beating a dead horse, but I like to confirm these things for myself. The information below simply means that you will not have to go to the same trouble (2–3 hours of study) that I did.

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[15] Josephus Antiquities, vii. 5, section 5

[16] *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible;* translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, p. 239.

[17] *The NIV Study Bible;* ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 424.

God had commanded the Jews: "Pay strict attention to everything I have said to you. You must not invoke the names of other gods; they must not be heard on your lips" (Ex. 23:13). Perhaps, for this reason, they felt that they could not say a man's name aloud if it contained the name *baal* (this did not apply to cities, however). For this reason, it may be good to see where one book uses *baal* and another books substitutes in *bosheth*.

Baal Versus Bosheth			
Person	**Baal**	**Bosheth**	**Commentary**
Gideon	Gideon was given the nickname *Jerubbaal,* which means *fighter of Baal* (Judges 6:32 7:1 8:29, 35 9:1–2, 5, 16, 19, 24, 28, 57 1Sam. 12:11). His father so named him because he took a stand against the Baal worship in Israel. As an aside, Hitchcock says *Jerubbaal* means *he that defends Baal, let Baal defend his cause.*[18]	The writer of Samuel does appear to have a problem with this name, as he makes an historical reference to Gideon, simply as an aside, and calls him *Jerubbesheth* (2Sam. 11:21).	I must admit that it seemed silly to me that the writer of Samuel (or a copyist) would have so flipped out by anyone's name to rename them, but this example alone is pretty powerful evidence for that. However, note that we do find the name *Jerubbaal* in 1Samuel (1 and 2Samuel were considered one book by the Jews).
Esh-baal	The name Esh-Baal means *a man of Baal* (1Chron. 8:33 9:39).	We are first made aware of Saul's son, Ishbosheth in 2Sam. 2 (see also 2Sam. 3:7–8, 11, 14–15 4:5, 7–8, 12). *Ishbosheth* means *a man of shame*.	All of the narrative concerning the life of Esh-baal is under the name *Ishbosheth*.
Meribbaal	The spelling Meribbaal is only found to the genealogies (1Chron. 8:34 9:40). His means *contender of Baal; a resister of Baal; Baal is my advocate; he who bows down to Baal; a lover of Baal.*[19]	Mephibosheth is Saul's grandson; Jonathan's son (2Sam. 4:4 9:6, 8, 10–13 16:1, 4 19:24–25, 30 21:7). His name means *exterminator of shame [idols]; from the mouth of a shameful thing.*[20]	Meribbaal is likely his given name. It is interesting that Saul's own son was named *a man of Baal,* but his grandson through Jonathan is named *contender of Baal*.
Mephibosheth	Although he probably had the name *Meribbaal,* he is only mentioned in one passage.	Mephibosheth, son of Saul by Rizpah (2Sam. 21:8).	This *Mephibosheth* is only mentioned one time.

[18] Roswell D. Hitchcock, *Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary;* taken from *Hitchcock's New and Complete Analysis of the Holy Bible* by Roswell D. Hitchcock, New York: A. J. Johnson, 1874, c1869, pp. 1104-1113; from E-Sword; Topic: *Jerubbaal*.

[19] The first two meanings come from Roswell D. Hitchcock, *Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary;* taken from *Hitchcock's New and Complete Analysis of the Holy Bible* by Roswell D. Hitchcock, New York: A. J. Johnson, 1874, c1869, pp. 1104-1113; from E-Sword; Topic: Meribbaal. This agrees with Strong. BDB has *Baal is my advocate* (Strong's #4807). *He who bows down to Baal* is from Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament;* ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 517 (footnote). The final meaning comes from *The NIV Study Bible;* ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 424. Gnana Robinson suggests *loved by Baal* instead. Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations;* International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; p. 169.

[20] The first definition is from M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary;* 1897; from e-Sword, topic: Mephibosheth (*Smith's Bible Dictionary* agrees); the second from *The NIV Study Bible;* ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 424. ISBE has *idol-breaker* and Hitchcock has *out of my mouth proceeds reproach*.

What is unusual is, we have several cities named throughout the books of Samuel which contain the name *Baal,* yet they remain unchanged (2Sam. 5:20 6:2 13:23).

Fausset[21] even offers a rationale for the copyist who changed these names (assuming that a copyist and not the author changed the names). Isa. 44:8–9: Do not be startled or afraid. Have I not told you and declared it long ago? You are my witnesses! Is there any God but Me? There is no other Rock; I do not know any. All who make idols are nothing, and what they treasure does not profit. Their witnesses do not see or know anything, so they **will be put to shame**. The final word in this verse is the verb cognate for *bosheth*. Also, Hosea 9:10: I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. I saw your fathers as the first-fruit in the fig tree at her first time. But they went to Baal-peor and set themselves apart to a **shameful thing**; and they became abominable like that which they loved. *Shameful thing* is *bosheth* in the Hebrew. That Gideon's name is unchanged in 1Samuel, but changed in 2Samuel I can only assume is an oversight; or that this decision was made well into the copying of the book of Samuel. The copyists comes to 2Sam. 2, and calls a meeting before continuing.

Given this information; I have no problem believing that a copyist along the way changed the names of these individuals; however, I am supposing that he left the names of the cities as is, given that the same cities were probably still in existence. Personally, given what we have in the book of Samuel, my guess is, this was the result of a committee meeting who chose to make this change.

All of this is, of course, reasonable and rational speculation; and I have not heard or thought of an alternate explanation which is as convincing.

As an addendum to all this, the CEV tells us in a footnote that in one ancient translation of this verse, we have *Mephibaal;* however, they do not tells us which manuscript this is; it is not LXX beta, the Hebrew, the Latin or the Syriac, which all read *Mephibosheth*.

Rechab and Baanah Assassinate Ishbosheth

And so go sons of Rimmon—Rechab and Baanah—and so they come in as a heat of the day unto a house of Ishbosheth and he is lying down [in] a bed [in] the noonday.	2Samuel 4:5	**Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon, go and they come to the house of Ishbosheth about the heat of the day; and Ishbosheth [lit., *he*] is lying down in bed in the afternoon.**

Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon, went to the house of Ishbosheth in the middle of the day, and Ishbosheth was lying in his bed in the afternoon.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so go sons of Rimmon—Rechab and Baanah—and so they come in as a heat of the day unto a house of Ishbosheth and he is lying down [in] a bed [in] the noonday.
Septuagint	And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

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[21] Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary;* from e-Sword, topic: Esh-Baal.

CEV	One day about noon, Rechab and Baanah went to Ishbosheth's house. It was a hot day, and he was resting...
The Message	One day Baanah and Recab, the two sons of Rimmon, headed out for the house of Ish-Bosheth. They arrived at the hottest time of the day, just as he was taking his afternoon nap.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth, came to Ishbosheth's home at the hottest time of the day. Ishbosheth was taking his midday nap...
HCSB	Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out and arrived at Ish-bosheth's house during the heat of the day while the king was taking his midday nap.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who lay resting on his bed at noon.
ESV	Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ish-bosheth as he was taking his noonday rest.
Young's Updated LT	And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, go, and come in at the heat of the day unto the house of Ish-Bosheth, and he is lying down—the lying down of noon.

The gist of this verse?   Rechab and Baanah, the troop commanders, decide to go to the home of Ishbosheth in the middle of the day; Ishbosheth is asleep at this time.

2Samuel 4:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlake (הַלְךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHKe*]	*to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Rimmôwn (רִמּוֹן) [pronounced *rihm-MOHN*]	*pomegranate;* transliterated *Rimmon*	masculine singular proper noun; also refers to a location and to a Syrian deity	Strong's #7417 BDB #942
Beʾêrôthîy (בְּאֵרֹתִי) [pronounced *be-ā-ro-THEE*]	*wells; an inhabitant of Beeroth;* transliterated *Beerothite*	gentilic adjective; masculine singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #886 BDB #92
Rêkâb (רֵכָב) [pronounced *ray-KAWᵇV*]	*band of riders; horseman, rider;* transliterated *Rechab*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7394 BDB #939

2Samuel 4:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וּ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Ba′ănâh (בַּעֲנה) [pronounced *bah-ğuhn-AW*]	*in distress; son of distress;* transliterated *Baanah*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1196 BDB #128

Translation: Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon, go... These are the top troop commanders mentioned earlier, who are from the tribe of Benjamin. We are not given any info yet as to why they are going to Ishbosheth or who else might be involved here.

2Samuel 4:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
kaph or kᵉ (כְּ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*as, like, according to; about, approximately*	preposition of comparison or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
chôm (חֹם) [pronounced *khoum*]	*heat, hot, warm*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2527 BDB #328
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day; time; today* (with a definite article); possibly *immediately*	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bayith (בֵּת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]	*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʾÎysh-Bôsheth (אִישׁ־בֹּשֶׁת) [pronounced *eesh-BOH-sheath*]	*man of Baal;* transliterated *Ishbosheth*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #378 BDB #36

Translation: ...and they come to the house of Ishbosheth about the heat of the day;... I don't think these two men just got up around noon and decided to mosey on over the Ishbosheth's house. I think that they had a definite plan, and that plan included the time that they would go there.

2Samuel 4:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it; himself* as a demonstrative pronoun: *that, this*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
This pronoun can be used in the emphatic sense. Sometimes, the verb *to be* is implied when this pronoun is used.			
Hûwʾ is also used as a masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun and is rendered *that; this*.			
shâkab (שָׁכַב) [pronounced *shaw-KAHᵝV*]	*to lie down, to lie down [to sleep, to have sexual relations, to die; because of sickness or humiliation]; to relax*	Qal active participle	Strong's #7901 BDB #1011
A **participle** takes a verb and uses it as an adjectival noun—that is, it acts as a noun but describes that noun by the action that it performs. It is occasionally legitimate to append a participle with a *who*. The Qal active participle denotes simple, continuous action.			
ʾêth (את) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mishkâb (מִשְׁכַּב) [pronounced *mish-KAWᵝV*]	*bed, couch; bier; laying down, the act of lying down*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4904 (from #7901) BDB #1012
tsôhar (צֹהַר) [pronounced *TZŌH-hahr*]	*light; windows; midday, noon, noonday*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #6672 BDB #843

Translation: ...and Ishbosheth [lit., *he*] is lying down in bed in the afternoon. It is likely that Rechab and Baanah were aware of Ishbosheth's schedule; that they knew, in coming at this time, that he would be asleep. Their actions are well-planned out. They know exactly what they are going to do; they know exactly where this or that person is.

That Ishbosheth is taking a nap seems to be a custom of many countries with warm climates (Spain and Mexico are examples of this). You work early in the morning, you work in the evening; and you sleep when it is too hot to work.

Matthew Henry is pretty tough on Ishbosheth here: *[Note the] slothfulness of Ish–bosheth. He lay upon his bed at noon. It does not appear that the country was at any time of the year so hot as to oblige the inhabitants to retire at noon, as we are told they do in Spain in the heat of summer; but Ishbosheth was a sluggish man, loved his ease and hated business: and when he should have been, at this critical juncture, at the head of his forces in the field, or at the head of his counsels in a treaty with David, he was lying upon his bed and sleeping, for his hands were feeble (2Sam. 4:1), and so were his head and heart. When those difficulties dispirit us which should rather invigorate us and sharpen our endeavours we betray both our crowns and lives. Love not sleep, lest thou come to*

poverty and ruin. The idle soul is an easy prey to the destroyer.[22] However, I include this passage because, he does have a point when it comes to personal sloth. I can testify to having known a number of people who are struck with personal sloth.

And here they came as far as a midst of the house taking wheat stalks. And so they strike him unto the belly. And Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.
2Samuel
4:6
They came here as far as the middle of the house carrying wheat stalks. Then they struck him in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah, his brother, slipped out.

They came in as far as the middle of the house carrying wheat stalks. When they came to Ishbosheth sleeping, they struck him dead, sticking him in the stomach. Then the brothers Rechab and Baanah escaped.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And here they came as far as a midst of the house taking wheat stalks. And so they strike him unto the belly. And Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.
Peshitta	And behold, they came into the midst of the house; then those sons of wickedness took and smote him in his abdomen; and Rechab and Banna his brother escaped.
Septuagint	And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth *rib;* and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.
Alexandrian LXX	And behold, the woman who kept the door of the house was cleaning wheat. She became drowsy and fell asleep. Rechab and his brother slipped by, and entered the house while he was asleep on his bed... [I have included a portion of the following verse for context; this translation is according to the Tanakh; and I am assuming that this is the Alexandrian LXX, as I own another version].
Significant differences:	In the Hebrew, it is unclear whether they are carrying wheat stalks in or going inside to bring them out as a pretense. This accounts for the difference in the second phrase. This is the only difference and it is just an apparent difference; not an actual one. There is a problem with the second word of this verse, which will be discussed further in the Hebrew exegesis.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...in his bedroom. The two brothers went into the house, pretending to get some flour. But once they were inside, they stabbed Ishbosheth in the stomach and killed him. Then they cut off his head and took it with them. Rechab and Baanah walked through the Jordan River valley all night long. [vv. 6–7].
The Message	They entered the house on a ruse, pretending official business. The maid guarding the bedroom had fallen asleep, so Recab and Baanah slipped by her...
NAB	The fortress of the house had dozed off while sifting wheat, and was asleep. So Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped past...
NJB	The woman who kept the door had been cleaning wheat and had drowsed off to sleep.
NLT	The doorkeeper, who had been sifting wheat, became drowsy and fell asleep. So Recab and Baanah slipped past the doorkeeper, went into Ishbosheth's bedroom,

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[22] Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:5–7.

and stabbed him in the stomach. Then they escaped. [Notice how the NLT never lets on that this doorkeeper is a woman?].

REB   The door-keeper had been sifting wheat, but she had grown drowsy and fallen asleep, so Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped past,... [This is the probably reading; compare Greek text; Hebrew: they came right into the house carrying wheat, and they struck him in the belly; Rechab and his brother Baanah were acting stealthily. They...].[23]

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™   ...when they came into the house as though they were going to get some flour. Instead, they stabbed him in the belly. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.

HCSB   They entered the interior of the house as if to get wheat and stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.

The Tanakh   So they went inside the house, as though fetching wheat, and struck him in the belly. Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped by,... [Their footnote reads *Meaning of Hebrew uncertain,* after which they offer the Alexandrian LXX (see above)].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible   And they came into the interior of the house as though they were delivering wheat; and they smote him in the body; and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

ESV   And they came into the midst of the house as if to get wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

LTHB   And they came to the middle of the house, bringing wheat. And they struck him in the belly. And Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.

WEB   They came there into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they struck him in the body: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

Young's Updated LT   And there they have come, unto the midst of the house, taking wheat, and they strike him unto the fifth rib, and Rechab and Baanah his brother have escaped.

The gist of this verse?   The two brothers, Rechab and Baanah, come into the house of Ishbosheth under some pretense, kill him, and then escape.

2Samuel 4:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (ו) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hênnâh (הֵן) [pronounced *hayn-nawh*]	*they, those; these* [with the definite article]	3rd person feminine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #2007 BDB #241
However, the word is possibly the adverb...			
hênnâh (הֵן) [pronounced *HAŶN-naw*]	*hither, here*	adverb	Strong's #2008 BDB #244

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[23] Quoted from footnote for the REB. *The Complete Parallel Bible;* NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 648.

2Samuel 4:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
And the Syriac, and possibly other translations,[24] render this as...			
hên (הֵן) [pronounced *hayn*]	*lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up*	interjection	Strong's #2005 BDB #243
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3ʳᵈ person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced *ǵahd*]	*as far as, even to, up to, until*	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
tâvekᵉ (תָּוֶךְ) [pronounced *taw-VEKᴱ*]	*midst, among, middle*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063
bayith (בַּת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]	*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
lâqach (לְקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*]	*to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive*	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
chîṭṭâh (חִטָה) [pronounced *kheet-TAW*]	*wheat, wheat stalks*	feminine plural noun	Strong's #2406 BDB #334

Translation: They came here as far as the middle of the house carrying wheat stalks. The Hebrew verb can be used for taking some or receiving something. Therefore, it is unclear whether they walked in their with wheat stalks or whether they came in under the pretense of picking some up (which seems less likely). These are troop commanders, and would have been able to gain easy access to the house; they would be recognized and waved through. In any case, they enter into the residence of Ishbosheth on some pretense.

Ishbosheth is asleep at this time. The idea is, they want to enter into the house and assassinate Ishbosheth with the least problem. They don't want him spouting out, "Hey, I didn't order any pizza (wheat stalks)" or "Just have them leave the stalks in the kitchen" or words to that effect. They need to get close to Ishbosheth, which means Ishbosheth cannot know they are there.

You will notice with the REB, NAB and the NJB, we have a whole different scenario; there is a woman at the door who falls asleep while (or, after) sifting wheat. This is how the men are able to slip into the house. The REB references the Greek text to back this up, but my Greek text reads: And they came there into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat... It is possible they are referring to the Alexandrian LXX, which I do not have access to at this time. In my Good News Bible, this rendering is said to be justified by *one ancient translation.*[25] In any case, this seems like a less likely scenario, as, why would Ishbosheth allow himself to be guarded by a female servant? This is his guard at the door? That seems ridiculous! It also seems ridiculous to follow some unidentified ancient translation, as opposed to the MT, the LXX, the Vulgate and the Peshitta. It seems more likely that these men could gain entrance on a ruse, being high-ranking officers in Ishbosheth's army, than it does for Ishbosheth to post a female servant guard. .

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[24] Rotherham lists 3 early printed editions, the Septuagint (obviously a different version than I have) and the Vulgate. Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible;* ®1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 325.

[25] *Good News Bible; Today's English Version;* The American Bible Society, ©1978; The Testament, p. 236.

The Hebrew word allows for them to either bring or receive the wheat stalks. As we have seen, the various translations split on this.

Are Rechab and Baanah Bringing Wheat Stalks in or Taking them out?	
Commentator	**Opinion**
Barnes	Barnes is torn between the two interpretations (as I am): *Rechab and Baanah came into the house under the pretense of getting grain, probably for the band which they commanded out of the king's storehouse, and so contrived to get access into the king's chamber; or, they found the wheat-carriers (the persons whose business it was to carry in grain for the king's household) just going into the king's house, and by joining them got into the midst of the house unnoticed. If the latter be the sense, the literal translation of the words would be:* And behold (or, and there) there came into the midst of the house the carriers of wheat, and they (i. e. Rechab and Baanah) smote him,...[26]
Clarke	*The king's stores were probably near his own dwelling; and these men were accustomed to go thither for provisions for themselves, their cattle, and their men. This supposition which is natural, renders unnecessary all the emendations of Houbigant and others.* *As these men were accustomed to bring wheat from these stores, from which it appears there was an easy passage to the king's chamber, (especially if we consider this a summer-house, as it most probably was), no man would suspect their present errand, as they were in the habit of going frequently to that place.*[27]
Gill	*[as though] they would have fetched wheat; out of the king's granaries, for the payment and support of the soldiers under them, who in those days were paid in corn, as were the Roman soldiers[1] in later times; and these granaries might not only be in the king's house, but near his bedchamber; for in those ancient ages of simplicity there was not such grandeur in the courts of princes as now; the Targum is, "as sellers of wheat,"* *in the guise and habit of such persons, pretending they came to sell wheat to the king's purveyors, who were at the granaries; or, as others interpret it, they went in along with the wheat merchants as if they belonged to them, and so found their way to the king's bedchamber:* .
Henry	*Baanah and Rechab...came into the house, under pretence of fetching wheat for the victualling of their regiments; and such was the plainness of those times that the king's corn-chamber and his bed-chamber lay near together, which gave them an opportunity, when they were fetching wheat, to murder him as he lay on the bef.*[28]
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	Rechab and Baanah have shown up to take wheat stalks with them: *It is still a custom in the East to allow their soldiers a certain quantity of corn, together with some pay; and these two captains very naturally went to the palace the day before to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers, that it might be sent to the mill at the accustomed hour in the morning.*[29]

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[26] Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:6.

[27] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:6.

[28] Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:1–8.

[29] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* from e-sword, 2Sam. 4:5–6.

Are Rechab and Baanah Bringing Wheat Stalks in or Taking them out?	
Commentator	**Opinion**
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	*It is still a custom in the East to allow their soldiers a certain quantity of corn, together with some pay; and these two captains very naturally went to the palace the day before to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers, that it might be sent to the mill at the accustomed hour in the morning.*[30]
Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge	*It is still the custom of the East, according to Dr. Perry, to allow the soldiers a certain quantity of corn, with other articles of provision, together with some pay, and as it was the custom also to grind the corn, as needed, at the break of day, these two captains very naturally went the day before to the palace, where the king's stores appear to have been kept, to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers under them, to be ground at the accustomed hour in the morning. The princes of the East, in those days, as appears from the history of David, reposed on their couches till the cool of the evening. they therefore came in the heat of the day, when they knew their master would be resting on his bed; and as it was a necessary to have the corn before it was needed, their coming at this time, though it might be earlier than usual, excited no suspicion.*[31]
Wesley	*Which was laid up in publick granaries in the king's house, and was fetched thence by the captains and commanders of the army for the pay of their soldiers, who, in those ancient times were not paid in money, but in corn. Upon this pretence they were admitted into the house, and so went from room to room, to the place where the king lay.*[32]
Kukis	In either case, it seems quite unlikely that the guard for Ishbosheth is one lone woman. Furthermore, since this aspect of this verse is based on one unnamed old manuscripts, I think that it is a very doubtful interpretation. What we can be certain of is, there is some ruse involved here in order for Rechab and Baanah to get into the house.
I agree that sometime I focus in on minutia; however the idea here is, I do that, so you don't have to. What you do get here is pretty much every viewpoint on this matter.	
[1] Vid. Valtrinum de re militar. Roman. l. 3. c. 15. p. 236.	

Freeman offers us further reason to believe that these men were taking wheat out: *Harmer {Observations, vol. I, p. 433) suggests that the pretense of these men that they went into the house for wheat, was rendered plausible by the fact that is was necessary to obtain the grain in the afternoon in order to have it ready for grinding early the next morning, according to the daily custom. All suspicion of their murderous intention was thus avoided.*[33]

In any case, we have no idea as to the guards. I would assume that, on this official business, that Rechab and Baanah went past the guards as a part of this ruse.

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[30] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* from e-sword, 2Sam. 4:6.

[31] *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge;* by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 4:6.

[32] John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible;* courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 4:6.

[33] *Manners and Customs of the Bible;* James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 143.

Matthew Henry's final comment: *We know not when and where death will meet us. When we lie down to sleep we are not sure but that we may sleep the sleep of death before we awake; nor do we know from what unsuspected hand a fatal stroke may come. Ish-bosheth's own men, who should have protected his life, took it away.*[34]

2Samuel 4:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכָה) [pronounced *naw-KAWH*]	*to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate*	3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
chômesh (חֹמֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHOH-mesh*]	*belly, abdomen, stomach; fifth [rib]; fifth [part]*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2569 & #2570 BDB #332

BDB seems to struggle with this word, but, in my estimation, without cause. 4 times it clearly refers to the *belly, stomach* or *abdomen* (2Sam. 2:23 3:27 4:6 20:10); one time, it refers to the *fifth part* of produce—i.e., it refers to a tax (Gen. 47:26). Its cognates, for the most part, are related to the numeral 5. What is likely the case is, this word was understood to mean *the fifth rib;* but was used commonly and metaphorically for the *stomach* or *abdomen*. The idea could have come from the idea of stabbing a person above or below the fifth rib was likely to result in a quick death for that person, so that became the target area in battle. Given what happens in this context, one could reasonably argue that this word came to be used even in reference to the *stomach* below the ribs.

Translation: Then they struck him in the stomach. In this verse, we are not told what weapon they used; simply that Ishbosheth was stabbed in the stomach. There are scriptural references to this above; for some reason, in the book of 2Samuel, we find this essential phrase used several times.

If you will notice, the less literal translations for this portion of the verse (v. 6a–b), do not have any stabbing, but have instead, Ishbosheth being guarded by what appears to be a maid of sorts who has fallen asleep after sifting wheat. By the way, it is only my guess that it is the Alexandrian LXX with this original rendering, which most of the less literal translations pounced upon. I believe the LXX which I use is called the *Beta text;* and it is in agreement with the Latin, Hebrew and Syriac (this is not available to us in the Dead Sea Scrolls); and for me, the witness of several ancient manuscripts is much more trustworthy than the witness of one manuscript, which I cannot even verify.

I think the problem is, in this verse, the brothers slip in, stab Ishbosheth, and slip out; and in the next verse, we seem to have a replay. Well, this is not some great anomaly in the Hebrew; it is normal for the Hebrew to give us a summation verse, and then to give us more details on the exact same incident afterward. Therefore, even though we do not necessarily write like that, this does not mean that we must freak out when they do. Many times, they put their main verb first, followed by the subject, and then followed by the direct object, something which we

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[34] Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:1–8.

generally do not do. This does not mean that we should search out ancient versions which have the subject, noun, direct object order which we are accustomed to.

> Edersheim comments: *There is no real difficulty about the repetition in the narrative, 2Sam. 4:5, 6—the latter verse taking up and continuing the interrupted narrative in v. 5. Accordingly, there is no need for the addition made in the LXX., which must be regarded not as an emendation of, but as a gloss upon, the text*.[35]

	2Samuel 4:6c		
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Rêkâb (רֵכָב) [pronounced *ray-KAWᵉV*]	*band of riders; horseman, rider;* transliterated *Rechab*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7394 BDB #939
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Baʿănâh (בַּעֲנָה) [pronounced *bah-ğuhn-AW*]	*in distress; son of distress;* transliterated *Baanah*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1196 BDB #128
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced *awhk*]	*brother, kinsman* or *close relative*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
mâlaţ (מָלַט) [pronounced *maw-LAHT*]	*to be delivered; to deliver oneself, to escape, to slip away, to slip through [or past]; to go away in haste*	3rd person masculine singular, [often a reflexive meaning in the] Niphal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #4422 BDB #572

Translation: Then Rechab and Baanah, his brother, slipped out. The brothers were able to enter into the house of Ishbosheth under the pretense of bringing wheat. After killing him, they were able to slip out safely without incident (and, as mentioned before, they may have brought wheat stalks in or taken them out).

V. 6 gives us an overall view of what happened; v. 7 will go into a little more detail. To our way of thinking, we'd prefer to simply see this laid out chronologically; the Hebrews do not always approach things chronologically.

And so they come [into] the house and he is laying upon his bed in a private room of his bed, and so they stuck him and so they killed him and so they remove his head and so they take away his head and so they go a way of the Arabah all the night.	2Samuel 4:7	**When they came [into] the house, he is laying on the bed in his bedroom. They struck him and killed him, then beheaded him and took his head and departed, [taking] the road to Arabah all the night.**

When they entered into the house, they found Ishbosheth laying on his bed in his bedroom. They struck him and killed him, then beheaded him, taking his head as they made their escape along the road to Arabah (along which they traveled the entire night).

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[35] Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament;* ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 517 (footnote).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so they come [into] the house and he is laying upon his bed in a private room of his bed, and so they stuck him and so they killed him and so they remove his head and so they take away his head and so they go a way of the Arabah all the night.
Septuagint	For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and they go away through the plain all night.
Significant differences:	No significant differences; *plain* is a valid translation for the Hebrew noun *arabah*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...in his bedroom. The two brothers went into the house, pretending to get some flour. But once they were inside, they stabbed Ishbosheth in the stomach and killed him. Then they cut off his head and took it with them. Rechab and Baanah walked through the Jordan River valley all night long. [vv. 6–7]. The CEV gives us a much better Gentile flow than the Hebrew text does.
The Message	...and entered the room where Ish-Bosheth was asleep on his bed. They killed him and then cut off his head, carrying it off as a trophy. They traveled all night long, taking the route through the Arabah Valley.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	(They had come into the house while Ishbosheth was sleeping on his bed in his bedroom. They stabbed him, killed him, and cut off his head.) They took his head and traveled all night along the road to the plains.
HCSB	They had entered the house while Ish-bosheth was lying on his bed in his bedroom and stabbed and killed him. Then they beheaded him, took his head, and traveled by way of the Arabah all night.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	Now when they had come into the house, and he lay on his bed in his bedroom, they [not only] smote and slew him, [but] beheaded him, and took his head and went by the way of the plain all night;...
LTHB	And they entered the house, and he was lying on his bed in his bedroom; and they struck him and killed him, and took off his head. And they took his head and went the way of the Arabah all the nigh.
WEB	Now when they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, they struck him, and killed him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and went by the way of the Arabah all night.
Young's Updated LT	Yea, they come in to the house, and he is lying on his bed, in the inner pare of his bed-chamber, and they strike him, and put him to death, and turn aside his head, and they take his head, and go the way of the plain all the night.

The gist of this verse?	The way that Rechab and Baanah executed Ishbosheth is given here; they enter into his private bedroom and violently kill him there, severing his head and taking it with them on their escape along a common route (the Arabah road).

2Samuel 4:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]	*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: When they came [into] the house,... Rechab and Baanah gain entrance into the house, and quickly go to find Ishbosheth. This was no doubt well-planned out.

2Samuel 4:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it; himself* as a demonstrative pronoun: *that, this*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
shâkab (שָׁכַב) [pronounced *shaw-KAHᴮV*]	*to lie down, to lie down [to sleep, to have sexual relations, to die; because of sickness or humiliation]; to relax*	Qal active participle	Strong's #7901 BDB #1011
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ģahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
miṭṭâh (מִטָּה) [pronounced *mit-TAW*]	*couch, bed; an open casket, a bier, a stretcher on which the dead are carried*	feminine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4296 BDB #641
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
cheder (חֶדֶר) [pronounced *KHEH-dehr*]	*chamber, room, private room; private office; innermost part; inward parts*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2315 (and #2316) BDB #293
mishkâb (מִשְׁכָּב) [pronounced *mish-AWᴮV*]	*bed, couch; bier; laying down, the act of lying down*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4904 (from #7901) BDB #1012

Translation: ...he is laying on the bed in his bedroom. The room of his bed refers, obviously, to Ishbosheth's bedroom (or, a mid-day sleeping area?). Ishbosheth is fast asleep, dead to the world. Soon thereafter, he will be dead to the world.

Although the verbiage found in this passage continues to refer to the house of Ishbosheth, I think we might consider this more of a compound; reasonably well-guarded, with a courtyard or two, and the grain being kept inside the compound, near an entry way leading to the bedroom of Ishbosheth. Obviously, Rechab and Baanah thought this all out previously; they were well aware of the grain and had probably picked it up on several occasions (I am assuming here that they came to pick up grain rather than to drop it off—I'll explain why later). They knew of Ishbosheth's sleeping schedule, which was probably common in this portion of the ancient world. Furthermore, even though Matthew Henry went off on a rant about Ishbosheth's sloth; I think that the civil war had come to a halt, and that Ishbosheth no longer had anyone like Abner furthering the cause; leaving Ishbosheth with very little to do.

2Samuel 4:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וֹ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכָה) [pronounced *naw-KAWH*]	*to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate*	3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
wa (or va) (וֹ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute*	3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: They struck him and killed him,... I think the two similar verbs speak to the violence of this act. We also have a large group of wâw consecutives, which signifies quick and continuous action; and, in this case, bloody action.

2Samuel 4:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וֹ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çûwr (סוּר) [pronounced *soor*]	*to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from*	3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rôʾsh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced *rohsh*]	*head, top, chief, front, choicest*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Translation: ...then beheaded him... The verb here has them removing Ishbosheth's head. They will want to prove that they killed him, and the severed head is easy to carry and excellent proof. Of course, walking out of the king's palace or compound with a severed head is easier said than done.

Beheading appears to be relatively common during that time period (1Sam. 17:54 31:9 2Kings 10:6–7 Matt. 14:11 Mark 6:28–6:29). It is not unknown to our era either, although the practice obviously seems to be singularly distasteful and barbaric to most of us.

2Samuel 4:7e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*]	*to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rôʾsh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced *rohsh*]	*head, top, chief, front, choicest*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Translation: ...and took his head... As we have discussed in the past, taking a leader's head is probably the easiest way to prove that he has been eliminated. What they chose to do was not going to remain hidden; they were going to reveal this to someone or, more than likely, to a larger group.

Furthermore, this seems to tilt the scales in terms of what their ruse was. Rechab and Baanah have to slip out of the house (or compound) of Ishbosheth, and they must do so carrying his severed head. Of course, they could have walked in with a hatbox, and took it out there; but, I am thinking that may have aroused some suspicion ("Why are you carrying a hatbox? They haven't been invented yet" would have been the response of any guard who observed them). However, if they are carrying out some wheat, particularly in bags; they might reasonably take out Ishbosheth's head in one of these bags (I think I will avoid discussing the problem of the blood of Ishbosheth's severed head and just assume that they thought that through).

Although no motive is ascribed to Rechab and Baanah, the passage which follows indicates that their primary interest was getting on the winning side and gaining a good position on that side; or, at the very least, a reward. There does not appear to be any indication that Ishbosheth had become as flipped out as Saul. Personal gain seems to be the order of the day for these two men.

2Samuel 4:7f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 4:7f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak[e] (הֵלַך) [pronounced *haw-LAHK[e]*]	*to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
derek[e] (דֶּרֶך) [pronounced *DEH-rek[e]*]	*way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
ʿărâbâh (עֲרָה) [pronounced *guh-raw-VAW*]	*plain; arid, sterile region; a desert;* transliterated *Arabah* with the definite article	feminine singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #6160 BDB #787
With the definite article, ʿărâbâh often refers to the valley which runs from the Sea of Chinnereth (the Sea of Galilee) down to the Gulf of Aqaba.			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*]	*the whole, all of, the entirety of, all;* can also be rendered *any of*	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
lay[e]lâh (לַיְלָה) [pronounced *LAY-law*]	*night; that night, this night, the night*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

Translation: ...and departed, [taking] the road to Arabah all the night. Interestingly enough, these soldiers decided to choose time as the most important factor as opposed to a more surreptitious escape route. They could move more quickly along an established route, which is what they chose to do.

> Gill explains: *[They traveled] through the plain of Jordan; all the way from Mahanaim to Hebron being for the most part a plain country till they came to Hebron, which was mountainous; the way from Mahanaim to Hebron was a space of sixty eight miles, according to Bunting.*[36]

Let me see if I can follow the example of the CEV, and put the events of these two or three verses into a reasonable chronology.

A Chronological Reshuffling of 2Samual 4:5–7

So the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah came to the house of Ishbosheth in the heat of the day, while Ishbosheth was sleeping. When they arrived at the house, Rechab and Baanah were able to enter into the main house, on the cover of picking up grain for their troops. They found Ishbosheth laying asleep on his bed, taking his midday rest. Then they struck him in the stomach, killing him. They beheaded Ishbosheth and slipped out of the house without incident. They took his head and departed, [taking] the road to Arabah all the night.

Although I took some liberties here and there with the text, I did manage to keep this reasonable close to the original language.

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[36] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:7; he references Bunting, Travels, pp. 145, 148.

Apparently some, Abarbinel[37] for one, thinks that they entered into the bedroom of Ishbosheth twice; once to stab him and then again to behead him. This notion is just weird.

Return to Chapter Outline   **Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines**

Rechab and Baanah Bring the Head of Ishbosheth to David

And so they bring a head of Ishbosheth unto David [at] Hebron and so they say unto the king, "Behold, a head of Ishbosheth, son of Saul your enemy who sought your soul. And so gives Yᵉhowah to my adonai the king vengeance the day the this from Saul and from his seed."

2Samuel 4:8

So they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David [at] Hebron and they said to the king, "Look, [we present to you] the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your enemy who sought your life. Therefore, Yᵉhowah has given vengeance to my adonai the king this day on [lit., *from*] Saul and on [lit., *on*] his offspring."

So they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Look, here is the head of Ishbosheth, son of Saul, your enemy who sought your life. Therefore, Jehovah has given vengeance to my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so they bring a head of Ishbosheth unto David [at] Hebron and so they say unto the king, "Behold, a head of Ishbosheth, son of Saul your enemy who sought your soul. And so gives Yᵉhowah to my adonai the king vengeance the day the this from Saul and from his seed."
Septuagint	And they brought the head of Ishbosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ishbosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD has given vengeance to my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Finally they turned west and went to Hebron. They went in to see David and told him, "Your Majesty, here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of your enemy Saul who tried to kill you! The LORD has let you get even with Saul and his family."
The Message	They presented the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron, telling the king, "Here's the head of Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, your enemy. He was out to kill you, but GOD has given vengeance to my master, the king--vengeance this very day on Saul and his children!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	They brought Ishbosheth's head to David at Hebron. "Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of your enemy Saul who tried to kill you," they told the king. "Today the LORD has given Your Royal Majesty revenge on Saul and his descendants."

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[37] See Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:7.

HCSB	They brought Ish-bosheth's head to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here's the head of Ish-bosheth son of Saul, your enemy who intended to take your life. Today the LORD has granted vengeance to my lord the king against Saul and his offspring."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	...and brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron. And they said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. The LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring.".
WEB	They brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold, the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; and Yahweh has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.
Young's Updated LT	And bring in the head of Ish-Boshes unto David in Hebron, and say unto the king, "Lo, the head of Ish-Bosheth, son of Saul, yours enemy, who sought your life; and Jehovah does give to my lord the king vengeance this day, of Saul and of his seed.".

The gist of this verse?	Rechab and Baanah haul in the head of Ishbosheth to David, and claim that he is now avenged against Saul and his seed.

2Samuel 4:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*]	*to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry*	3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rôʾsh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced *rohsh*]	*head, top, chief, front, choicest*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
Ȋysh-Bôsheth (אִישׁ־בֹּשֶׁת) [pronounced *eesh-BOH-sheath*]	*man of Baal;* transliterated *Ishbosheth*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #378 BDB #36
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated *David*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
Chebᵉrôwn (חֶבְרוֹן) [pronounced *khebᵊv-ROHN*]	*association, league, joined;* transliterated *Hebron*	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: So they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David [at] Hebron... The plan is simple; these two men are commanding troops on what will be the losing side of this civil war—that is clear to them. Although they could have simply deserted and gone over to David, they chose not to. Their defection to David was going to be with an impressive present: the head of Ishbosheth, David's enemy. I want you to notice that they don't see things like David sees them. David is not concerned about Ishbosheth; David does not have this uncontrollable lust to control all of Israel. David is content to let God take care of the details. Now, he is not going to ignore God's prodding or God's direction; on the other hand, David is not going to get out in front of God and take charge.

Application: For some believers, right after they believe in Jesus Christ, they think they need to *do* something. They need to make big changes in their lives and they need to start doing great things for God. The men called to serve God the most quickly after salvation were the Apostles; and Jesus did not send them out until He had trained them day and night for a year or so. They went through intensive seminary training at the feet of the Master. However, Paul already possessed an almost encyclopedic knowledge of the Old Testament and he was proficient in logic skills. However, even at his salvation, Paul cooled his heels for awhile before he began his ministry. You don't get saved one day, and the next day, you are evangelizing dozens or hundreds of people. A child can be born to parents with the best set of complementary genes possible, but that child is not going to be worth a damn until 15 or 20 years later, after his parents have properly raised him. If his parents don't give him proper training, then he is going to be a loser in life, despite his great genes.

Application: Doctrine is key to being on the right side of history. Doctrine is key when it comes to interpreting the events of your time. For instance, even though Ronald Reagan caught hell from the press for *Star Wars* and for the hardline that he took against the Soviets, history has shown Reagan to have great vision. Now, liberals are attempting to rewrite history in any way that they can, but, during the time of Reagan, liberals said that Reagan's approach to the Soviet Union was simplistic and dangerous, and could result in the end of human civilization. A few decades after Reagan's presidency, after the Soviet Union fell, liberal revisionists are going back and talking about the roots of the Soviet demise are in Truman and Kennedy. During the age of Soviet expansionism and aggression, liberals proclaimed co-existence; after the Soviet Union collapsed, liberal cannot give Reagan the credit, so they go back to previous Democratic presidents and try to give them the credit for the Soviet collapse—which Soviet collapse no liberal reporter could have imagined during the time of Reagan until it happened.

Application: You understand the era in which you live by understanding the Word of God. It is difficult for some to even go back a few decades and understand history if it conflicts with their preconceived ideology. For instance, Reagan was portrayed again and again as a bumbling fool and a 2nd rate actor who lucked into his position; and his actions as president were among the most profound of any president of his century. For those who are ideologues, they look at the Reagan which the press and media presenting in one way, they see the great results which he achieved (at the end of his 4 and 8 year terms, we were so much better off than after President Carter's presidency, who was continually portrayed in the media as brilliant, thoughtful and absolutely honest). So, those who are ideologues have the problem with, how did a bumbling man of limited intelligence achieve so much during his presidency as compared with the honest intellect or his predecessor, who also had a dramatic impact on the people of this country, most of which was bad? So, during President's Reagan's presidency, what he said and done were interpreted one way; and after his presidency was over, and after he had turned things around in almost every area, these same ideologues who criticized him have to go back and rethink the history and then present it as the result of presidents who served several decades previously. With doctrine, you can see the issues clearly and you can interpret history which has gone by and you can interpret contemporary history. Now, both you and the liberal historian may have a framework within which you work and interpret; but the liberal must rearrange and change and reinterpret past events in order for them to fit into their framework, once history passes them by. Your first impression is often the most accurate.

> Back to the topic: you do not get saved one day, and then have your life completely transformed in every way the next. There must occur a period of growth. I read an email the other day, from a person that I used to know; it was her testimony and about being saved. *You're not going to believe this...I've just become a "born-again" believer myself...No kidding...The Holy Spirit came right into my home and converted me...Guess I just prayed the right prayer request...It was an amazing*

experience...For two months I lived in the Glory of the Holy Spirit all around my home...There were events, however, which led up to this...And I do testify with all my life that those events were miracles unto themselves...But on the night of Mar 3, God responded to my prayers in a great way...I tell you I have seen the face and spirit of Christ on three occasions in the past three months starting with and including that night...I absolutely understand what is meant by The Living Word of God...Every word that I had ever known in my life associated with the character of Christ, of God, came alive and filled every cell of my being with its meaning...How can I describe it to you???...Up to that fateful date, I had been a rebellious non-believer...Now, I have been thrust at rocket speed into a supernatural realm in which anything is possible and can come true...I'm still reeling from the effect of it...I can't begin to tell you in this small e-mail all the things that have happened to me, the immediate but wonderful things that have manifested themselves in my life since then...I can only emphasize the awe and beauty of it all...I so totally relate to the song "Amazing Grace." Only a person touched by the Divine Infinite Glorious Holy Spirit could write or thereafter relate to such lyrics...I hold out hope renewed that God has something so wonderous in store for humanity...I have Faith that He is going to bring us into a life so full of Love, Mercy, and Glory that it will be as a spiritual cocooning, in which we will all be transformed, the earth and every living thing in and upon the earth, into His originally intended purpose...I can emphatically declare, "I Believe! I Believe!" And no amount of education, no superior intellectual prowess or genius will be able to put words or physics formula to It when it happens...Those pursuits will simply be inadequate to the task and irrelevant to the new abundant life we will be so freely, so lovingly, so undeservedly given...Infinite Glory, Infinite Praise, Infinite Love, Infinite Thanks, Infinite Laud be always and forever to Him, The Divine Infinite Glorious Holy Heavenly Father...Amen. Do you see what her testimony is all about? It is not about Jesus Christ; it is about this incredible experience. There is no mention of the gospel anywhere in this testimony. Although Jesus is mentioned, note the serious lack of the cross.

Application: You do not get saved one day, and then go out stumping with your personal testimony the next. You don't know enough about what happened to you to tell anyone. How many babies come out of the womb and say, "Let me tell you about what I just experienced! Let me tell you all about my birth!" They have no vocabulary, no concepts, no way of really communicating what has happened to them. So it is with the newly born-again believer.

Do you see where I am getting this? God anointed David king over Israel back when David was maybe 12 or 13; David did not go out the next day and rule Israel. It is now 15 or 20 years later, and he is still not the ruler over all Israel. However, Rechab and Baanah aren't willing to just come to David and offer him their service. They don't want David to give them direction, to start them out at a lower position than they are used to; they want to start out at the top; they want to bring their works to David.

Application/parallel: You do not bring any works to God in salvation; in fact, you never mix works or promises or intentions with salvation. We are saved based upon what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross; there is nothing we can add to this, there is no promise that we can make which will improve on this; and our intentions are meaningless next to the cross. In fact, if you bring works and faith to the cross, you are still lost in your sins. Our salvation is based 100% upon what Jesus did for us on the cross; and 0% upon what we do. God forbids us from bringing any works to Him pre-salvation or coterminous with salvation.

2Samuel 4:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MAHR*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 4:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced *el*]	*unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to*	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
meleke (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
rôʾsh (ראֹש) [pronounced *rohsh*]	*head, top, chief, front, choicest*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
ʾÎysh-Bôsheth (אִישׁ-בֹּשֶׁת) [pronounced *eesh-BOH-sheath*]	*man of Baal;* transliterated *Ishbosheth*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #378 BDB #36
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: ...and they said to the king, "Look, [we present to you] the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul... Rechab and Baanah gain audience with the king (easy to do, as they are carrying the head of Ishbosheth). They walk into Hebron, walk right up to the palace, hold up the head of Ishbosheth, and say, "We would like to see the king." They gain entrance immediately. When they stand before David, they hold up this head and say, "Look, here is Ishbosheth's head!"

> Jamieson, Fausset and Brown comment: *Such bloody trophies of rebels and conspirators have always been acceptable to princes in the East, and the carriers have been liberally rewarded. Ish-bosheth being a usurper, the two assassins thought they were doing a meritorious service to David by removing the only existing obstacle to the union of the two kingdoms.*[38]

Do you remember the Amalekite who came to David at the beginning of this book? He carried with him some of Saul's personal items, along with a story which he felt was guaranteed to win David's favor, yet not get him in trouble. However, based upon his own (false) confession, he made himself anathema to David. As the sovereign of Judah, David had no choice but to execute him (would that David had acted as quickly with Joab and Abishai!).

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[38] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* from e-sword, 2Sam. 4:8.

2Samuel 4:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâyab (אֹיֵב) [pronounced aw-YAᵇV]	*enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility*	masculine plural, Qal active participle; with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #340 BDB #33
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	*that, which, when, who, whom*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bâqash (בַּקַּשׁ) [pronounced baw-KAHSH]	*to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask, to seek with desire and diligence*	3rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
ʾêth (את) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	*soul, life, living being, desire*	feminine singular noun with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

Translation: ...your enemy who sought your life. When it comes to applying this to Saul or Ishbosheth; it is clear that Saul continually sought David's life; this was known throughout Israel. Therefore, *your enemy who sought your life* is a reference to Saul and not to Ishbosheth. Note the Piel perfect; a completed action—if this referred to Ishbosheth, then the action would be ongoing. Finally, in the next portion of this verse, vengeance is give to David on Saul (who is named first) and then on his offspring (where Ishbosheth is not even named).

Do you see a parallel? Do you recall the Amalekite who brought Saul's arm band and crown to David at the beginning of 2Samuel? This was the same idea—he wanted David's favor; he wanted David to either give him a high-ranking position or to reward him with valuables. It is unfortunate that Rahab and Baanah were not aware of what this Amalekite did; they might not have been so quick to try to gain David's favor in this way.

You may ask, *well, what was their alternative?* We have already seen that many men have come to David and had been coming to David for years. Abner went directly to David, and he is commander-in-chief of the northern Israeli forces. This means that, anyone could have gone to David to seek refuge.

Do you see the spiritual parallel? All men who serve Satan and his servants can always seek refuge in Jesus Christ. They can always go to Jesus Christ, and they need not bring anything. In fact, you cannot come to Christ with your own works. Now, with David, a man would show up and say, "Use me." Ideally, we will do that when we come to Christ; however, we are not required to bring anything but ourselves. We are not required to promise to do anything; we are not required to do anything. All we have to do is, come to Him.

2Samuel 4:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 4:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*]	*to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]	*lord, master, owner, superior, sovereign;* can refer to the trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated *Adonai*	masculine plural noun with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 BDB #10
melekᵉ (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*]	*king, ruler, prince*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
nᵉqâmâh (נְקָמָה) [pronounced *nᵉkaw-MAW*]	*vengeance, revenge, an exacting of vengeance; a desire for revenge*	feminine plural noun	Strong's #5360 (and #5359) BDB #668
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced *yohm*]	*day; time; today* (with a definite article); possibly *immediately*	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*]	*here, this, this one; thus;* possibly *another*	masculine singular demonstrative adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (ו) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
zeraʿ (זֶרַע) [pronounced *ZEH-rahǵ*]	*a seed, a sowing, an offspring*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282

Translation: Therefore, Yᵉhowah has given vengeance to my adonai the king this day on [lit., *from*] Saul and on [lit., *on*] his offspring." The men of David's time were aware of his piety, so when speaking to David, they often would use *holy* language. They were the ones who killed Ishbosheth; they were not directed by God, they were opportunists. The idea was, kill David's chief rival, bring the head to David, and get either a reward or a permanent position in David's government.

I should add, even though it is clear that Abner was working during his life to turn Israel against Ishbosheth and toward David, none of his messages or directives included the killing of Ishbosheth. Therefore, there would be no reason to assume that Rechab and Baamah were acting under anyone's orders, but, essentially, they were doing spec work. They were acting on their own. It is more likely that, one day, they sat down and said, "You know, we are on the wrong side; however, we can use this to our advantage." Or, they may not have even realized that they were on the wrong side, but that they were on a losing side. Again, the idea is, they would use this to their advantage. They used the fact that they were Ishbosheth's generals in order to gain access to his house while he was asleep.

> Matthew Henry sums this up nicely: *The murderers triumphed in what they had done. As if they had performed some very glorious action, and the doing of it for David's advantage was enough not only to justify it, but to sanctify it, they made a present of Ish–bosheth's head to David (2Sam. 4:8): Behold the head of thy enemy, than which they thought nothing could be more acceptable to him; yea, and they made themselves instruments of God's justice, ministers to bear his sword, though they had no commission:* The Lord has avenged you this day of Saul and of his seed. *Not that they had any regard either to God or to David's honour; they aimed at nothing but to make their own fortunes (as we say) and to get preferment in David's court; but, to ingratiate themselves with him, they pretended a concern for his life, a conviction of his title, and a zealous desire to see him in full possession of the throne.*[39]

Abner never indicated any intention to assassinate Ishbosheth, even though Ishbosheth was afraid of him. Abner could have easily set things up to take Ishbosheth out, but he chose not to. I have credited Abner with great political and military savvy; but this does not mean that he operated without a conscience. This does not mean that he only thought about himself, or how to get ahead, or how to maximize his return for what he did. Being smart and being able to think under pressure are admirable qualities. My guess is, Abner evaluated the overall situation; if the tribes suddenly supported David, then there was no reason to do anything against Ishbosheth. He would be left hanging out there without any support; and he was unable to lead himself. So, there would be no reason to assassinate him. Now, of course, in a military or political situation, when you remove the head, you often achieve great results (great, as in magnitude; I am using it as a neutral term). However, Ishbosheth was only the head of northern, eastern and central Israel because of Saul, his father, who probably conceived this on his last day; and because of Abner, who put everything into motion. Ishbosheth appeared to do nothing himself to achieve this position; so, Abner mostly likely theorized that, removing his support would be easy, and it would remove all of his power. Therefore, there would be no reason to harm Ishbosheth.

Rechab and Baanah, on the other hand, were not interested in any subtleties or in whatever results they might achieve with regards to David; their only concern is, *what will the assassination of Ishbosheth do for us?*

Application: You may not grasp this at first, but did you know that you can't always get what you want by going after that thing? *The Lord helps those who help themselves* is not a verse from the Bible. Don't misunderstand me; I am certainly not knocking hard work—there are a number of verses in the Bible which extol the virtues of hard work. However, when you have decided on certain amenities that you desire, be they material, positional, vocational, etc.; do not think that anything goes. Don't think that, if you see that thing that you want desperately, that it is okay to use any means by which to attain it. One of the tests you will face is, right in front of you will be that thing that you want, and all you have to do is compromise doctrine in order to get it. All you have to do is slip out of fellowship for just a short amount of time, and it you will get that thing that you so desperately want. Satan and his demon corps are in the tempting business; they know which carrots to dangle out in front of you. You might even rationalize this away to yourself.

Application: Now, this does not mean that you cannot buy that nicer house; this does not mean that you cannot put in the swimming pool or the deck or the barbeque grill in the backyard. However, always bear in mind what you are trading and if it is valid. Are their children involved? Is this a two parent home, but both parents work in order to buy more stuff and better stuff? I've taught in a nice area, where it was nothing for the parents to give

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[39] Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:1–8.

their kids $50 or $100 and send them to the mall for the day. With both parents working, at some point in time, they end up with a lot of money to throw around; however, if you are one of the parents in that situation, have you neglected your children? Have you depended upon daycare, school and church to raise your children? Personally, I never saw my father much because he worked so hard; but my mother was always there; and if anyone needed direction and discipline, it was me. Having one parent available was a necessity in my growing up. Had I been born 30 years later, I would have been given a handful of Ridilin to discipline me. There is no pill, no school, no amount of extra income which can take the place of a parent who is there.

Okay, I have gone pretty far afield, I admit.

David Executes Rechab and Baanah for their Evil Act

And so answers David Rechab and Baanah his brother, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite; and so he says to them, "Living Yᵉhowah, Who has redeemed my soul from every adversity,...   2Samuel 4:9   **David then answered the brothers Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, saying, "[By] the Living Yᵉhowah, Who has purchased my life from every adversity:...**

David then answered the brothers Rechab and Baanah, the sons of the Beerothite Rimmon, saying, "By the Living Jehovah Who has purchased my life from every adversity which I have faced:...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so answers David Rechab and Baanah his brother, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite; and so he says to them, "Living Yᵉhowah, Who has redeemed my soul from every adversity,...
Septuagint	And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, "As the LORD lives, who redeemed my soul out of all adversity,...
Significant differences:	The Greek fills in the oath of David, adding the words *as the* (which is something that we would do in an English translation as well).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David answered: I swear that only the LORD rescues me when I'm in trouble!
The Message	David answered the brothers Recab and Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as GOD lives--the One who got me out of every trouble I've ever been in--...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	David responded to Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth,...
HCSB	But David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as the LORD lives, the One who has redeemed my life from every distress,...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

LTHB	And David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, As Jehovah lives, who has redeemed my life out of all distress,...
Young's Updated LT	And David answers Rechab and Baanah his brother, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and says to them, "Jehovah lives, who has redeemed my soul out of all adversity,...

The gist of this verse?   In answering these two brothers, David takes an oath by the Jehovah God Who has delivered him out of every adversity and problem.

2Samuel 4:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced *ģaw-NAWH*]	*to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced *daw-VEED*]	*beloved* and is transliterated David	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Rêkâb (רֵכָב) [pronounced *ray-KAWᵇV*]	*band of riders; horseman, rider;* transliterated *Rechab*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7394 BDB #939
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Baʿănâh (בַּעֲנָה) [pronounced *bah-ģuhn-AW*]	*in distress; son of distress;* transliterated *Baanah*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1196 BDB #128
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced *awhk*]	*brother, kinsman* or *close relative*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced *bane*]	*son, descendant*	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Rimmôwn (רִמּוֹן) [pronounced *rihm-MOHN*]	*pomegranate;* transliterated *Rimmon*	masculine singular proper noun; also refers to a location and to a Syrian deity	Strong's #7417 BDB #942

2Samuel 4:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Bᵉˋêrôthîy (בְּאֵֽרֹתִי) [pronounced *bᵉ-ā-ro-THEE*]	*wells; an inhabitant of Beeroth; transliterated Beerothite*	gentilic adjective; masculine singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #886 BDB #92

Translation: David then answered the brothers Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite,... We are given the gist of the conversation. These brothers had other things to say to David; when one stopped talking, the other one probably began to talk. However, once they were through, David has had time to consider this situation and he answers them.

2Samuel 4:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ˋâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MAHR*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	3ʳᵈ person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
chay (ח) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*]	*living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]*	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly *yhoh-WAH*]	transliterated variously as *Jehovah, Yahweh, Yᵉhowah*	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ˋăsher (אֲשֶׁא) [pronounced *uh-SHER*]	*that, which, when, who, whom*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
pâdâh (פָּדה) [pronounced *paw-DAWH*]	*to ransom, to purchase, to redeem*	3ʳᵈ person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6299 BDB #804
ˋêth (את) [pronounced *ayth*]	*generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*]	*soul, life, living being, desire*	feminine singular noun with the 1ˢᵗ person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

2Samuel 4:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kohl*]	*every, each, all of, all; any of, any*	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
tsar (צַר) [pronounced *tsar*]	*an adversary, an enemy; narrow, tight* and therefore, *distress, affliction, intense distress* [caused by an adversary]	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6862 BDB #865

Owen lists this as a masculine singular noun, which matches the spelling of this word in his *Analytical Key*. *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament* lists this as the Qal perfect of the verb cognate of tsar.

Generally speaking, when *tsar* means *enemy, adversary,* it is found in poetry, in the plural, and without a definite article. When in prose, in the singular, and with a definite article, it usually means *distress, oppression, affliction*. Here (in 1Sam. 13:6), it is in prose, in the singular, but it lacks a definite article.

Translation: ...saying, "[By] the Living Yᵉhowah, Who has purchased my life from every adversity:... David is going to take an oath before these two men, and he takes his oath by Jehovah God, who has delivered David time and time again from every adversity which he has faced. In simply setting up this oath, David is making it clear that he depends upon God's grace, mercy and protection; and not upon the works of man. In other words, what they have done for David is meaningless; David depends upon God, not upon men; and certainly not upon men who kill simply for their own profit.

> Clarke comments: *This was, in David's case, a very proper view of the goodness and watchful providence of God towards him. His life was frequently in danger; murderers had often laid wait for it: but God, the living God, had always redeemed that life from all adversity; and called on him now to punish such evil-minded and blood-thirsty men.*[40]

This short statement which David gives indicates that what he is going to say is the absolute truth; it is his way of taking an oath before God, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

For making known to me to say, 'Behold, has died Saul' (and he was as bringing tidings in his eyes). And so I seize in him and so I kill him in Ziklag, which my giving to him tidings.	2Samuel 4:10	**When one made known to me, saying, 'Look, Saul has died' (and, in his eyes, he was as one bringing good news); I then seized him and executed him in Ziklag, which [was] my [way of] giving tidings [or, *good news*] to him.**

When the one who told me, 'Listen, Saul has died' thought that he was bringing me good news; I seized this man and executed him in Ziklag, which was my good news to him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

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[40] Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:9.

| Masoretic Text | For making known to me to say, 'Behold, has died Saul' (and he was as bringing tidings in his eyes). And so I seize in him and so I kill him in Ziklag, which my giving to him tidings. |
| Septuagint | When one told me, saying, 'Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag,' who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings. |

| Significant differences: | The final phrase of this verse is a little difficult to render; I have rendered it as I believed to be accurate; however, several English translators understood it more as the Greek translators did. |

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| CEV | When a man came to Ziklag and told me that Saul was dead, he thought he deserved a reward for bringing good news. But I grabbed him and killed him. |
| *The Message* | ...when the messenger told me, 'Good news! Saul is dead!' supposing I'd be delighted, I arrested him and killed him on the spot in Ziklag. That's what he got for his so-called good news! |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| *God's Word*™ | "I once seized a man who told me that Saul had died. He thought he was bringing good news. I killed him in Ziklag to reward him for his news. |
| HCSB | ...when the person told me, 'Look, Saul is dead,' he thought he was a bearer of good news, but I seized him and put him to death at Ziklag. That was my reward to him for his news! |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	...when one told me, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his news.
NRSV	...when the one who told me, 'See, Saul is dead,' thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag—this was the reward I gave him for his news.
Young's Updated LT	...when one is declaring to me, saying, 'Lo, Saul is dead, and he was as a bearer of tidings in his own eyes,' then I take hold on him, and slay him in Ziklag, instead of my giving to him for the tidings.

| **The gist of this verse?** | David tells these two men that a few years back, an Amalekite came to him, reporting that he helped kill Saul (at Saul's request); and that, in his own thinking, the Amalekite thought that this was good news; however, based upon his testimony, David had him executed. |

2Samuel 4:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּ) [pronounced *kee*]	*for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time*	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471

2Samuel 4:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*]	*to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that*	Hiphil participle with the definite article	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
A **participle** takes a verb and uses it as an adjectival noun—that is, it acts as a noun but describes that noun by the action that it performs. It is occasionally legitimate to append a participle with *who, the one, those*. The Qal active participle denotes simple, continuous action.			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *l^e*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition with the 1st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *l^e*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MAHR*]	*to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think*	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*]	*lo, behold,* or more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out*	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced *mooth*]	*to die; to perish, to be destroyed*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
Shâʾûwl (שָׁאוּל) [pronounced *shaw-OOL*]	which is transliterated *Saul;* it means *asked for*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: When one made known to me, saying, 'Look, Saul has died'... An Amalekite came to David and claimed that Saul asked him to kill him, and so he did. The Amalekite brought David Saul's crown and armlet as proof. At that time, this was all that David knew about Saul's death, and this Amalekite condemned himself with his own testimony.

In reality, Saul committed suicide; and his armor bearer also committed suicide; however, David had no way of knowing this, and had to judge the Amalekite based upon his own words.

2Samuel 4:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w^e (or v^e) (וּ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*]	*he, it; himself* as a demonstrative pronoun: *that, this*	3rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

2Samuel 4:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*]	*to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass*	3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
kaph or kᵉ (כְּ) [pronounced *kᵉ*]	*as, like, according to; about, approximately*	preposition of comparison or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
bâsar (מְשַׂר) [pronounced *baw-SAHR*]	*a bearer of good news, the bringer of news; a messenger*	Piel participle	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced *ǵay-nah-YIM*]	*eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface*	feminine plural noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

Together, the bêyth preposition and ʿayin literally mean *in the eyes of;* it can be understood to mean *in the opinion of, in the thinking of, in the estimation of; as ____ sees things to be.*

Translation:...(and, in his eyes, he was as one bringing good news);... We have a very similar situation here; the Amalekite who came to David with the news of Saul's death by his own hand *thought* that this was good news; he *thought* that he would be rewarded for what he claimed to have done. These two men, Rechab and Baanah, also thought that this was good news and that David would reward them.

When this was translated into Greek, they used the same word which we render *gospel* or *good news* (ευαγγελιον). There is the implication that the bearer of this good news is often due a reward.

2Samuel 4:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâchaz (אָחַז) [pronounced *aw-KHAHZ*]	*to grasp, to take hold of, to seize; to take [by hunting, fishing]; to hold [something taken]; to take possession of*	1st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #270 BDB #28
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: ...I then seized him... The Amalekite condemned himself with his own testimony. David seized him, which meant, more or less, that he was placed under arrrest. Obviously, he was physically seized; but that would be analogous to being arrested. Now, David as king, does not have to be the one who seizes this man; it was

probably done at David's command; however, as we have seen many times, a leader may be given credit for this or that (e.g., David defeated the Amalekites in battle), but this does not mean that he did anything more than give orders.

2Samuel 4:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hârag (הָרַג) [pronounced *haw-RAHG*]	*to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin*	1st person singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2026 BDB #246
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
Tsiqᵉlag (צִקְלַג) [pronounced *tzihkᵉ-LAHG*]	transliterated *Ziklag*	Proper noun; location	Strong's #6860 BDB #862

Translation: ...and executed him in Ziklag,... David executed the man then and there; he condemned himself with his own testimony. Now, what we have at the end of 1Samuel is the actual way that Saul died, and that this man did not have anything to do with it. However, David did not know that at the time; and, there was no reason to bring in other witnesses or hear other testimony, as the man had condemned himself.

2Samuel 4:10e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *uh-SHER*]	*that, which, when, who, whom*	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâthan (נַת) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*]	*to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make*	Qal infinitive construct with the 1st person singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced *lᵉ*)	*to, for, towards, in regards to*	directional/relational preposition; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
bᵉsôwrâh (בְּשׂוֹרָה) [pronounced *bᵉs-oh-RAW*]	*good news, glad tidings;* implication: *a reward for good news*	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1309 BDB #142

There are two very similar spellings for this noun (as is generally true with the long ô).

Translation: ...which [was] my [way of] giving tidings [or, *good news*] to him. What David is saying here is, this man brought tidings to him of Saul's death; so him seizing this man and executing him, was his giving tidings to this man. "You think that your killing of Saul is good news? I'll show you some good news: Saul's murderer has been captured, tried and executed."

This is my translation and understanding of this verse; however, most English translators had a different take of this verse. The NKJV, perhaps one of the best translations available, renders this ...the one who *thought* I would give him a reward for *his* news. You will notice the addition of a couple words; their interpretation, which is reasonable, is that, this Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul expected a reward for this news. Now, I agree that this is undoubtedly true; I gave this interpretation throughout the first chapter of 2Samuel—this Amalekite expected either a monetary reward or he expected to be installed at a high position under David. However, I do not believe that this is the way v. 10e should be interpreted. Most literal renderings, by the way, interpret this along the lines of: ...which was the reward I gave him for *his* news. Because of this verse, both Gesenius and BDB suggest that the final word of this verse could be understood as *a reward for [his] good news*. In any case, although we could put 3 slightly different spins to the end of this verse, there is little substantive change in the overall chapter; and it would have no affect on any major doctrine.

Furthermore, when men lawless kill a man righteous in his house upon his bed, and now [should] not I seek his blood from your hand and I have burned [or, *removed*] you from the earth?"	2Samuel 4:11	**How much more when malevolent men kill an innocent [lit., *righteous*] man in his [own] house, on his [own] bed? Therefore, should I not seek [retribution for] his blood from your hand? Therefore, I will remove you from [this] earth."**

How much more [is justice required, in comparison to the example given] when malevolent men kill an innocent man in his own bed in his own house? Therefore, should I not seek justice from you for his unjust death? Therefore, I will take you out of this life."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Furthermore, when men lawless kill a man righteous in his house upon his bed, and now [should] not I seek his blood from your hand and I have burned [or, *removed*] you from the earth?"
Septuagint	How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?
Significant differences:	The beginning of the Greek translation is a reasonable rendering of the Hebrew—it follows the well-established idiom more than the exact individual words. The difference of the verbs in the second sentence is also a reasonable translation by the Greeks.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	You evil men have done something much worse than he did. You've killed an innocent man in his own house and on his own bed. I'll make you pay for that. I'll wipe you from the face of the earth!
The Message	And now you show up--evil men who killed an innocent man in cold blood, a man asleep in his own house! Don't think I won't find you guilty of murder and rid the country of you!"
NLT	Now what reward should I give the wicked men who have killed an innocent man in his own house and on his own bed? Should I not also demand your very lives?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	How much more should I reward wicked men who kill an innocent man on his own bed in his home? The LORD has rescued me from every trouble. I solemnly swear, as the LORD lives, I'll now seek revenge for his murder and rid the land of you."
HCSB	How much more when wicked men kill a righteous man in his own house on his own bed! So now, should I not require his blood from your hands and wipe you off the earth?"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	How much more, when wicked men have slain a just man in his own house on his bed, shall I not now require his blood of your hand, and remove you from the earth?
ESV	How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and destroy you from the earth?"
LTHB	And when wicked men have slain a righteous man in his own house on his bed, should I not even now seek his blood from your hand, and glean you from the earth?.
MKJV	Indeed when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?
Young's Updated LT	Also—when wicked men have slain the righteous man in his own house, on his bed; and now, do not I require his blood of your hand, and have taken you away from the earth?"

The gist of this verse?	David asks these two men a rhetorical question: If he killed the Amalekite for killing Saul (at Saul's request), how much more will he punish these two men for killing Ishbosheth?

2Samuel 4:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾaph (אַף) [pronounced *ah*	*in fact, furthermore, also, yea, even, indeed*	conjunction	Strong's #637 BDB #64
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*]	*when, that, for, because*	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
Together, these two conjunctions mean *in fact, more than; but also; but even; much more; how much more* [when an affirmation precedes]; *how much less* [when a negation precedes].[41]			
ʾănâsîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced *uh-NAW-seem*]; also spelled ʾîyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced *ee-SHEEM*]	*men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers*	masculine plural noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
râshâʿ (רָשָע) [pronounced *raw-SHAWG*]	*malevolent, lawless, corrupt, criminal*	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7563 BDB #957

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[41] H.W.F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament;* ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 69.

2Samuel 4:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hârag (הָרַג) [pronounced *haw-RAHG*]	*to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin*	3ʳᵈ person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2026 BDB #246
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced *eesh*]	*a man; a husband; one of virile age; an inhabitant of, a citizen of* [when followed by a genitive of a place]; *companion of, solider of, follower of* [when followed by a genitive of king, leader, etc.]; *anyone, someone, a certain one, each, each one, everyone*	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
tsaddîyq (צַדִּיק) [pronounced *tsahd-DEEK*]	*just, righteous, justified; absolute or perfect righteousness* [if applied to God]	adjective, often used as a substantive	Strong's #6662 BDB #843
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity; with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*]	*house, household, habitation* as well as *inward*	masculine singular noun with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ģahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
mishkâb (מִשְׁכָּב) [pronounced *mish-AWᵝV*]	*bed, couch; bier; laying down, the act of lying down*	masculine singular noun with the 3ʳᵈ person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4904 (from #7901) BDB #1012

Translation: How much more when malevolent men kill an innocent [lit., *righteous*] man in his [own] house, on his [own] bed? A comparison has been set up. Saul had actually sought David's life; Saul on several occasions, tried to have David killed; he even tried to do it himself. However, David did not respond in kind, and when a man came to him claiming to have killed Saul, David had this man executed. Well, we have a similar situation, but these men are even more condemned than this Amalekite.

David brings up a parallel situation: not too long back, an Amalekite came to David, reporting that he had killed Saul; and this man expected a reward. David executed him. Now, these two Benjamites approach David, claiming that they killed Ishbosheth, and they are expecting to be rewarded for their deed.

Why the Execution of Ishbosheth is a Greater Crime than the Execution of Saul	
Saul	**Ishbosheth**
According to his testimony, Saul asked the Amalekite to kill him.	Ishbosheth did not request to be killed by anyone.
According to his testimony, the Amalekite killed Saul when Saul was about to die.	These men killed Ishbosheth as he was lying asleep on his bed in his own home.
Saul had personally tried to kill David.	Ishbosheth had never tried to kill David.
Saul sent men out to kill David.	Ishbosheth, insofar as we know, never sent anyone to David to kill him; in fact, as you will recall, he even restored Michal to David.
Saul pursued David again and again.	Although Ishbosheth was involved in a civil war against David, this seems to be as much Abner's doing as his own. It is possible that, when Abner went over to David's side, that could have ended the civil war right there.
If David still lived in Judah, then Saul would have continued to pursue him.	Ishbosheth and his civil war have seemed to come to a halt; and Ishbosheth even agrees to send Michal, David's wife, back to him.
If David held the Amalekite liable for the death of Saul; how much more would he hold Rechab and Baanah responsible for the death of Ishbosheth?	

Ishbosheth is called *righteous* in this portion of v. 11; the idea here is, not so much that he is righteous or good, but that he is an innocent man who was killed by these two rogue Benjamites. These men were not fighting some great wrong; they were not trying to end the civil war; they were not operating under orders from a superior; their purpose in killing Ishbosheth was for personal gain, and nothing else. They took advantage of the situation—that Ishbosheth was rapidly losing his power—and killed him.

> Gill: *[Ishbosheth is murdered] in cold blood, and not in the field of battle, not being engaged in war with him; in his own palace, where he might justly think himself in safety; on his bed asleep, and so at an unawares, when insensible of danger, and not in a posture of defence; and now David argues from the lesser to the greater, that if the man that brought him the tidings of Saul's death had no reward given him for bringing what he thought would be reckoned good tidings, then much less would any be given them who had actually slain their master, and that in such a base and barbarous way; and if the above person, who only was a bringer of tidings, was taken and slain, then how much more did they deserve to die, who had been guilty of such a cruel and barbarous murder?*[42]

This is the only time that we have any idea what David personally thinks of Ishbosheth. Since Ishbosheth is essentially involved in a civil war against David, David appears to be surprisingly charitable. Think about David's options: when Abner came to him, and when Abner was murdered, David could have approached this civil war in a number of ways. One approach would be to strike Ishbosheth suddenly and forcefully, now that his lead general is down and his support obviously waning. David, however, does not do that. When Abner came to him, the approach was, to let Abner drum up some popular support for David, which, apparently, he did prior to his death (we will see the results of this in 1Chron. 12:23–40). After Abner was murdered, David mourns his loss; but

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[42] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:11.

does not plan any attacks, insofar as we know, against Ishbosheth. There is no reason to think that David had any plans to suddenly escalate this war for a quick victory. In fact, his part in the war appears to primarily be defensive. That does not mean that fighting a defensive war should be the order of the day for all wars in all situations; but, in this particular situation, that seems to be the most prudent approach. The advantage, in this approach is, less bad blood between northern and southern Israel.

Because this civil war has seemed to have come to a halt; and because it is in the works for popular support to be garnered on David's behalf (even though Abner is dead, David no doubt knows what Abner has done already, and that his messengers have gone throughout northern Israel on David's behalf). Furthermore, since aggressive actions from Ishbosheth have stopped, David does not appear to hold out any animosity toward Ishbosheth. Some men would say, "Now is the time to squish this man like the bug that he is;" but not David. Despite what Saul did to him, Saul was a father figure to David; Ishbosheth had done even less against David; therefore, David would have even less against Ishbosheth. If anything, David possibly saw Ishbosheth as a nephew, albeit somewhat misguided.

> Matthew Henry: *Ish-bosheth was a righteous person, he had done them no wrong, nor designed them any. As to himself, David was satisfied that what opposition he gave him was not from malice, but mistake, from an idea he had of his own title to the crown, and the influence of others upon him, who urged him to put in for it. Note, Charity teaches us to make the best, not only of our friends, but of our enemies, and to think those may be righteous persons who yet, in some instances, do us wrong. I must not presently judge a man a bad man because I think him so to me. David owns Ish-bosheth an honest man, though he had created him a great deal of trouble unjustly. The manner of it much aggravated the crime. To slay him in his own house, which should have been his castle, and upon his bed, when he was in no capacity of making any opposition, this is treacherous and barbarous, and all that is base, and that which the heart of every man who is not perfectly lost to all honour and humanity will rise with indignation at the thought of.*[43]

2Samuel 4:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced *ǥaht-TAWH*]	*now, at this time, already*	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, wᵉ + the adverb ʿattâh mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore*. Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
hă (הֲ) [pronounced *heh*]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb *to be* may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
lôʾ (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced *low*]	*not, no*	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hă lôʾ together expect an affirmative answer.			

2Samuel 4:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced *baw-KAHSH*]	*to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask, to seek with desire and diligence*	1st person singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâm (דָּם) [pronounced *dawm*]	*blood, often visible blood; bloodshed, slaughter; bloodguilt; blood of the grape [wine]*	masculine singular noun with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1818 BDB #196
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced *yawd*]	generally translated *hand*	feminine plural noun with the 2nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Translation: Therefore, should I not seek [retribution for] his blood from your hand? The final suffix is a masculine plural suffix; David is asking, in such a way to demand an affirmative answer, if he should not demand retribution from their hands for the death of Ishbosheth. This is a rhetorical question; David is not really confused on this issue and asking their opinions; the way this is stated, the affirmative answer is expected, even though it is not asked for. We might add the phrase, "Hell, yes, I should!" or "You're damned right I should." David is not seeking an answer; he is not searching for more information upon which he can base a decision; he is not concerned with their thoughts at this point in time. Not all questions are designed to elicit an answer. The question, "You're a real moron, aren't you?" is an insult, not a question. David is saying, "Don't you think you deserve to be executed for what you did?" with the added implication, "You're damned right you ought to be executed.

2Samuel 4:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (ו) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâ´ar (בָּעַר) [pronounced *baw-ĢAHR*]	*to burn; to completely consume, to utterly remove, to devour, to devastate*	1st person singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1197 BDB #128
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally *to, toward*	affixed to a 2nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
min (מִן) [pronounced *min*]	*from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than*	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

2Samuel 4:11c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
ˈerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced *EH-rets*]	*earth (all or a portion thereof), land, ground, soil*	feminine singular noun; with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: Therefore, I will remove you from [this] earth." When divine institution #3, the nation, is a nation of laws, then that which is required of this nation is to have justice. David will gain this justice by removing these men from this earth, as they have forfeited their rights as citizens, having taken an innocent life.

Now, you may ask, *where is David's charity now? Where is his forgiving attitude?* David is the sovereign leader of this land. Two men who perpetrated a crime against an innocent man stand before David, confessing to their wrongdoing. It is David's responsibility to have these men executed. If he did not, he would be shirking his own duty.

Application: I was raised in an odd era, which sometimes causes me to overcompensate. I was brought up during a time when revolution was seen generally as a good thing, which cured a multitude of injustices, and threw out the evil which was in place. On the other hand, this same set of values made it clear that war was almost always wrong. The Bible never takes the stand that revolution is a good thing. Even though Jesus is portrayed as a revolutionary, He was not. At no time did Jesus do anything to encourage the Jews to revolt against their Roman leaders. We do see Him standing up in opposition to the scribes and the pharisees, but there were specific spiritual issues involved there. And, at no time did Jesus call for the people to go into the Temple and lynch the religious leaders. What we do find in Scripture is general support for the status quo, the present government. The explanation is simple: there are no political solutions. Trading one leader for another leader, particularly in a revolution, is not going to change things for the better. The Communist revolutions resulted in millions of deaths. In fact, I would imagine that the deaths resulting from Communist revolutions outnumber deaths for all other revolutions combined.[44] Nothing was solved in those questions; one corrupt government replaced another corrupt government; and all of those who were opposed were executed.

Note our own situation: we know that David is the better leader; we know that God has chosen David to rule over Israel. And we are in David's camp, looking at it from David's perspective. Any other leader, other than David, would be willing to let this go; to even say, *apparently, this confirms that my rulership over all Israel is God's will*. But David is objective about the situation. He does not interpret their actions in the same way that he interprets the actions of Abner (who had killed no one to gain David's favor). They are acting as revolutionaries and opportunists; Abner acted more like someone who had belatedly come to his senses.

And so commands David the young men and so they kill them and so they cut off their hands and their feet and so they hang [them] upon the pool in Hebron. And a head of Ishbosheth they took and so they buries [it] in a tomb of Abner in Hebron.	2Samuel 4:12	**David then commanded [his] young men [or, *servants*] and they executed them. They also cut off their hands and feet and hung [them] beside the pond in Hebron. Also, they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried [it] in Abner's tomb at Hebron.**

David then commanded his young men to execute Rechab and Baanah. They also cut off their hands and feet and hung them beside the pond in Hebron. Finally, they took Ishbosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb at Hebron.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

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[44] See **http://www.scaruffi.com/politics/massacre.html**

Dead Sea Scrolls	David gave orders to the you]ng men, [and they killed them, cut] off their hands and [feet, and hung them up beside the p]ool in Hebr[on. Then] he took [the hea]d of Mephibosheth and [buried it in the grave of Abn]ner at He[bron].
Masoretic Text	And so commands David the young men and so they kill them and so they cut off their hands and their feet and so they hang [them] upon the pool in Hebron. And a head of Ishbosheth they took and so they buries [it] in a tomb of Abner in Hebron.
Septuagint	And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.
Significant differences:	Although the MT and the LXX have no significant differences, you will notice that there are several problems with the Dead Sea Scrolls' text. Clearly, the name here should be *Ishbosheth* and not *Mephibosheth* (which is a problem with the text of the Dead Sea Scrolls in this chapter). I include this mistake so that you do not assume that the Dead Sea Scrolls have the final say on all textual matters.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Then David said to his troops, "Kill these two brothers! Cut off their hands and feet and hang their bodies by the pool in Hebron. But bury Ishbosheth's head in Abner's tomb near Hebron." And they did.
The Message	David then issued orders to his soldiers. They killed the two--chopped off their hands and feet, and hung the corpses at the pool in Hebron. But Ish-Bosheth's head they took and buried in Abner's tomb in Hebron.
TEV	David gave the order, and his soldiers killed Rechab and Baanah and cut off their hands and feet, which they hung up near the pool in Hebron. They took Ishbosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb there at Hebron.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| *God's Word*™ | So David gave an order to his young men, who executed Rechab and Baanah, cut off their hands and feet, and hung their dead bodies by the pond in Hebron. Then they took Ishbosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb in Hebron. |
| HCSB | So David gave orders to the young men, and they killed Rechab and Baanah. They cut off their hands and feet and hung their bodies by the pool in Hebron, but they took Ish-bosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb in Hebron. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| WEB | David commanded his young men, and they killed them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up beside the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron. |
| Young's Updated LT | And David commanded the young men, and they slay them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hang them over the pool in Hebron, and the head of Ish-Bosheth they have taken, and bury it in the burying-place of Abner in Hebron. |

| **The gist of this verse?** | David has Rechab and Baanah executed, and their hands and feet are hung near the pool in Hebron. Ishbosheth's head is given a proper burial in Abner's tomb. |

2Samuel 4:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced *tsaw-VAW*]	*to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order*	3rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
naʿar (נַעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ģahr*]	*boy, youth, young man, personal attendant*	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654

Translation: David then commanded [his] young men [or, *servants*]... David is the one in authority. He had young men as servants, and he gave them some commands concerning the disposition of Rechab and Baanah.

2Samuel 4:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hârag (הָרַג) [pronounced *haw-RAHG*]	*to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin*	3rd person plural, Qal imperfect; with the 3rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2026 BDB #246

Translation: ...and they executed them. David was able to command obedience of his men. He had young male servants (which seems to be indicated with the word used here); and he commanded that they execute Rechab and Baanah. No doubt, these men have heard the exchanges between David and these two men.

2Samuel 4:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâtsats (קָצַץ) [pronounced *kaw-TSAHTS*]	*to cut off, to amputate; to divide; to cut away, to cut loose*	3rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7112 (& #7113) BDB #893
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

2Samuel 4:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâd (יד) [pronounced *yawd*]	generally translated *hand*	feminine plural noun with the 2nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (ו) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
`êth (את) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced *REH-gel*]	*foot, feet*	feminine plural noun; with the 3rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

Translation: They also cut off their hands and feet... It is the hands and feet which enable someone to do evil; however, the evil, is, of course, first conceived in the mind. I think that this is symbolic, more than anything else. The feet and hands were literally cut off, but the symbolism is, these represented feet that went to do evil and hands which carried out said evil.

Gill comments: *their hands, which had smote Ishbosheth, and cut off his head; and their feet, which had been swift to shed his blood, and made haste to bring his head so many miles to David; this was what the Jews call measure for measure.*[45]

2Samuel 4:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tâlâh (תָּלָה) [pronounced *taw-LAWH*]	*to hang [up], to suspend; to put to death by hanging; to hang on a stake, to crucify*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8518 BDB #1067
´al (על) [pronounced *ģahl*]	*upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
bᵉrêkâh (בְּרֵכָה) [pronounced *bᵉ-ray-KAW*]	*pool, pond*	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1295 BDB #140
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉʰ*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

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[45] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:12.

2Samuel 4:12d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
Chebᵉrôwn (חֶבְרוֹן) [pronounced kheᵇv̆-ROHN]	*association, league, joined; transliterated Hebron*	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: ...and hung [them] beside the pond in Hebron. It appears as though it is the feet of Rechab and Baanah which are hung beside the pond or pool in Hebron; and possibly they are done so to indicate that there is law in Hebron and throughout Judah. People would come to the pool, and conversations about these hands and feet would of course occur; people would be very aware of what happened and what David chose to do.

However, it is more likely that the bodies of these two men were hung up themselves, their hands and feet missing. In either case, the idea is twofold: (1) David punishes those guilty of murder; (2) David had nothing to do with the murder of Ishbosheth. This would be in keeping with the Mosaic Law, which proscribes: If anyone is found guilty of an offense deserving the death penalty and is executed, and you hang his body on a tree, you are not to leave his corpse on the tree overnight but are to bury him that day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not defile the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance (Deut. 21:22–23).

> Gill comments: *and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron; not their hands and their feet, but the trunks of their bodies, thus mutilated; so Theodoret; though others think their hands and their feet were hung up, and not their bodies, because dead bodies were not to hang upon the tree more than a day; they were hung up over the fish pool in Hebron, because a public place, and where they were the more exposed to their shame, and the terror of others.*[46] Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet—as the instruments in perpetrating their crime. The exposure of the mutilated remains was intended as not only a punishment of their crime, but also the attestation of David's abhorrence.*[47]

Most of us are familiar with Psalm 55:22, which reads: Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will support you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken; but do you know the next verse? You, God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; men of bloodshed and treachery will not live out half their days. But I will trust in You. Very applicable here.

2Samuel 4:12e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	**Common English Meanings**	**Notes/Morphology**	**BDB and Strong's Numbers**
wᵉ (or vᵉ) (וְ) [pronounced *weh*]	*and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though*	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (את) [pronounced *ayth*]	generally untranslated; occasionally *to, toward*	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rôʾsh (ראש) [pronounced *rohsh*]	*head, top, chief, front, choicest*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

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[46] Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible;* from e-Sword, 2Sam. 4:12.

[47] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible;* from e-sword, 2Sam. 4:12.

2Samuel 4:12e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾÎysh-Bôsheth (אִישׁ־בֹּשֶׁת) [pronounced *eesh-BOH-sheath*]	*man of Baal;* transliterated *Ishbosheth*	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #378 BDB #36
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*]	*to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: Also, they took the head of Ishbosheth...   Rechab and Baanah haul in the head of Ishbosheth to show to David. Once these two have been executed, something must be done with his head. David's servants took the head and buried it.

2Samuel 4:12f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) () [pronounced *wah*]	*and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore*	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced *kaw-BAHR*]	*to bury, to heap up a mound*	3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qeber (קֶבֶר) [pronounced *KEHᵇ-VEHR*]	*grave, sepulcher, tomb; burial place*	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6913 BDB #868
ʾĂbᵉnêr (אֲבְנֵר) [pronounced *uᵇvᵉ-NAYR*]	*my father is Ner* or *my father is a lamp,* and is transliterated *Abner*	masculine proper noun	Strong's #74 BDB #4
bᵉ (בְּ) [pronounced *bᵉh*]	*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within*	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Chebᵉrôwn (חֶבְרוֹן) [pronounced *kheᵇv-ROHN*]	*association, league, joined;* transliterated *Hebron*	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: ...and buried [it] in Abner's tomb at Hebron. Both Ishbosheth and Abner were afforded some respect; they were, for awhile, and probably due to Saul's final wish, in league with one another; so that it was fitting for them to be buried together.

So, who are you going to be like? Abner, who gets with the plan of God too late in life? Or will you be like Ishbosheth, who never got with God's plan? Their untimely deaths should serve as a warning.

I want you to notice something else now—maybe you thought that Mephibosheth was thrown into this chapter for no reason; well, you would be wrong. We might originally feel some pity for Mephibosheth, because he is lame, because he has no hope of following Saul as king or as a military hero. But, Mephibosheth, because he is helpless, because he is willing to be on the right side of history, will find himself showered with God's grace throughout most of his life.

Prior to David ruling over all Israel, there were several instances of political intrigue:

Behind the Scenes Political Intrigue under David		
Scripture	**Incident**	**Result**
2Sam. 1:2–16	A young Amalekite comes to David, claiming that he helped Saul die in battle, as per Saul's personal request.	David found this man guilty of murder, by his own testimony, and had him executed.
2Sam. 2:17–23	Asahel is killed by Abner.	David never, insofar as we know, brought this incident up with Abner, as Abner was forced to kill Asahel in battle. Abner is accepted by David as an ally in 2Sam. 3.
2Sam. 3:22–39	Joab and Abishai successfully plot to avenge their brother by murdering Abner.	David takes no action, although he appears to have personal misgivings over his own inaction (2Sam. 3:38–39).
2Sam. 4:1–12	Two captains under Ishbosheth, Rechab and Baanah, assassinate Ishbosheth on spec.	David has these two evil men executed.

We must view David in a realistic light. He was sometimes able to act with great intelligence and foresight; and, on at least one occasion, he was unable to do what should have been done. Because of his inaction, Joab and Abishai will kill again.

Addendum

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 4	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	**A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase**
The Characters	
When [Ishbosheth], the son of Saul, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, his courage failed [him] [lit., *his hands dropped*] and all [the rest] of Israel was confused [and terrified].	When Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, heard that Abner had been murdered in Hebron, his courage failed him and all the rest of northern Israel was likewise confused and terrified.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 4

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
[There] were two men—raiding party leaders—[who] were [under the command of] Saul's son [Ishbosheth]. One's name [was] Baanah and the other's name [was] Rechab. [They were] sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from the tribe [lit., *sons*] of Benjamin (for Beeroth [is] also considered an addition to Benjamin; because the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and they have been there until this day).	Now there were two men who were troop leaders for Saul's son, Ishbosheth: Baanah and Rechab. These men were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from the tribe of Benjamin (for Beeroth was taken in as a part of Benjamite territory; since the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and they have been living there until this day).
And Jonathan, Saul's son, [had] a son crippled in [his] feet. He was 5 years old, when a report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nanny lifted him up and she fled, but it came about in her haste to flee, he fell and became lame. His name [is] Mephibosheth [also known as Merib-baal].	And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was crippled. The son was 5 years old when the report about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nanny lifted him up and she fled, but in her haste to flee, the child fell and became lame. His name is Mephibosheth (he is also known as Merib-baal).

The Crime

Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon, go and they come to the house of Ishbosheth about the heat of the day; and Ishbosheth [lit., *he*] is lying down in bed in the afternoon. They came here as far as the middle of the house carrying wheat stalks. Then they struck him in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah, his brother, slipped out. When they came [into] the house, he is laying on the bed in his bedroom. They struck him and killed him, then beheaded him and took his head and departed, [taking] the road to Arabah all the night.	Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon, went to the house of Ishbosheth in the middle of the day, and Ishbosheth was lying in his bed in the afternoon. They came in as far as the middle of the house carrying wheat stalks. When they came to Ishbosheth sleeping, they struck him dead, sticking him in the stomach. Then the brothers Rechab and Baanah escaped. When they entered into the house, they found Ishbosheth laying on his bed in his bedroom. They struck him and killed him, then beheaded him, taking his head as they made their escape along the road to Arabah (along which they traveled the entire night).

Kissing up to David

So they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David [at] Hebron and they said to the king, "Look, [we present to you] the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your enemy who sought your life. Therefore, Yᵉhowah has given vengeance to my adonai the king this day on [lit., *from*] Saul and on [lit., *on*] his offspring."	So they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Look, here is the head of Ishbosheth, son of Saul, your enemy who sought your life. Therefore, Jehovah has given vengeance to my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring."

David Sentences the Men to Death

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 4	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	**A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase**
David then answered the brothers Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, saying, "[By] the Living Yᵉhowah, Who has purchased my life from every adversity: When one made known to me, saying, 'Look, Saul has died' (and, in his eyes, he was as one bringing good news); I then seized him and executed him in Ziklag, which [was] my [way of] giving tidings [or, *good news*] to him. How much more when malevolent men kill an innocent [lit., *righteous*] man in his [own] house, on his [own] bed? Therefore, should I not seek [retribution for] his blood from your hand? Therefore, I will remove you from [this] earth."	David then answered the brothers Rechab and Baanah, the sons of the Beerothite Rimmon, saying, "By the Living Jehovah Who has purchased my life from every adversity which I have faced: When the one who told me, 'Listen, Saul has died' thought that he was bringing me good news; I seized this man and executed him in Ziklag, which was my good news to him. How much more [is justice required, in comparison to the example given] when malevolent men kill an innocent man in his own bed in his own house? Therefore, should I not seek justice from you for his unjust death? Therefore, I will take you out of this life."
David then commanded [his] young men [or, *servants*] and they executed them. They also cut off their hands and feet and hung [them] beside the pond in Hebron. Also, they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried [it] in Abner's tomb at Hebron.	David then commanded his young men to execute Rechab and Baanah. They also cut off their hands and feet and hung them beside the pond in Hebron. Finally, they took Ishbosheth's head and buried it in Abner's tomb at Hebron.

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