

2SAMUEL 18

2Samuel 18:1–33

Absalom is Killed in the War

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

These exegetical studies are *not* designed for you to read each and every word. For instance, the Hebrew exegesis is put into greyish tables, so that if you want to skip over them, that is fine. If you question a translation, you can always refer back to the appropriate Hebrew tables to sort it all out.

The intent is to make this particular study the most complete and most accurate examination of 2Samuel 18 which is available in writing. The idea is to make every phrase, verse and passage understandable; and to make application of all that is studied.

Besides teaching you the doctrinal principles related to this chapter, this commentary is also to help bring this narrative to life, so that you can understand the various characters, their motivations, and the choices that they make. Ideally, you will be able to visualize the peoples and armies as they move across the landscape of the Land of Promise.

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Doctrines Covered	Doctrines Alluded To		
		Revolution	

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To			
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Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. In addition to this, I will use a number of other more traditional technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Definition of Terms	
Client Nation	Client-Nation, is a national entity in which a certain number of spiritually mature Christians (the salt of the earth) have formed a pivot sufficient to sustain the nation and through which God specifically protects this nation so that believers can fulfill the divine mandates of evangelism, communication and custodianship of Bible doctrine, providing a haven for Jews, and sending missionaries abroad. The United States is a client-nation to God. A client nation must have freedom: Freedom to seek God, freedom to use one's own volition and self-determination to succeed or fail, freedom from anarchy and tyranny, freedom for evangelism, freedom for believers to hear Bible teaching without government interference and, therefore, to grow spiritually, and freedom to send missionaries to other nations.
Emotional Arrogance	Emotional arrogance is where you allow your emotions to dominate your life, and you will set aside truth (in any of the 3 categories) in order to satiate your own emotions.
Enforced Humility	Enforced humility emphasizes the function of the particular authority within the societal organization. This one causes people some problems because here is where the teeth of authority begin to be felt. Because mankind is inherently sinful, when God delegated responsibility and authority in the realm of Divine Establishment, he also had to include the means to compel obedience.
Genuine Humility	Genuine humility denotes the positive response to authority by the one under authority. Whereas in Enforced Humility we looked at humility from the standpoint of the one in authority, we now look at humility from the standpoint of the one under authority. If a person is properly oriented to authority, and has cultivated the habit of humility, his expression of humility will be genuine-not forced.
Interlocking Systems of Arrogance	The interlocking systems of arrogance refers to many clusters of sins which have a tendency to interlock with one another. That is, a believer who goes into interlocking systems of arrogance through one gate (or entrance), is likely to interlock with another cluster of sins if he remains out of fellowship. We have simple examples of this in life. A person might begin to smoke marijuana, which is illegal. Some time later, he may take other drugs (this is why marijuana is often called a gateway drug). He may also become involved in anti-authority actions, extreme liberal philosophy and politics, and break more and greater laws. He may involve himself with a woman with the same weaknesses, and they become involved in sexual arrogance together (his norms and standards being wiped out by his changing mores). He enters in the gate of smoking marijuana which makes him vulnerable to a number of other clusters of sins.
Laws of Divine Establishment	These are natural laws which apply to people and nations, which cause a nation to be preserved and a people to be perpetuated. These laws are designed for believers and unbelievers alike.
Organizational Humility	Organizational humility focuses on the social structure inside which humility is fostered and developed. All human societies have social structures. No matter how different the cultures are, they are all divided into social structures that exist on different levels.
Phase II	Phase I is salvation; phase II is the believer's life in time, and phase III is eternity (all believers spend eternity with God).

Definition of Terms	
Rationale The plan of God rationale, the rebound rationale	<p>This is where you gather a few doctrines which give you confidence in God, God's plan, and what is going on around you. Because these rationales are in your soul, you are able to withstand certain pressures. For instance, the plan of God rationale means, all that is in your life is a part of the plan of God. Now, obviously, when you sin, you take yourself out of God's will, and that is a separate consideration; but when you are filled with the Spirit and advancing spiritually each day through the intake of Bible doctrine, then you are able to evaluate difficulties in your life as being a part of the plan of God. Since these things are a part of the plan of God, then God has given you the wherewithal to endure these difficulties.</p> <p>The rebound rationale means that, no matter what sin you have committed, you name that sin to God, and you are completely and totally forgiven in time for committing that sin. Therefore, you re-enter the plan of God. Because of the rebound rationale, you do not go back to past sins from 5 or 10 years ago and lament these great sins.</p>
Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers).
Shock troops	Shock troops are a group of soldiers trained specially for carrying out a sudden assault.
Type	A type is a person, a thing or an act which looks forward to Jesus or to Jesus on the cross. For instance, Isaac's birth was the <i>type</i> ; our Lord's birth was the <i>antitype</i> , which was the fulfillment of the type.
<p>Some of these definitions are taken from</p> <p>http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556</p> <p>http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml</p> <p>http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf</p> <p>http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d</p> <p>http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm</p> <p>http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html</p> <p>http://www.theopedia.com/</p>	

An Introduction to 2Samuel 18

Introduction: 2Sam. 18 is a necessary chapter, in order to reveal what happens to the rebellion of Absalom, but it is also an odd chapter insofar as what is found in this chapter. 3 verses only are dedicated to the actual battle. Much more time is given to Absalom's predicament of being hung in a tree, along with the predicament of the soldier who finds him, but refuses to kill Absalom, because of the order of the king. Another oddity in this chapter is, there is a great deal of time given to a narrative about the person who would deliver a message to the king about the victory and about Absalom. So, this chapter is quite necessary in order to tie together some loose ends; but it is odd in terms of what seems to be emphasized and remembered.

As you may recall, Absalom has rebelled against his father David, and has forced David out of Jerusalem. David did set up a spy network, so that he was able to keep track of what was occurring in Jerusalem. He also had a mole at the highest level in Absalom's cabinet, so David was lightyear's head of Absalom when it came to intelligence gathering.

Because of gathering this intelligence, David knew to take his troops across the River Jordan and it appears that he set up headquarters in Mahanaim, but that would not be the place from where he would lead his troops into battle against Absalom.

Hushai, David's man on the inside, convinced Absalom to gather troops from all over Israel and to personally lead these men into battle against David. This seemed like an excellent idea to a non-military man like Absalom, not realizing that (1) this gave David more time to regroup, prepare, and develop a strategy; and (2) a larger army is not always a better army. Ahithophel suggested that Absalom allow him to take **shock troops** and to quickly go on the offensive against David (Ahithophel was going to take a substantial army into battle, which might not quite fit the definition of *shock troops*). In any case, it is very likely that this approach would have worked. However, this approach would not have glorified Absalom, which was the plan's fault, insofar as Absalom was concerned.

In the chapter before us, David reviews and organizes his troops, and is about to go out to war with them, when he is encouraged to remain behind at Mahanaim. His 3 generals would be able to defeat Absalom's army. So David remained behind, the people who supported him went to war against Absalom's army, and David's army prevailed, in part, because of the terrain which David's army chose to fight in.

Absalom, who is really unfamiliar with war, insofar as we know, gets his head caught up in the branches of a tree, because of all his hair, and he cannot free himself—while his mule trots off leaving him there hanging. He is discovered by members of Joab's brigade. Although the man who discovers him refuses to kill Absalom (because of David's explicit orders), Joab tries to kill Absalom, and then puts ten of his armor bearers on that job.

After Absalom is killed, Joab allows his army to retreat without taking retribution against them.

What follows is an odd portion of the narrative where Ahimaaz, one of David's couriers, wants to tell David of their victory. Joab chooses another man to do this, but Ahimaaz is so insistent that Joab allows him to go to deliver the news as well. Interestingly enough, Ahimaaz does not tell David all that happened; but the other runner does.

In the end, David grieves greatly over the loss of his son Absalom.

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of 2Samuel 18

Characters	Biographical Material
David	King David of Israel has been temporarily pushed out of power by his son Absalom. He has led his military supporters across the River Jordan into eastern Israel. David will not go with his soldiers to war, but he will wait in the city of Mahanaim for word about the war. When he finds out that his son has been killed, he will grieve dramatically.
Absalom	Absalom is David's wayward son who had revolted against David and forced him out of Jerusalem. Absalom is leading a very large army out of Israel to pursue David and his smaller army, as per the advice of Hushai in the previous chapter.
Joab	Joab is David's primary general, and he will see to it that Absalom is killed in battle. Instead of pursuing Absalom's followers, he will allow them to return to their own homes.
Abishai and Ittai the Gittite	These are David's other two generals, both of whom play an important part in the battle, but they are only mentioned in the narrative.
Ahimaaz	After David's army defeats Absalom's army (and kills Absalom), Ahimaaz ben Zadok wants to deliver this message of victory to David. Although Joab decides to send someone else, he allow Ahimaaz to deliver the message as well.

The Principals of 2Samuel 18

Characters

Biographical Material

The Cushite runner

Joab chooses a Cushite runner to deliver the message that Absalom's army has been defeated. He is also willing to tell David that Absalom is dead, something which Ahimaaz is unable to do.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of 2Samuel 18

All of this started with David chasing skirt perhaps a decade ago in Jerusalem when his soldiers were in the field at war. He had gone way to far by committing adultery with a married woman, and then he had her husband killed.

The prophet Nathan came to David, and got David to come to the point of realizing that what he did was so very wrong. Once David recognized his own sin, then God put David under a great deal of discipline and pressure, designed to bring him out of this state of sexual arrogance (which had interlocked with criminal arrogance).

The child that came out of that illicit union died. The great pressure that David found himself under were the natural results of his failure as a parent, and his sexual arrogance in collecting wives and mistresses. His sons, which were, for all intents and purposes, wards of the state, grew up without a father to guide them, as a true father would have done. David could not give them all his time, so they grew up the best they could, being raised by their mothers.

His son Absalom eventually rebelled against him, setting into motion a play to take David's power from him. He drove David out of Jerusalem. David left quickly with a scratch army and, before he had crossed over the River Jordan, David had set up a system of spies and an intelligence network, so that he could determine which military moves to make.

Absalom associated himself with Ahithophel, who was a brilliant tactician, and Ahithophel gave Absalom a plan which would have probably succeeded. However, this plan did not appeal to Absalom's arrogance. Ahithophel was going to gather up some shock troops and go right after David, right then and there. He would return to Jerusalem after defeating David in battle. Ahithophel would have been the star of this plan and not Absalom. So when Hushai, David's mole, presented a plan to Absalom, Absalom liked that plan because Absalom was the star of that plan. Absalom had more hands on in Hushai's plan than in Ahithophel's plan, which was another reason why Absalom liked it. Some people like to manage everything, which pretty much describes Absalom. Absalom, pretty much on his own, set himself up as the new king of Israel—he did this by himself, never having done it before, and right under the nose of his overindulgent father. Therefore, Absalom believed that he had things worked out, as long as he was in charge. When Hushai said, "You need to gather all the people of Israel and lead them into battle yourself;" Absalom thought that was a good idea. He had never done this before, but that's okay, because he had never decided to become king before, and he did pretty well with that. So Absalom is blindly arrogant. He doesn't know what he doesn't know; he does not recognize an upper limit to his abilities.

When it came to the difference between himself and his son Absalom, his son was the newest model. He was younger and better looking, more progressive and more relatable. Although there was no indication whatsoever that Absalom had the ability to actually lead his country Israel, apart from being David's son, he received a fairly significant backing from the people, many of whom were unhappy with David's skirt chasing and killing

The Prequel of 2Samuel 18

(information which sure got out into the public by this time).

So, this brings us to this chapter, where David is east of the River Jordan, and Absalom has gathered an opposition army from all over Israel. Absalom knows that he must defeat David's army and kill David. David, apparently, cannot take himself to the point where he recognizes this himself. David apparently believes that he can defeat Absalom's army and somehow coexist with his son, as will become clear at the end of this chapter.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This timeline is simply a shortened version of the **David Timeline (HTML)** ([PDF](#)), with a few principle events of David's life recorded, along with the events of this chapter. Bracketed dates are derived from the Scripture, based upon author's original premises.

The Abbreviated David Timeline

Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
[1085 B.C.]	1040 B.C.	[1055 B.C.]	Ruth 4:22	David is born.
1062 B.C.		1029 B.C.	1Sam. 17	David defeats Goliath.
1055 B.C. (c. 1010 B.C.)	1010 B.C.	1025 B.C.	2Sam. 2:1-4	David becomes king over Judah (the southern kingdom). David is 30. 2Sam. 5:4 David was 30 years old when he began to reign. He reigned 40 years.
1048 B.C. (c. 1004 B.C.)	1003 B.C.	1018 B.C.	2Sam. 5:1-3 1Chron. 11:1-3	David becomes king over all Israel. He is still ruling from Hebron. David is approximately 37 years old, according to Bible Truth 4U.
1035 B.C.		1005 B.C. c. 1016 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 11:2-25	David's sin with Bathsheba. He has her husband, Uriah the Hittite, killed in battle.
1034 B.C.		1004 B.C. c. 1016 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 11:26-12:23 Psalm 32 51	David marries Bathsheba. David is rebuked by Nathan. David calls for God's forgiveness and cleansing.
	1000 B.C.	1003 B.C. c. 1015 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 12:24-25	Birth of Solomon. David is approximately 40 years old (BT4U).
1032 B.C.	990 B.C.	1002 B.C.	2Sam. 13:1-22	David's son, Amnon, rapes David's daughter, Tamar.

The Abbreviated David Timeline

Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
1030 B.C.	[990–985 B.C.]	1001–999 B.C. 998 B.C. (Klassen – date was changed; typo in Reese)	2Sam. 13:23–39	David's son Absalom kills Amnon and flees.
1025 B.C.	[985–983 B.C.]	996 B.C. 995 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 14	Joab tries to reunite David and Absalom.
1024 B.C.	979–961 B.C. (?)	994–993 B.C.	2Sam. 15	Absalom rebels against David and David goes into exile.
			2Sam. 16:1–14	David's relationship with the two factions of Israel.
1023 B.C.			2Sam. 16:15–17:23	David gains the upper hand over Absalom by means of intrigue and deception.
1023 B.C.		992 B.C.	2Sam. 17:24–18:18	David's army defeats Absalom's army in battle and Absalom is subsequently killed. Absalom is approximately 30 years old (Reese). According to Reese, David would be 63 years old and according to Fenton-Farrar, he would be 62 years old.
1023 B.C.			2Sam. 18:19–19:8	David reacts to Absalom's death.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The outlines for this chapter are not too different from one another.

Matthew Henry Outlines 2Samuel 18

This chapter puts a period to Absalom's rebellion and life, and so makes way for David to his throne again, whither the next chapter brings him back in peace and triumph. We have here,

1. David's preparations to engage the rebels (2Sam. 18:1–5).
2. The total defeat of Absalom's party and their dispersion (2Sam. 18:6–8).
3. The death of Absalom, and his burial (2Sam. 18:9–18).
4. The bringing of the tidings to David, who tarried at Mahanaim (2Sam. 18:19–32).
5. His bitter lamentation for Absalom (2Sam. 18:33).

From Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18 chapter notes.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Clarke gives a good synopsis of this chapter.

A Synopsis of 2Samuel 18

David reviews and arranges the people, and gives the command to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, 2Sam. 18:1, 2Sam. 18:2.

On his expressing a desire to accompany them to the battle, they will not permit him, 2Sam. 18:3.

He reviews them as they go out of the city, and gives commandment to the captains to save Absalom, 2Sam. 18:4–5.

They join battle with Absalom and his army, who are discomfited with the loss of twenty thousand men, 2Sam. 18:6–8.

Absalom, fleeing away, is caught by his head in an oak; Joab finds him, and transfixes him with three darts, 2Sam. 18:9–15.

The servants of David are recalled, and Absalom buried, 2Sam. 18:16–18.

Ahimaaz and the Cushite bring the tidings to David, who is greatly distressed at hearing of the death of Absalom, and makes bitter lamentation for him, 2Sam. 18:19–33.

Taken from Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18 chapter comments.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom has challenged David's authority; in fact, in doing so, he has challenged God's authority with regards to Israel.

The Pulpit Commentary on David's actions to put down Absalom's rebellion: *Our entire life is a continuous duty. Obligations attend us every day. Right action means fulfilment of purposes, obeying laws, harmony with moral necessity. The pressure is incessant, and ordinarily is, for the Christian, a not unwelcome yoke. But now and then duty is in forms requiring all the resources of a strong will, and in a direction against some of the most cherished feelings of the heart. David was bound to care for the kingdom over which he had been appointed by God. The validity of his anointing was still unrevoked by him who ordained it. It was, therefore, due to himself, his kingdom, and his God that he should take means to put down the usurpation of his own son. Paternal feeling might be pained, but the obligation was imperative.*¹

Some of these points were taken from or inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0460.

An Adversity Scale of Values

1. David's son, Absalom, was an insurgent. He was the titular head of the revolutionary movement. He successfully removed his father David from power, albeit temporarily.
2. David is fighting a war of counterinsurgency. He is the establishment king with the right to the throne. Even when out of Jerusalem, David is called the king over and over again by God the Holy Spirit in previous chapters of 2Samuel.
3. David and the men who support him have to be focused on destroying the enemy's talent, intelligence, leadership, thinking and planning. Joab seems to understand that a fully successful counterinsurgency will involve the death of Absalom; David is unable to accept that.
4. David and Joab went from a position of power and prosperity, to great adversity; and therefore, they need to have a dual set of values for that adversity. David could value and enjoy his great DVD collection when

¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1–18.

An Adversity Scale of Values

- in prosperity; he had to leave it behind when under adversity. In prosperity, a believer may have a surfeit of material things which he enjoys; but these things must be forgotten, written off, abandoned or ignored under adversity (depending upon the level of adversity).
5. Under adversity; it is not what you have that counts but it is what you think that counts. You must lay aside all that you possess and set aside whatever rank or recognition that you have attained. These things are not important under adversity.
 6. Going from prosperity to adversity requires a believer to be flexible and objective. David was flexible (he left Jerusalem immediate); he was not objective. He could not deal with the idea of killing his own son.
 7. In this chapter, we are going to deal with some very complex issues: David will issue an order to all of those under him—an order to not harm Absalom. However, the only way that this revolution can end is for Absalom to die. A field soldier will refuse to disobey David; but Joab will disobey David and begin the killing of Absalom.
 8. The believer must be able to shift gears into an adversity scale of values when facing sudden adversity. In order for the believer to be able to shift gears and get into the adversity mode; he must have the plan of God **rationale**, **rebound** rationale, etc. in his soul, to draw upon quickly. Such a believer must be able to make instant application of the pertinent doctrines when under adversity.
 9. God's plan is not changed by disaster. Our plans and our values must change under great adversity, but all of this is according to God's plan.
 10. Changing circumstances do not change blessing from God. Philip. 4:11–13 **I'm not saying this because I'm in any need. I've learned to be content in whatever situation I'm in. I know how to live in poverty or prosperity. No matter what the situation, I've learned the secret of how to live when I'm full or when I'm hungry, when I have too much or when I have too little. I can do everything through Christ Who keeps on pouring the power into me.** (God's Word™, mostly) Your happiness does not depend upon material blessing, promotion, having success in life or finding your right woman. Happiness and contentment is a state of mind.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Some of these points were taken from or inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0460.

God and Counterinsurgency

1. God uses the weapons of revolution against revolutionaries: lying, deceit, counter-violence. David has drawn Absalom to the battlefield of his choice, a battlefield designed for a small army rather than for a large one; and David's men are better trained and have a better mental attitude with which to oppose Absalom and his army.
2. Revolution is filled with lies—you will recall how Absalom again and again has mislead the people. He traveled with an entourage to make himself look important. He sympathized with the litigants in court cases he could care less about. He lured some of David's supporters down to Hebron, to make it seem as if they were supporters of Absalom. So David employed Hushai the Archite as a mole in Absalom's organization; and because Absalom liked Hushai's advice, Absalom's army will be destroyed in battle against David's army. The revolutionary lies of Absalom are defeated by the counterrevolutionary lies of David's organization.
3. The revolution was initially successful because much of Israel rejected truth in all 3 categories: **divine establishment** truth; the gospel truth and the truth of Bible doctrine.
4. Absalom used violence against David and was willing to kill his own father; violence would be used against Absalom and he would be destroyed by it.
5. God allows and even condones counterinsurgency tactics in order to defeat a revolution against an established government. Therefore, God allowed and condoned the deception of Hushai the Archite.

God and Counterinsurgency

6. The goal of counterinsurgency is to penetrate the highest echelon of enemy command and to plant disinformation, by using blackmail, flattery, deception and violence.
7. Absalom was filled with arrogance when he opposed David. He was the natural heir to David's throne, and all he needed to do was bide his time. He was not willing to do that. He wanted David's power and he wanted it now.
8. However, Absalom's arrogance would not overcome David. Jesus Christ controls history, and [God uses man's wrath to praise Him](#) (Psalm 76:10). Even though David suffered from an arrogance hangover concerning his son, when he was told to stay behind while the rest of Israel fought, he was willing to do this.
9. James 4:6 [God makes war against the arrogant but he gives grace to the grace oriented.](#)

The [laws of divine establishment \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Some of these points were taken from or inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0460.

Arrogance and Revolution

1. People get the leader that they deserve. We recently had a spate of revolutions in the Middle East; however, the only change in government which was initially positive is that which was imposed by the United States, to some degree, from the outside, in both Iraq and Afghanistan. In the other countries, their revolutions are not resulting in a Jeffersonian democracy nor can they. They are the same people that they were before the revolution.
2. Because Jesus Christ controls history, God allowed David to be restored to power and for Absalom to be destroyed in battle. There were still enough people in Israel who were willing to embrace establishment leadership, regardless of the personal failings of King David.
3. In a revolution, the *people's choice* is not God's choice.
4. Absalom had potential as a leader, although his arrogance neutralized this leadership ability. He had one of the greatest military mind working for him in Ahithophel. However, Absalom's arrogance destroyed whatever ability and potential that he had.
5. Hushai infiltrated the highest echelon of the enemy forces through flattery. Absalom believed that Hushai would reject David and embrace him.
6. Good decisions result in increased options and greater freedom; bad decisions limit your options and they reduce your own freedom. Absalom through a series of bad and arrogant decisions will end up hanging by his hippy hair caught up in the branches of a tree.
7. The combination of crusader arrogance and criminal arrogance results in revolution. The crusaders set the stage for revolution and support the revolutionary leaders. The revolutionary leaders want power, so they will do whatever is necessary to take that power. Both groups might use the same tactics, but the crusaders believe that they are instituting a new and better way; and the criminals are simply seizing power, using whatever rhetoric and tactics get them that power. The [reign of terror](#) reveals the incompetency of the revolution to provide a decent environment in which to live.
8. Revolution allows a cover for those who want to take revenge on their enemies. They use the coup d'etat in order to get their revenge.
9. Those suffering from revolutionary arrogance rejected the greatest reign of Israel and revolted against David's reign.
10. Revolutionary arrogance rejects the laws of divine establishment. Arrogance is stronger than environment, as David's leadership provided a good environment. David himself had some soul kinks, but the nation of Israel was still great under him. Therefore, arrogance is stronger than great environment.

When it comes to this revolution, there are many moving parts. Absalom sinks deeper and deeper into arrogance while David begins to find his way out, although he does suffer a bit of an arrogance hangover at the end of this chapter and the beginning of the next.

There are also the people of Israel to consider. Some were carried away emotionally by Absalom, as the king who was new and shiny and cool and a man of the people. God had to allow for many of them to be killed off; and this occurs in a revolution.

As an aside, I am often amused by people who scoff at the Bible and denigrate God because He requires, from time to time, the destruction of a people. These same people would support a revolutionary movement; these same people who scoff at God would think nothing of innocent people being slaughtered in a revolution, as long as those people are conservatives. But they are somehow offended when God, Who is omniscient, Who has all of the facts, chooses for a population to be destroyed or decimated.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Application: The taking of power through violence and revolution testifies to man's inability to enjoy or appreciate divine establishment authority and good government. Believers who understand establishment principles appreciate the police officer, the fire department, etc. On the other hand, if you want to resent a mayor or a governor etc., that can be legitimate. David had personal failings; but his government was establishment oriented. Overthrowing David did not just remove David, but it removed all that he put into place. Do not throw out the baby with the bath water.

Application: We have establishment government in the United States, where we still settle things with debates and votes. Obviously there is a lot of misinformation, a lot of propaganda and a dishonest media (most media today are advocacy groups); but with doctrine in your soul and a modicum of information, you can make the right choices. For instance, the nuclear family is a principle of divine establishment. When one political party is in favor of everything but; and the other political party recognizes the importance of the family unit, it is easy to make a choice in the voting booth. However, when violence is used to accomplish this or that end, then we become involved in arrogance, as a country. God never condones a violent overthrow of the government; God never condones revolution; God never condones intimidation. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. pointed out, "We still have freedom to comment negatively about our government. Most of us make money. That is freedom; that is establishment. We can call 911 and get a police out to our homes. God gave us the laws of divine establishment to perpetuate man."²

Application: At present (I write this in 2013), we have the worst president in my lifetime with the worst vice president probably ever next in line for the presidency. He has increased his power and has ignored the laws that he does not want to enforce. This is the greatest arrogance that I have ever seen in a president in my lifetime. And yet, there should be no call of revolution among conservative Americans. We function in a democracy. Now, I fully understand that, there is probably some **election fraud** which has **gone on**. However, this is no reason to revolt; this is no reason to take up arms to "take back our nation." If 40–48% of our nation either supports or is fooled by liberalism, then that is problematic for the United States on many levels; but, it is not enough reason to start a revolution.

Application: During the time that I write this (2013), evangelism is taking place, Bible teaching is taking place; there are no laws against either. Our streets are, for the most part, safe (the exception is, of course, many large cities where liberals have had a foothold for a long period of time). Revolution means chaos and sometimes for an extended period of time. We are seeing this in Egypt and Libya, both countries which were ruled by despots previously; but are now are in national turmoil. Christians have fled many countries in the middle east during this *Arab Spring* because their lives were in danger. Satan used the chaos to attack Christians and their churches.

² From B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0460. Not an exact quote; taken from my notes.

Application: Look, I realize that the left turn which our country has taken is quite disconcerting. I recognize that there are so many serious problems throughout our nation, including the ever-increasing class of dependents (those who would rather collect payments from the government than work) and the politically adept homosexual movement, who have been successfully pushing their agenda for decades now. These things must come to pass; these things must occur. Our nation is under discipline. However, always keep in mind, *are you able to safely and easily attend Bible class?* (This question is poised to those who lived near a doctrinal church) If our churches are not being shut down, then we are fine. We are in the midst of a spiritual battle. There will always be the strong forces of Satan in a nation built upon the principles of God. There will always be the attacks of Satan in the nation where there is Bible teaching and evangelism taking place. Our solution is never political and our solution is *never* revolution.

According to Reese, David would be 63 years old and according to Fenton-Farrar, he would be 62 years old.

It appears that David and his men are stopped at Mahanaim, and that is where David will reorganize his troops and that is where David will remain when his army goes to war against Absalom. When David left Jerusalem, he first organized and reviewed his troops in 2Sam. 15:17–18, 23 (As the king and his troops were leaving the city on foot, they stopped at the last house. All his mercenaries passed by him; all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, Ittai, and all 600 men who had followed him from Gath were marching past the king. The whole country was crying loudly as all the troops were passing by. The king was crossing the Kidron Valley, and all the people were moving down the road toward the desert. God's Word™). Since then, David has moved northeast to Mahanaim, and it is likely that thousands of men have joined him to do battle against Absalom.

This is the city where David stopped with his army, and there were outpourings of logistical support from all over Israel. David had already come to Mahanaim by the time Absalom and all the men of Israel with him crossed the Jordan River. When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi, son of Nahash from Rabbah in Ammon, and Machir, son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai from Rogelim in Gilead brought supplies and food for David and his troops (2Sam. 17:24, 27–28a; God's Word™). See also 2Sam. 19:32. This location fits with the rest of the narrative.



This is a **map of Mahanaim**, taken from bible-history.com. The city is noted in **red** on the map, is on the correct side of the Jordan, and it is therefore assumed to be near the forests of Ephraim (2Sam. 18:6).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

David Mobilizes His Troops for War, but Remains Behind

Kukis slavishly literal:

Kukis moderately literal:

And so numbers David the people who [are] with him; and so he sets over them captains of thousands and captains of hundreds.

2Samuel
18:1

David numbered the soldiers who [were] with him, and he placed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

Kukis not so literal:

David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred.

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 translation³; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), 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). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

Ancient texts:

³ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

Latin Vulgate	And David, having reviewed his people, appointed over them captains of thousands and of hundreds.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so numbers David the people who [are] with him; and so he sets over them captains of thousands and captains of hundreds.
Peshitta (Syriac)	AND David numbered the people who were with him, and set over them commanders of thousands and captains of hundreds.
Septuagint (Greek)	And David numbered the people with him, and set over them captains of thousands and captains of hundreds.
Significant differences:	The Latin appears to be lacking the use of the word <i>captains</i> twice, and it is only found once in their English translation.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	David divided his soldiers into groups of a hundred and groups of a thousand. Then he chose officers to be in command of each group.
Easy English	David's men defeat and kill Absalom David counted the soldiers who were with him. He appointed men to command groups of 1000 soldiers. He also appointed other men to command groups of 100 soldiers.
Good News Bible (TEV)	King David brought all his men together, divided them into units of a thousand and of a hundred, and placed officers in command of them.
<i>The Message</i>	David organized his forces. He appointed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds.
New Berkeley Version	David proceeded to organize the forces that were with him and appointed over them commanders of units of a thousand and a hundred.
New Living Translation	Absalom's Defeat and Death David now mustered the men who were with him and appointed generals and captains [Hebrew appointed commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.] to lead them.
The Voice	Then David gathered the soldiers who were with them and divided them into units of a thousand and a hundred. He appointed leaders over each unit.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then David counted his men to see how many were with him, and he assigned generals and officers over them and sent them out [to battle].... A portion of v. 2 is included here for context.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	David called together the troops that were with him. He appointed commanders in charge of regiments and battalions.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Preparation for Battle.</i> After mustering the troops he had with him, David placed officers in command of units of a thousand and units of a hundred.
NIRV	Absalom Dies David brought together the men who were with him. He appointed commanders of thousands over some of them. He appointed commanders of hundreds over the others.
New Jerusalem Bible	David reviewed the troops who were with him and appointed commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds to lead them.
New Simplified Bible	David called the troops that were with him. He appointed commanders in charge of regiments and battalions.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David counted the people with him, and set leaders of thousands and leaders of hundreds over them.
The Expanded Bible	David counted [mustered; reviewed] his men and placed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So they met in the pastures, where David and the force with him had halted, and he appointed colonels of regiments and captains of companies over them. This appears to take a few phrases from 2Sam. 17.
HCSB	David reviewed his troops and appointed commanders of hundreds and of thousands over them.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And now David passed the men who were with him under review, appointing commanders and captains over them;...
NET Bible®	<i>The Death of Absalom</i> David assembled the army that was with him. He appointed leaders of thousands and leaders of hundreds. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.
NIV – UK	David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	David took a census of the people who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and of hundreds.
exeGesés companion Bible	<u>DAVID LINES UP FOR WAR</u> And David musters the people with him and sets governors of thousands and governors of hundreds over them:.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Dovid mustered HaAm that were with him, and set sarei alafim, and sarei me'ot over them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Darby Translation	And David marshalled the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.
English Standard Version	Then David mustered the men who were with him and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.
The Geneva Bible	And David numbered [For certain of the Reubenites, Gadites, and of the half tribe could not bear the insolence of the son against the father, and therefore joined with David] the people that [were] with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.
New King James Version	Absalom's Defeat and Death And David numbered the people who were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.
Syndein/Thieme	{David Organizes the Establishment Army} Then David mustered/mobilized {paqad} the army/people who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands {thousands would relate to general officers to command divisions or brigades} and commanders over hundreds {hundreds would relate to field grade officers to command battalions}. {Note: RBT says the book of 'Numbers' should be called 'Mobilization' or the book of 'universal military training. Paqad which is usually translated 'numbered' actually means to mobilize the army. David's pre-revolution army has been badly split up. He needs to reorganize it and appoint officers.}.

World English Bible

David numbered the people who were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

Young's Updated LT

And David inspects the people who are with him, and sets over them heads of thousands and heads of hundreds.

The gist of this verse:

David began to organize his troops into military units.

2Samuel 18:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced <i>paw-KAHD</i>]	<i>to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: David numbered the soldiers who [were] with him,... David knows that he is about to go to war with Absalom. He does not have all of the details, although he certainly has an efficiency and effective G2 squad watching Absalom's every move.

What a head commander must do is know his resources inside and out.

The Pulpit Commentary: *The verb "numbered" really means that he organized his army, and arranged it in companies and divisions. As Absalom gathered all Israel to him, there would be some delay; and David, like a wise general, made use of it for training the brave but undisciplined men who had joined*

him, chiefly from Gilead. Besides these, he had with him numerous veterans, whose skill and experience would be invaluable in such service. The result was that when the rebels came to close quarters, they had a vast body of men, but David a disciplined force, which, under skillful generalship, scattered Absalom's raw levies with ease.⁴

As you will recall, David has cross over the River Jordan with all of his troops, and Absalom was slowed down somewhat, as he was going to follow the plan of Hushai, which would take longer (he has to assemble more troops). There have been several groups of people who have located David and have provided food for him and for his troops. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that many men from that side of the Jordan have joined David's army; and some have also come over from the western side of the Jordan as well to support David. This is a logical deduction, but it is not directly found in the text. However, when David marched out of Jerusalem, you will recall that he reviewed his troops then before moving out. If he is reviewing his troops again, that suggests that he has had additions or reductions to his fighting force. The former makes the most sense. It would take time for the news to spread, and for people to realize where David can be found.

In the previous chapter, it was observed that David, as a type of Christ, can be found by those who support him; he is not so easily found by Absalom or his troops. In the same way, Jesus can be found by anyone who desires a relationship with God; however, those who have no interest in a relationship with God cannot expect for God to search them out and offer Himself to them as Jesus.

2Samuel 18:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
sîym (שׂים) [pronounced seem]; also spelled sūwm (שׂוּם) [pronounced soom]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah/]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
‘ălâpîhîym (אַלְפִיִּים) pronounced uh-law-FEEM]	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sar (סַר) [pronounced sar]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978

⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1 (slightly edited).

2Samuel 18:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mē'ôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced <i>may-OHTH</i>]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural noun; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547

Translation: ...and he placed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. We do not know exactly who came out with David. Some groups were named earlier; and, at this point, we know that he has a fairly large army, which includes people who have voluntarily joined him over the past week or so.

Since David places captains over groups of 1000, and that word is in the plural, that suggests that we have probably 3000–10,000 or more troops. R. B. Thieme, Jr. supposes that there are 30,000 in David's army.⁵ Elsewhere, Bob supposes that there might be 60,000, broken down into 3 corps.⁶ A grouping of 1000 is known as a *battalion*, usually headed by a lieutenant colonel.

These are broken down further into groups of 100, and that is often classified as a *company*, led by a captain or a major. Although armies can be broken down into smaller units, David is going to let Absalom come to him, and respond offensively with large groups of men. Smaller units would be used in amorphous warfare. David has intentionally moved his men away from Jerusalem in order to reduce civilian casualties, and to keep this as his army against Absalom's. Therefore, smaller units are not needed.

This is just so you can see how an army is broken down.

Modern Military Hierarchy		
Name	Strength	Commander/Leader
corps	40,000–80,000	lieutenant general, 3 star general
division	10,000-30,000	major general, divisional general or two-star general
brigade	3,000-5,000	brigadier general, brigade general, or one-star general (sometimes colonel)
regiment or group	1,500-3,000	colonel
infantry battalion , U.S. Cavalry squadron, Commonwealth armoured regiment or Argentine Army regiment/artillery group/battalion	300-1,300	lieutenant colonel
infantry company , artillery battery, U.S. Cavalry troop, or Commonwealth armour or combat engineering squadron	80-225	chief warrant officer, captain or major

⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series #631_0462.

⁶ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series #631_0463.

Modern Military Hierarchy		
platoon or Commonwealth troop	26-55	warrant officer, first or second lieutenant

From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_organization accessed July 13, 2013.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Josephus suggests⁷ that the total number in David's army is only 4000. If David here is said to be dividing his army into groups of 1000, and then later has Joab, Abishai and Ittai each in control of a third of his army, that suggests that (1) David has about 3000 men or (2) David has a large enough army so that a third of it consists of several brigades (a brigade is 3000–5000 men) and Joab is in charge of one of those brigades.

Later, one will say either that they have an army of 10,000 (which would make sense) or that David is worth 10,000 of his men. 10,000 is a nice round number to make a point like that, but it also suggests that David's army is 10,000 men or larger. Putting these two things together, and recognizing that Absalom has the larger army, David probably has a force of over 10,000 to 20,000 men. Absalom's army is probably 10x that amount.⁸ Although there are more military types in Israel, it is unlikely that they can be easily mustered for a civil war.

David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred. David is beginning to grow spiritually, and he trusts God. This does not mean that he finds a park bench somewhere and parks his butt and lets God destroy the enemy. There are times that will happen. However, unless God specifically gives David orders, then David is to evaluate the situation that he is in and to act appropriately. If he intends to be king again, then he will have to defeat Absalom in battle. If he intends to put down the Absalom rebellion for good, then he will have to put Absalom down. Joab, David's lead general, understands this; David does not.

Application: Contemporary Christians often do not have a clue as to what they ought to do with their lives. They are told to have faith in God in all things; but then, if they do anything, then are they expressing faithlessness? This may seem absurd to some, but for some believers, they really struggle with this concept. If you are an adult, then you ought to be working at a job. If you do not have a job, but you realize that you need one, you do not find the nearest park bench and sit down and wait for God to drop a job into your lap. You go out and apply at one place, then at another, and apply and interview, apply and interview until you have secured a job. If you apply at one place and you think you like that company, then you go back a week later (or a month later) and you inquire again. If they require specialized training, then you get that specialized training.

Application: In many ways, I adapted quite easily to being a teacher. I needed very little guidance from the teachers for whom I taught; nor did I need much from the instructor who oversaw my work. They had to work a great deal with the other two student teachers with whom I trained—one was too lax and the other was too stern. However, that did not mean that I did not need any guidance, any oversight, etc. All of that was necessary, and like all new teachers, I needed advice and guidance, despite adapting to it quite naturally. It would have been pure arrogance for me to think that, because I was a Christian, I could do not wrong and make no mistakes and that I would be hired right out of college (I was not). Eventually, in order to teach, I had to move to another state. All of this was in God's plan; and it involved doing a lot more than finding a park bench to sit on and using faith until a job was dropped into my lap. Getting off my duff and moving to Texas for a job was God's plan for my life.

Application: In case there is any confusion about this, man was designed to work (and women of course); and if you are not working, then you are likely outside of God's plan.

⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:1; Gill cites Josephus; Antiquities I. 7. c. 10. sect. 1.

⁸ R. B. Thieme, Jr. estimates maybe a quarter million. R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series #631_0463.

Back to David and what we get from this: faith in God does not mean inaction on your part. God designed us to function like rational beings, and to make rational decisions. **David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred.** David moved out of Jerusalem with some of his supporters, and now he begins to organize his troops. Even though he has faith in God and even though God is on his side and not on Absalom's, this does not preclude him from making normal, rational decisions.

The Pulpit Commentary on why David moving out of Jerusalem was a rational decision: *The hasty flight of David from Jerusalem was not the result of cowardice, but of prudence and of spiritual penetration. He thought it possible that a movement which had won over so able a man as Ahithophel, and which had developed so secretly, might issue in a sudden rising which would involve the city in bloodshed. Moreover, with the keen spiritual insight which ever characterized him, he could not but see in this rebellion the chastising hand before which it became him in his lifelong penitence, mingled with sincere trust, to bow.*⁹

Application: It is a rare situation where faith will cause you to act against normal, rational thought.¹⁰ In fact, it is often enthusiastic but completely goofy Christians who cause unbelievers to question the validity of faith in Jesus Christ. They know almost nothing and they often act as if they know nothing. A new believer is often much better off keeping his faith a secret and learning what he has just done first. Recall that Jesus instructed His disciples, **“Be wise as snakes and as harmless as doves.”**

And so sends forth David the people, the third in a hand of Joab and the third in a hand of Abishai ben Zeruiah brother of Joab and the third in a hand of Ittai the Gittite. And so says the king unto the people, “Going out I will go out, also me, with you [all].”

2Samuel
18:2

David then deployed his army [lit., *the people*], a third in the hand of Joab, a third in the hand of Abishai ben Zeruiah (Joab's brother) and a third in the hand of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the people, “I will certainly go out with you [lit., *“Going out, I will go out with you—even me.”*].”

David then deployed the people into three companies—one under Joab, one under Abishai, his brother, and one under Ittai the Gittite. David also said to the people, “I will also go out with you to battle.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abisai the son of Sarvia Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ethai, who was of Geth: and the king said to the people: I also will go forth with you.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so sends forth David the people, the third in a hand of Joab and the third in a hand of Abishai ben Zeruiah brother of Joab and the third in a hand of Ittai the Gittite. And so says the king unto the people, “Going out I will go out, also me, with you [all].”

Peshitta (Syriac)

And David placed a third part of the people under the command of Joab, and a third part under the command of Abishai the son of Zoriah, Joabs brother, and a third part under the command of Ittai the Gittite.

⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1–18.

¹⁰ Let me suggest the example of David, when his child was near death, and David was laying on the floor petitioning God; but, after his child died, David picked himself up, washed and worshiped God.

Septuagint (Greek) And David sent the people away, a third part under the hand of Joab, a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And David said to the people, I also will surely go out with you.

Significant differences: The Syriac does not appear to have David sending his troops out. Also, in the Syriac, David is not saying that he will be going out with his troops.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible David sent out the army—a third under Joab's command, a third under the command of Abishai, Zeruiah's son, and a third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king told the troops, "I will march out with you myself."

Contemporary English V. He sent out one-third of his army under the command of Joab, another third under the command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, and the rest under the command of Ittai from Gath. He told the soldiers, "I'm going into battle with you."

Easy-to-Read Version {David separated the people into three groups.} And then David sent the people out. Joab led one third of the people. Joab's brother, Abishai son of Zeruiah led another third of the people. And Ittai from Gath led the last third of the people.

Good News Bible (TEV) Then he sent them out in three groups, with Joab and Joab's brother Abishai and Ittai from Gath, each in command of a group. And the king said to his men, "I will go with you myself."

The Message Then David deployed his troops, a third under Joab, a third under Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. The king then announced, "I'm marching with you."

New Berkeley Version He had the army advance, one third under the command of Joab, another third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and the final third under the command of Ittai of Gath. But when the king informed his men, "I am surely going out with you myself," the people insisted, "You shall not go out! For if we are put to flight, they will not be concerned about us; even if half of us die, our fate will not matter. But you are worth ten thousand of us. So now, it will be better for you to be in position to send us support from the city." V. 3 is included for context.

New Life Bible And he sent the people out. One third of them was under the rule of Joab. One third was under the rule of Zeruiah's son Abishai, Joab's brother. And one third was under the rule of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the people, "I myself will go out with you also."

The Voice He divided his army *into three groups*. A third of them were commanded by Joab, a third by Abishai (Zeruiah's son, Joab's brother), and the final third by Ittai the Gittite.

David (to his soldiers): I will go out to fight with you.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible ...and sent them out [to battle]. a third under the direction of JoAb, a third under the direction of AbiShai (the son of ZeruJah, JoAb's brother), and a third under the direction of ItTai the Gethite. Then David said to the people: 'Now, I'll be leading you.'

New Advent (Knox) Bible ...one third he entrusted to Joab, one third to Joab's brother Abisai, and the remainder to Ethai of Geth. He himself, he told his men, would go into battle with them,...

New American Bible (R.E.) David then divided the troops three ways, a third under Joab, a third under Abishai, son of Zeruiah and brother of Joab, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the troops, "I intend to go out with you myself."

NIRV	Then David sent the troops out in three companies. One company was under the command of Joab. Another was under Joab's brother Abishai, the son of Zeruiah. The last was under Ittai, the Gittite. The king told the troops, "You can be sure that I myself will march out with you."
New Jerusalem Bible	David divided the army into three groups, one under the command of Joab, another under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah and brother of Joab, and the third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. David then said to the troops, 'I shall take the field in person with you.'
New Simplified Bible	David assigned a third of the troops under Joab's command. He put another third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah. Then he placed the last third under Ittai from Gath. »I am going into battle with you,« the king said to the troops.
Today's NIV	David sent out his troops, a third under the command of Joab, a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. The king told the troops, "I myself will surely march out with you."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David sent a third of the people in the hand of Joab, and a third in the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third in the hand of Ittai from Gath. The king said to the people, "I will also proceed with you."
Bible in Basic English	And David sent the people out, a third of them under the orders of Joab, and a third under the orders of Abishai, son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the people, And I myself will certainly go out with you.
The Expanded Bible	He sent the troops out in three groups. Joab commanded one-third of the men. Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah commanded another third. And Ittai from Gath commanded the last third. King David said to them, "I will also go with you."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Afterward David arranged the forces, one third under J'oab, and one third under Abishai, and one third under Athai the gardener. (B.C. 1023) Defeat and Death of Absalom
HCSB	And the king said to the forces, "I also will march with you." He then sent out the troops, one third under Joab, one third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and one third under Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the troops, "I will also march out with you."
NET Bible®	David then sent out the army - a third under the leadership of Joab, a third under the leadership of Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under the leadership of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the troops, "I too will indeed march out with you."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then David dispatched the people, a third of them under the command of Yo'av, a third under Avishai the son of Tz'ruyah, Yo'av's brother, and a third under Ittai the Gitti; and the king said to the people, "I will also go out with you, myself."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and David sends a third of the people under the hand of Yah Ab and a third under the hand of Abi Shai the son of Seruyah the brother of Yah Ab and a third under the hand of Ittay the Gittiy. And the sovereign says to the people, In going, I - I also go with you.
Hebrew Names Version	David sent forth the people, a third part under the hand of Yo'av, and a third part under the hand of Avishai the son of Tzeru'yah, Yo'av's brother, and a third part

under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	David sent out the troops [Some Septuagint manuscripts read “divided the troops into three.”], one-third under the command of Joab, one-third under the command of Joab’s brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and one-third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. And David said to the troops, “I myself will march out with you.”
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Dovid sent forth a third part of the people under the yad Yoav, and a third part under the yad Avishai Ben Tzeruyah (Yoav’s brother), and a third part under the yad Ittai the Gitti. And HaMelech said unto HaAm, I will surely go forth with you myself also.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Dawid sent out one third of the people under the hand of Yo’ab, and one third under the hand of Abishai son of Tseruyah, Yo’ab’s brother, and one third under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the sovereign said to the people, “I shall certainly go out with you too.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and David sends the third of the people by the hand of Joab, and the third by the hand of Abishai, son of Zeruiah, brother of Joab, and the third by the hand of Ittai the Gittite, and the king said unto the people, `I certainly go out--I also--with you.
Context Group Version	And David divided the people in three [parts], a third part under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the people, I will surely go out with you { pl } myself also.
English Standard Version	And David sent out the army, one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the men, "I myself will also go out with you."
NASB	David sent the people out, one third under the command [Lit hand] of Joab, one third under the command [Lit hand] of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command [Lit hand] of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the people, "I myself will surely go out with you also."
New RSV	And David divided the army into three groups [Gk: Heb sent forth the army]: one-third under the command of Joab, one-third under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one-third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the men, `I myself will also go out with you.'
Syndein/Thieme	And David placed 'the 1st corps/'a third part' of the army/people under the command/hand of Joab, and 'the 2nd corps/'a third part' under the command/hand of Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, {Zeruiah was David's sister and Joab and Abishai are two of her three sons that were great generals of David's army (the third son was dead by this time)} and 'the 3rd corps/'a third part' under the command/hand of Ittai the Gittite. Afterward, the king 'announced a general order' to the army/people, "Even I myself will definitely march out with you." {yatsa' yatsa' - doubling is very strong in the Hebrew - idiom meaning he will personally take the overall command the 3 corps}.
World English Bible	David sent forth the people, a third part under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.
Young’s Updated LT	And David sends the third of the people by the hand of Joab, and the third by the hand of Abishai, son of Zeruiah, brother of Joab, and the third by the hand of Ittai the Gittite, and the king says unto the people, “I certainly go out—I also—with you.”

The gist of this verse: David further divided up his army into 3 divisions, under Joab, Abishai and Ittai. He also informed his men that he would go to war with them.

2Samuel 18:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: David then deployed his army [lit., *the people*],... War between David and Absalom was about to begin. Between the previous chapter and now, Absalom has taken his men in pursuit of David. They are now in Ephraim, so this means that David went back across the Jordan, so that he is back on the west side of the river.

David must reorganize his army. First of all, he has not been the acting head of the entire army for several years now. Secondly, there are fewer men, and not every man from every division is with him. Therefore, they need to be organized again. David organized them for a march out of Jerusalem, but now, there is a need to organize his army once again.

2Samuel 18:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sh ^e lishîym (שְׁלִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh^eli-SHEEM</i>]	<i>third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]</i>	feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

2Samuel 18:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
This combination of the bêyth preposition and <i>hand</i> literally means <i>in [the] hand of</i> ; and can be rendered <i>by the hand of</i> ; <i>in [under] the power [control] of</i> ; <i>by the power of</i> ; <i>with</i> ; <i>through</i> , <i>by</i> , <i>by means of</i> ; <i>before</i> , <i>in the sight of</i> .			
Yôw'âb (יֹאבִיב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father</i> and is transliterated <i>Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: ...a third in the hand of Joab,... It is not clear whether Joab is over a brigade of 1000 men or whether he is in command of several brigades. However, a third of the total number of soldiers are under Joab's command. Joab, on the field, is David's number-one man. He has replaced David as the great general of Israel.

What seems logical is, David has 3 systems of authority: the captain over 100 men; the lieutenant colonel over 1000 men, and then generals over a third of the army (probably 3000–10,000 men). Obviously, David is over all of the men.

Joab is David's nephew and he has been David's right-hand man for a long time. David has placed Joab in charge of his military on many occasions, and Joab has performed admirably in that position.

2Samuel 18:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh ^e lishîym (שְׁלִישִׁים) [pronounced sh ^e li-SHEEM]	<i>third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]</i>	feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
This combination of the bêyth preposition and <i>hand</i> literally means <i>in [the] hand of</i> ; and can be rendered <i>by the hand of</i> ; <i>in [under] the power [control] of</i> ; <i>by the power of</i> ; <i>with</i> ; <i>through</i> , <i>by</i> , <i>by means of</i> ; <i>before</i> , <i>in the sight of</i> .			
'Ăbîyshay (אִישׁ־יִשָּׁי) [pronounced ub- ^v ee-SHAH-ee]	<i>my father is Jesse</i> and is transliterated <i>Abishai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #52 BDB #5
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

2Samuel 18:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Ts ^e rûwyâh (זְרוּיָהּ) [pronounced tz ^e roo-YAW]	transliterated <i>Zeruiah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #6870 BDB #863
'âch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, half-brother; kinsman or close relative; one who resembles</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #251 BDB #26
Yôw'âb (יֹאבָב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: ...a third in the hand of Abishai ben Zeruiah (Joab's brother)... Joab had two brothers. One was killed back in the early part of 2Samuel, but the other is still alive: Abishai. He is a great man, but he again is in the shadow of his brother Joab, suggesting that Joab is a greater soldier. This is because Joab is named first and Abishai is named second and also he is identified in terms of Joab.

Both Joab and Abishai, David's nephews, were commanders in David's army (2Sam. 8:16 10:10–14 12:26).

2Samuel 18:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh ^e lishîym (שְׁלִישִׁים) [pronounced sh ^e li-SHEEM]	<i>third, a third part, a third time; chambers [of the third story]</i>	feminine adjective/ordinal numeral with the definite article	Strong's #7992 BDB #1026
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
This combination of the bêyth preposition and <i>hand</i> literally means <i>in [the] hand of</i> ; and can be rendered <i>by the hand of</i> ; <i>in [under] the power [control] of</i> ; <i>by the power of</i> ; <i>with</i> ; <i>through, by, by means of</i> ; <i>before, in the sight of</i> .			
'Ittay (אִתַּי) [pronounced iht-TAH-ee]	<i>with me</i> ; transliterated <i>lthai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87
Alternate spelling: 'ÿthay (אִתַּי) [pronounced ee-THAH-ee].			
Gittîy (גִּתַּי) [pronounced git-TEE]	<i>inhabitant of Gath and possibly wine press</i> ; and transliterated <i>Gittite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1663 BDB #388

Translation: ...and a third in the hand of Ittai the Gittite. You will recall that, when first leaving Jerusalem, David spoke directly to Ittai and told him, “You do not need to travel with me. You can stay behind with King Absalom, and I will not hold it against you.” (2Sam. 15:19–22). But Ittai was loyal to David. Therefore, he is in charge of a third division.

This is what we have so far: David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred. David then deployed the people into three companies—one under Joab, one under Abishai, his brother, and one under Ittai the Gittite. An army must be organized; an army requires a system of authority which all of the men understand. Each man in the army must understand the chain of command. We will not see any of that with Absalom’s army. This does not mean that no organization was attempted, but David and Joab are soldiers; Absalom is not. David and Joab understand what needs to be done with the men; Absalom does not. Later on, in this chapter, we will find Absalom meandering about on his mule without an armor bearers around, and with apparently little ability to navigate the forest in which he finds himself.

The strategy and tactics involved in battle is helpful when you have 3 brigades which can be guided on the battlefield, each with a specific purpose. This was common among the Israelites and the Philistines as well (Judges 7:16 9:43 1Sam. 11:11 13:17 2Kings 11:5–6). How exactly these brigades were used will be suggested when we get to v. 7.

How an army is divided plays a large part on how that army is deployed. You may recall that when Joab was trapped between a holding force and an aggressive force in 2Sam. 10, he divided his own army into two parts, one part to move against the two forces against him, as well as being ready to back up the other. It was a risky move, but one that paid off, and one that changed world history.

David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred. David then deployed the people into three companies—one under Joab, one under Abishai, his brother, and one under Ittai the Gittite. What has undoubtedly occurred, even though there is no mention of this in the narrative is, men have come from all over Israel to support David. You will recall at the close of the previous chapter, we have men bringing supplies to David, because men need to be fed. If 3 different men from 3 very different places have enough sense to recognize that David needs logistical support, then it is equally logical that groups of men from all over would recognize that, in these circumstances, David needs an army. So it is likely that, even though David left with only a few troops when marching out of Jerusalem, since then, thousands of men have joined him. This explains why David organizes his troops in 2Sam. 15:13–23 as well as in this passage.

The principle is this: those who needed to find David were able to find him. Those who did not need to find him were unable to find him (Absalom’s army would not face off David’s army until Joab decided to let that happen). There is an analogy here. Just as those who needed to find David could find him, the same is true of Jesus Christ. The person who needs to find Jesus will find Him, no matter where that person is, someone will get the gospel to him.

2Samuel 18:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
’āmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 18:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (עַל) [pronounced eh]	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
'am (אָמ) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: The king said to the people,... David may or may not be speaking to all of those under his command. Even if he is, there are those close to him who can give him feedback on his decision.

David is called *the king* here, again because this is how God the Holy Spirit sees him. Absalom is not called *the king*, for the most part. God promotes us; we do not promote ourselves. You may recall a couple chapters back, after Absalom had pulled off his rebellion, the text referred to David again and again as *the king*. Quite obviously, this is the Holy Spirit editorializing. This is the Holy Spirit telling us that, in the eyes of God, David is the king. In the eyes of man, Absalom is the temporary king.

2Samuel 18:2f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
A Qal infinitive absolute is a verb which can act like noun, a verb or an adverb. Generally it takes the place of a noun and serves to intensify meanings. When it is found before the finite verb of the same root, it emphasizes the certainty or the decisiveness of the verbal idea of the root. ¹¹ When used as a complement of affirmation, it may be rendered <i>surely, indeed, definitely</i> ; and when it is a complement of improbability and condition, we render it <i>at all, freely, indeed</i> . The Qal infinitive absolute can also serve as an adverbial complement; or, as a verb, it can replace finite verbs, imperatives, participles, and the infinitive constructs. ¹²			
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	also, furthermore, in addition to, as well; even, moreover	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
'ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced aw-NEE]	I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58

¹¹ Choon-Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Revised Edition)*; Abingdon Press, Nashville; ©1995, p. 250.

¹² Taken from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2277.

2Samuel 18:2f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...“I will certainly go out with you [lit., “Going out, I will go out with you—even me.”]” David recognizes that all of these people are here because of him, so he says that he will go out to war with them. You may find this announcement a bit odd, but David makes this announcement because he has not gone out with his army for a very long time (see 2Sam. 11:1). Therefore, this is an important announcement.

Gill reasonably suggests¹³ that David might be doing this so that he can intercede for Absalom when necessary. This is probably a portion of David's agenda; but it would be torture for him to remain in Mahanaim while the fighting is going on, and just sitting there waiting for news.

This portion of v. 2 either ought to be a separate verse or be placed with v. 3a below.

And so say the people, “You will not go out, for if fleeing we flee, they will not set unto us a heart. And if die our half, they will not set unto us a heart, for now, according to us, ten a thousand. And now good that you are to us from a city for help.”

2Samuel
18:3

The people then said, “You will not go out [with us into battle], for if we indeed retreat, they will not consider us [lit., *place [their] heart to us*]. And if half of us die, they will not consider us, for now we [are] approximately ten-thousand [strong] [or possibly, ...for you (are) about (equal to) 10,000 (of us)]. Therefore, [it is better] that you are for us to help from [this] city.”

However, the people protested, saying, “You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom's army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you help us from this city.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Dead Sea Scrolls

[But] the army [said], “You will [no]t go out. [For if we must retreat, they will not care about us. Not if half of us were to die would they c]are [Singular 4QSam^a. Plural MT.] about [4QSam^a and MT use different words.] us. [You are worth ten thousand of us. So at present, it is better that] you be [ready to help] us [from the city].” We do not have a full manuscript of 2Samuel in the Dead Sea Scrolls; we only have bits and pieces which are readable. What is in brackets here is not readable.

Latin Vulgate

And the people answered: You will not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not much mind us: or if half of us should fall, they will not greatly care: for you alone are accounted for ten thousand: it is better therefore that you should be in the city to succour us.

¹³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:2.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so say the people, "You will not go out, for if fleeing we flee, they will not set unto us a heart. And if die our half, they will not set unto us a heart, for now, according to us, ten a thousand. And now good that you are to us from a city for help."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king said to the people, If we surely should flee, the enemy will not care about us; now therefore ten thousand men are enough for us; for it is better for us to receive help from the cities.
Septuagint (Greek)	And they said, You shall not go out; for if we should indeed flee, they will not care for us; and if half of us should die, they will not mind us; for you are as ten thousand of us; and now it is well that you shall be to us an aid to help us in the city.
Significant differences:	The English translation of the Syriac is quite different from the Masoretic text; it should be the people speaking to the king. The other problem, which will be discussed below in the exegesis, is whether the people are saying that they are 10,000 strong or that David is equal in value to 10,000 of them (the latter reading is found in the Latin and the Greek).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But the troops replied, "No! You must not march out! If we flee, they won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us. It is much better if you support us from the city."
Contemporary English V.	But the soldiers said, "No, don't go into battle with us! It won't matter to our enemies if they make us all run away, or even if they kill half of us. But you are worth ten thousand of us. It would be better for you to stay in town and send help if we need it."
Easy English	But they said to David, 'You must not come with us. If we have to run away in the battle, Absalom's men will not care. They will not care even if half of us die. But you are worth 10 000 of us. It will be better for you to stay in the city. You can help us from the city.'
Easy-to-Read Version	But the people said, "No! You must not go with us. Why? Because if we run away in the battle, Absalom's men will not care. Even if half of us are killed, Absalom's men will not care. But you are worth 10,000 of us! It is better for you to stay in the city. Then, if we need help, you can help us."
<i>The Message</i>	They said, "No, you mustn't march with us. If we're forced to retreat, the enemy won't give it a second thought. And if half of us die, they won't do so either. But you are worth ten thousand of us. It will be better for us if you stay in the city and help from there."
New Century Version	But the men said, "You must not go with us! If we run away in the battle, Absalom's men won't care. Even if half of us are killed, Absalom's men won't care. But you're worth ten thousand of us! You can help us most by staying in the city."
New Living Translation	But his men objected strongly. "You must not go," they urged. "If we have to turn and run-and even if half of us die-it will make no difference to Absalom's troops; they will be looking only for you. You are worth 10,000 of us [As in two Hebrew manuscripts and some Greek and Latin manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts read Now there are 10,000 like us.], and it is better that you stay here in the town and send help if we need it."
The Voice	Soldiers: ³ No, you should remain in Mahanaim. If we flee, the people here will not be concerned about us; or if half of us die, they will not care. But they care about you. You're worth 10,000 of us. It's better that you stay here and help us from the city.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But they said: 'You can't come; for, if [AbSalom's people] kill half of us, losing you would be like losing ten thousand men. So, it's best for you stay in the city to direct us.'
Christian Community Bible	But the men replied, "You shall not go out. They could not care less if we flee or if half of us die. But you are worth ten thousand of us and it is better if you are able to send us assistance from the city."
God's Word™	"You're not going with us," the troops said. "If we flee, they won't care about us, and if half of us die, they won't care either. But you're worth 10,000 of us. It's better for you to be ready to send us help from the city."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	...but they would not have it. It makes no great matter to the enemy, they said, whether we are routed: even if half of us should fall, they would set little store by it; thy life is more to them than the lives of ten thousand others. Better that thou shouldst remain in the city and garrison it for us.
New American Bible	But they replied: "You must not come out with us. For if we should flee, we shall not count; even if half of us should die, we shall not count. You are equal to ten thousand of us. Therefore it is better that we have you to help us from the city."
New American Bible (R.E.)	But they replied: "You must not come out with us. For if we flee, no one will care; even if half of us die, no one will care. But you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore it is better that we have you to help us from the city."
NIRV	But the men said, "You must not march out. If we are forced to run away, our enemies won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care. But you are worth 10,000 of us. So it would be better for you to stay here in the city. Then you can send us help if we need it."
New Jerusalem Bible	But the troops replied, 'You are not to take the field. No one will bother about us if we run away, they will not even bother about us if half of us are killed, but you are ten thousand times more valuable. So it is better if you stay inside the town, in case we need reinforcements.'
New Simplified Bible	»You must not go with us,« they answered. »It will not make any difference to the enemy if the rest of us turn and run. It will not matter even if half of us are killed. But you are worth ten thousand of us. It will be better if you stay here in the city and send us help.«
Revised English Bible	But they said, 'No, you must not; if we take to flight, no one will care, nor will they even if half of us are killed; but you are worth ten thousand of us, and it would be better now for you to remain in the town in support.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	But the people said, "Do not proceed! For if we flee , they will not set their heart at us. If half of us die, they will not set their heart at us. Now with ten thousand similar to us, it is better now for you to help us from the city."
Bible in Basic English	But the people said, It is better now for you not to go out: for if we are put to flight, they will not give a thought to us, and if death overtakes half of us, it will be nothing to them: but you are of more value than ten thousand of us: so it is better for you to be ready to come to our help from this town.
The Expanded Bible	But the men said, "You must not go ·with us [out]! If we ·run away in the battle [flee], Absalom's men won't care. Even if half of us are killed, Absalom's men won't care. But you're worth ten thousand of us! ·You can help us most by staying in the city [It is better that you support us from the city]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But the army said, "You shall not go; for if we are defeated, they will not set their heart upon us; and if they kill half of us, they will not set their heart upon us; for you are worth ten thousand of us, so it is better you should help by directing us from the city."

HCSB	"You must not go!" the people pleaded. "If we have to flee, they will not pay any attention to us. Even if half of us die, they will not pay any attention to us because you are worth 10,000 of us. Therefore, it is better if you support us from the city."
NET Bible®	But the soldiers replied [Heb "the people said."], "You should not do this [Heb "march out."]! For if we should have to make a rapid retreat, they won't be too concerned about us [Heb "they will not place to us heart."]. Even if half of us should die, they won't be too concerned about us. But you [The translation follows the Septuagint (LXX) (except for the Lucianic recension), Symmachus, and Vulgate in reading אַתָּה ('atta, "you") rather than Masoretic Text (MT) עַתָּה ('atta, "now").] are like ten thousand of us! So it is better if you remain in the city for support."
NIV – UK	But the men said, `You must not go out; if we are forced to flee, they won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care; but you are worth ten thousand of us [Two Hebrew manuscripts, some Septuagint manuscripts and Vulgate; most Hebrew manuscripts care; for now there are ten thousand like us]. It would be better now for you to give us support from the city.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	But the people replied, "Don't go out; because if we flee, they won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us; so it is better now that you stay in the city and be ready if we need help."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	But the troops replied, "No! For if some of us flee, the rest will not be concerned about us; even if half of us should die, the others will not be concerned about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us [So two Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Vulgate. Most manuscripts and the editions read "Now there are ten thousand like us."]. Therefore, it is better for you to support us from the town."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	But HaAm answered, Thou shalt not go forth; for if we flee away, they will not set their lev on us; neither if half of us die, will they set their lev on us; but now thou art worth ten thousand of us; therefore, now it is better that thou support us from the Ir [i.e., <i>Machanayim</i>].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the people say, `You do not go out, for if we utterly flee, they do not set [their] heart upon us; and if half of us die, they do not set [their] heart unto us--for now like us [are] ten thousand; and now, better that you be to us from the city for an helper.'
English Standard Version	But the men said, "You shall not go out. For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore it is better that you send us help from the city."
The updated Geneva Bible	But the people answered, You will not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now [you are] worth ten thousand of us [Signifying that a good governor is so dear to his people that they would rather lose their lives than have anything happen to him.]: therefore now [it is] better that you succour us out of the city.
Green's Literal Translation	And the people said, You shall not go out, for if we flee they will not set <i>their</i> heart on us even if half of us die; for now <i>you are</i> like ten thousand to us. And now <i>it is</i> good that you be a helper for us from the city.
Modern KJV	But the people answered, You shall not go forth. For if we run away, they will not set their heart on us, even if half of us die. For now you are worth ten thousand of us. And now it is better that you remain to help us from the city.
New King James Version	But the people answered, "You shall not go out! For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us now. For you are now more help to us in the city."

Syndein/Thieme

But the army/people answered, "You {David} will not march out with us. {Note: They know that David's military brains are the most important thing he can offer. They need to know he is in a secure place, leading the overall battle.} Because if we are forced to retreat, they {the officer's corps} will not take cognizance of our situation. {idiom: 'they will not put us to heart'} Furthermore, if half of us should die, they {our officers} will take cognizance of the casualties. {idiom: 'they will not put us to heart'} Because you, compared with us, are worth ten thousand. Now therefore it is better that you support us from the city with the reserves. {Note: David's men are indicating defeatism. They do not know their officers and in arrogance, they expect defeat and most of them will die, and they want David in the rear to take care of the remnant. They are telling David how to run the war. This officer corps of David will prove to be so great that Israel will be protected for the next 50 years.}

World English Bible

But the people said, You shall not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but you are worth ten thousand of us; therefore now it is better that you are ready to help us out of the city.

Young's Updated LT

And the people say, "You will not go out, for if we utterly flee, they do not set their heart upon us; and if half of us die, they do not set their heart unto us—for now like us are ten thousand; and now, better that you be to us from the city for an helper."

The gist of this verse:

The people insist that David not go out with them, as he is worth 10,000 of them.

2Samuel 18:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'am (אָמ) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422

Translation: The people then said, "You will not go out [with us into battle],... We do not know exactly the way this meeting is set up. It appears as if David is speaking before his entire army. However, it is possibly that he is speaking to his generals, lieutenant colonels and captains. And if David is addressing all of his men, his top men would be those who could discuss matters with him. One or more of these spoke up, saying, "You will not go out to war with us." When it says *the people said*, this does not mean that all of the people spoke at once and

in unison. What this suggests is, this idea has already been discussed, and this sentiment is in accordance with the people in general. So Joab or Abishai might be saying this, but this reflects the thinking of their men.

Then they explain why.

2Samuel 18:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
nûwç (נוּחַ) [pronounced <i>noose</i>]	<i>to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to retreat, to hasten quickly [away]</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #5127 BDB #630
nûwç (נוּחַ) [pronounced <i>noose</i>]	<i>to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to retreat, to hasten quickly [away]</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630
<p>A Qal infinitive absolute is a verb which can act like noun, a verb or an adverb. Generally it takes the place of a noun and serves to intensify meanings. When it is found before the finite verb of the same root, it emphasizes the certainty or the decisiveness of the verbal idea of the root.¹⁴ When used as a complement of affirmation, it may be rendered <i>surely, indeed, definitely</i>; and when it is a complement of improbability and condition, we render it <i>at all, freely, indeed</i>. The Qal infinitive absolute can also serve as an adverbial complement; or, as a verb, it can replace finite verbs, imperatives, participles, and the infinitive constructs.¹⁵</p>			
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
sîym (שִׂים) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]; also spelled sûwm (שׂוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^bv</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3820 BDB #524

Translation: ...for if we indeed retreat, they will not consider us [lit., place [their] heart to us]. ... It will not matter to Absalom's army if these men retreat. This is not a concern to them. It is Absalom's army which will have no consideration or thought for David's army. It does not matter to them if they live or die. The idea is, if they are

¹⁴ Choon-Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Revised Edition)*; Abingdon Press, Nashville; ©1995, p. 250.

¹⁵ Taken from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2277.

beaten back, and if they do retreat, Absalom's army will just come after them and kill them en masse. There is a certain blood-lust in war, and sometimes when an army begins to kill, it just keeps on killing.

2Samuel 18:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
chătsîy (חֶצֵי) [pronounced <i>khuh-TSEE</i>]	<i>half, middle</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #2677 BDB #345
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
sîym (שִׂים) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]; also spelled sûwm (שׂוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^bv</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3820 BDB #524

Translation: ...And if half of us die, they will not consider us,... They will not give a thought if they kill half of David's army. This is all a means to an end. What they want is David. If Absalom's army needs to kill half of David's army, this is of no concern to them.

This is in contrast with Joab, who will allow Absalom's army to retreat unabated after Absalom is killed. Joab is not out for blood; Joab does care about the people of Israel, even though he is at war with them.

2Samuel 18:3d

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

2Samuel 18:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘attâh (אתָּ) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
Clarke: The particle התי attah, now, is doubtless a mistake for the pronoun אתָּ attah, <i>you</i> ; and so it appears to have been read by the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Chaldee, and by two of Kennicott's and De Rossi's manuscripts. ¹⁶ Clarke (or the person who transcribed Clarke's work into e-sword) has made a mistake with the Hebrew here (see the notes below or the Hebrew word above), but he does list which ancient translations are essentially in agreement with him.			
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation; with the 1 st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #453
The kaph preposition can be used of time, and translated <i>about, at; as, when, at the time of</i> . ¹⁷			
‘asârâh (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced <i>gah-saw-RAW</i>]	<i>ten</i>	feminine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
‘eleph (אֶלֶף) [pronounced <i>EH-lef</i>]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

The NET Bible's translation: [But the soldiers replied, "You should not do this! For if we should have to make a rapid retreat, they won't be too concerned about us. Even if half of us should die, they won't be too concerned about us. But you are like ten thousand of us! So it is better if you remain in the city for support."](#) The NET Bible's note on this: The translation follows the Septuagint (LXX) (except for the Lucianic recension), Symmachus, and Vulgate in reading אַתָּא ('atta, "you") rather than Masoretic Text (MT) הַתָּע ('atta, "now").¹⁸

JPS (Tanakh—1985) has the footnote:¹⁹ So two Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Vulgate. Most manuscripts and the editions read "Now there are ten thousand like us." They also reference 1Kings 1:18, where there is a similar alternate reading (a confounding of *you* and *now*).

Translation: ...for now we [are] approximately ten-thousand [strong] [or possibly, ...for you (are) about (equal to) 10,000 (of us)]. Although there are some translations that throw an *if* in there, one interpretation is that, this simply tells us how many have come along with David. There are probably 9 brigades, and Joab, Abiathar and Ittai each have 3 brigades under them.

However, if you will notice the final note made in the Hebrew exegesis, that there may be a slight difference in one Hebrew word, which changes a great deal. Saying that they are 10,000 strong does not really fit into the context of this conversation. However, if they say that David should not go with them and that he is equal to about 10,000 troops, that makes more sense. That fits into what is being said, and many of the English translations have gone with that interpretation (Green's Literal Translation, the NKJV, R. B. Thieme, Jr., the WEB, etc.).

¹⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:3.

¹⁷ As per *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 454.

¹⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?2sa18.htm> accessed July 18, 2013.

¹⁹ *Tanakh, the Jewish Bible* by the Jewish Publication Society; ©1985; p. 498.

Both approaches still require some additional words to smooth things out; but the alternate reading appears to be more suited to the context. Let me suggest that some of the words or letters were dropped out, and then later, someone tried to fix the text with that one minor change. Just a theory. In any case, it makes complete sense for the people under David to recognize that it is his life or death that is key in this revolution. If he is killed, they have no reason to continue fighting. However, at the same time, Absalom's army may choose to continue fighting, just to kill any sort of opposition. Remember, they do not care about those who have followed David—they have no concern for them whatsoever.

So far, vv. 1–3d reads: David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred. David then deployed the people into three companies—one under Joab, one under Abishai, his brother, and one under Ittai the Gittite. David also said to the people, “I will also go out with you to battle.” However, the people protested, saying, “You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom's army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us.” So David has organized his army into various units, and he has installed officers over these units, and presumably a battleground has been chosen (where they will fight will be very advantageous to David's army). However, the war here is actually between David and Absalom. When one of them is killed, that will end the war (not necessarily the killing, but the actual war).

2Samuel 18:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘attâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ‘attâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore, now then</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
ʔôwb (בוט) [pronounced <i>tohb^v</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâyâh (הִיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
‘îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

2Samuel 18:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâzar (עָזַר) [pronounced ġaw-ZAHR]	<i>to help, to aid</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5826 BDB #740

The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of *is to be, must be, ought to be*.²⁰ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote *shall or must*.²¹

Translation: Therefore, [it is better] that you are for us to help from [this] city.” David and his troops are apparently in a city, based upon this and the next verse. Furthermore, as we have studied, this city appears to be Mahanaim.

The army will go out of the city. Now, how can David help from the city? He might be coordinating their supplies; he might be receiving information from the front lines and advising. However, David can rest assured that things will be handled well, as he has 3 great generals over his troops.

V. 3: However, the people protested, saying, “You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom’s army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you help us from this city.” David’s leaders are acting rationally. They are concerned with what is best for victory. Therefore, while they are at war, David will be at Mahanaim waiting for news of the war. He might be coordinating supplies and gathering men to help his people retreat, if necessary.

There is a parallel which is being set up here. Previously, what got David into this mess in the first place was, when his soldiers would go out to war, he would chase skirt throughout Jerusalem, embarrassing himself and the God he believed in. So again, his soldiers are out to war, but David will be left behind. He might organize a citizen’s brigade from Mahanaim; but mostly what David is going to do is think. He has the time to think right now. However, as we will find out, David does not think any of this through. It will be Joab who finally has to brace him in the next chapter, and to set David straight. However, David is given the opportunity here to put things together; to think about himself, God, his actions and the Absalom revolution.

Application: I have seen instances in many lives where a person is given a great deal of time during which to think. An extended illness or accident; a set of circumstances which takes them off their job. They have real time to contemplate their lives and their existence, and to take stock of their lives and their decisions. And, what I have also observed, in most of these cases, these people squander this time of reflection. There are times when you seem to be rushing about to do things and, out of nowhere, there is this extended period of great calm—if God gives you time like that, then use it. Double up on your Bible study; devote more time to prayer. This doesn’t mean that you are not allowed to watch 3 seasons of *Downton Abbey*, because God does not require you to read your Bible or study 24 hours a day or even 12 hours a day. But when given the time, honor God with more time than you have been giving Him before. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians: **Use your time well, for these are evil days** (Eph. 5:16; CJB).

²⁰ The bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

²¹ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

Given this information, that David has some time to consider his life and what is going on, while his soldiers risk their lives for him and his kingship, it would be important to touch on this doctrine:

The Doctrine of One Day at a Time

1. The believer oriented to grace regards every day alike. Rom. 14:5–6
2. This does not mean that we do exactly the same thing every day. On some days, we work; on the weekends (for most of us), we are off. So, quite obviously, we do not do exactly the same thing on a workday and on a weekend. However, every day ought to be spent in the Spirit and, on every day, you ought to take in the Word of God, whether the doors of your church are open or not.
3. Rom. 14:5–8 **One person considers one day to be above another day. Someone else considers every day to be the same. Each one must be fully convinced in his own mind. Whoever observes the day, observes it to the Lord. Whoever eats, eats to the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; and whoever does not eat, it is to the Lord that he does not eat, yet he thanks God. For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.** (HCSB) Our lives are intertwined with the plan of God. Therefore, whatever day it is, it is the Lord's and we are to be thankful for that day, and live that day so that it glorifies God.
4. Living every day alike is related to God and our spiritual life. This does not mean that we do not celebrate birthdays or Christmas or Thanksgiving. Can you imagine a Christian telling his family, "I cannot attend the family Thanksgiving dinner; I am a Christian and must live every day alike." That is not a Christian testimony; that is just dumb.
5. The believer uses every day to glorify the Lord. Every day is a day of different circumstances and a different configuration.
6. Living every day alike is certainly not a matter of doing everything at the same time. Schedules are good, traditions are good, and organization is good. However, so is flexibility. You may live a life where dinner is at 6 pm sharp every evening; and that Bible study is at 7 pm sharp. In other homes, this may not be the case. You may have a more fluid or disorganized schedule. For me, I found that my schedule and day could vary dramatically, and have chosen to spend my early mornings before everyone else taking in the Word of God and studying the Word of God.
7. **Therefore watch carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore don't be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is** (Eph. 5:15–17; WEB). Every day is a gracious gift from the Lord to be purchased for the Lord. The context of Eph. 5:16 tells us that we can buy this time by being filled with the Spirit. When you are filled with the Spirit, that time has been purchased. You might even be able to log time sleeping.
8. God's grace is given to us a day at a time. **Y^ehovah's grace is not consumed, because His compassion never fails. His gracious acts are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness** (Lev. 3:22–23). Part of our life each day ought to be recognizing God's place in that God; and God's faithfulness to us each and every day. We need to recognize this for periods of stability and periods of great instability.
9. The only time we possess to glorify God on the earth is the number of days given to us in **phase II** (phase II is life here on earth for the believer). James. 4:13–15
10. God provides the capital to make each day count for grace. James 4:6
11. Every day is a special day in phase II; no one day is more holy than another. There is no authorization in the Word of God to make Sunday a special day. However, because we have that day off, it is often best for us to have 2 or 3 lessons in the Word of God. Therefore, 2 or 3 services at a local church is reasonable. The observation of the Sabbath in the Old Testament was to teach people grace. They worked all the rest of the week.
12. Each day the believer is to avoid mental attitude sins which produce self-induced misery.
13. Psalm 103 God only has one chance to show us grace in suffering, which He can only do in time. There is no suffering in eternity (Rev. 21:4).
14. This is how purchasing a day works: God gives us time on this earth; when we use that time wisely (by being filled with the Holy Spirit and by knowing Bible doctrine), the result is the creation of divine good. Divine good is rewarded in time and in eternity. Therefore, when you purchase this time by being filled with the Holy Spirit, you are also laying aside gold, silver and precious stones in heaven (1Cor. 3:9–12,

The Doctrine of One Day at a Time

14). Those who try to do this in some other way will be producing wood, hay and stubble, to be burned in the judgment (1Cor. 3:13–15).

This has come, in large part, from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1969 Basic Bible Doctrine Series, [lesson #23](#). It was also taught in his 1961 Basic Series, [lesson #28](#). These points have been edited and appended.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

From my notes, R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s translation of vv. 1–3: **Then David reviewed [mobilized, mustered] his troops and appointed commanders of hundreds and of thousands over them. He then sent out the troops [David then organized his soldiers as follows:], one third under Joab [the first corps under the command of Joab], one third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruah, and one third under Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the troops, "I will also march out with you." [And I myself will assume command over the entire army] "You must not go!" the people [= the army] pleaded. "If we have to flee [if we are forced to retreat], they [David's officers] will not pay any attention to us [they will not take us to heart; they will not concentrate (or take cognizance) on our situation]. Even if half of us die, they will not pay any attention to us because you are worth 10,000 of us. Therefore, it is better if you support us from the city [as a reserve force]."**

David has a special circumstance here, where he is not required to do anything but wait and think. This allows him the opportunity to consider his mistakes and the justice of God. He needs to think through this thing with Absalom; but David does not use this time wisely. He will spend much of his time sitting in the gate of the city waiting for news of the battle.

And so says unto them the king, "That [which] is good in your eyes I will do." And so stands the king unto a hand of the gate and the people have gone out to hundreds and to thousands.

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The king then replied, "Whatever [seems] good in your eyes, [that] I will do." So the king stood at the side of the gate while all the people have gone out by hundreds and by thousands.

The king then replied, "I will agree to what you have said." Therefore, the king stood at the side of the gate watching the people go out marching in formation by hundreds and by thousands.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to them: What seemeth good to you, that will I do. And the king stood by the gate: and all the people went forth by their troops, by hundreds and by thousands.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says unto them the king, "That [which] is good in your eyes I will do." And so stands the king unto a hand of the gate and the people have gone out to hundreds and to thousands.
Peshitta (Syriac)	<u>And the servants of David said to him, We will go forth quickly to fight against them.</u> And the king said to them, Whatever seems good to you, do it. Then the king stood by the side of the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said to them, Whatever seems good in your eyes I will do. And the king stood by the side of the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands.

Significant differences: The first sentence of the Syriac is not found in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	David said, "All right, if you think I should." Then in a voice loud enough for everyone to hear, he said, "Joab! Abishai! Ittai! For my sake, be sure that Absalom comes back unharmed." David stood beside the town gate as his army marched past in groups of a hundred and in groups of a thousand. The war with Israel took place in Ephraim Forest. The CEV is combining several verses here.
New Berkeley Version	The king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." Then the king took his post beside the gate while all the troops marched out by hundreds and by thousands."
New Living Translation	"If you think that's the best plan, I'll do it," the king answered. So he stood alongside the gate of the town as all the troops marched out in groups of hundreds and of thousands.
The Voice	David: ⁴ All right. I'll do what you think is best. <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ffffcc; padding: 5px;">David is torn between his duties as king and his duties as father. When his own son attempts to overthrow him, he is forced to flee his kingdom and is subjected to ridicule and contempt. Absalom sleeps with all the royal concubines, a deadly insult, and it looks as though David will be overthrown just as Saul was before him. Even now with Absalom leading an outright rebellion, dishonoring his father, and seeking his death, David seeks to spare his son.</div> So David stood beside the gate while his soldiers marched out to fight against Absalom, organized into fighting units by the hundreds and by the thousands.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king said: 'I'll do whatever you wish.' So, the king stood at the city gate as his army passed by in companies and divisions.
God's Word™	"I'll do what you think best," the king responded. So the king stood by the gate while all the troops marched out by battalions and regiments.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So the king told them he would abide by their judgement, and he stood watching at the gate while they marched out company by company, in their hundreds and thousands.
NIRV	The king said, "I'll do what you think is best." So the king stood beside the city gate. The whole army marched out in companies of hundreds and companies of thousands.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said to them, "What is-good in your eye, I will do." The king stood by the hand of the gate and all the people proceeded by hundreds and by thousands.
Bible in Basic English	And the king said to them, I will do whatever seems best to you. So the king took his place by the door of the town, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands.
The Expanded Bible	The king said to his people, "I will do what you think is best [is good in your sight/eyes]." So the king stood at the side of the gate as the army went out in groups of a hundred and a thousand.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The king consequently replied, "Whatever is good in your opinion I will do." Therefore the king stood at the side of the gate, and all the force went out by companies and regiments.
NET Bible®	Then the king said to them, "I will do whatever seems best to you."

NIV – UK So the king stayed beside the city gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands.
The king answered, 'I will do whatever seems best to you.'
So the king stood beside the gate while all his men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible And the sovereign says to them,
Whatever well-pleases your eyes, I work.
And the sovereign stands by the portal handle
and all the people go by hundreds and by thousands.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And HaMelech said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And HaMelech stood by the side of the sha'ar, and kol haAm came out by hundreds and by thousands.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Syndein/Thieme And the king replied unto them {David acquiesces}, "Whatever seems best 'to you/'in your eyes', I will do. Therefore the king stood beside the gate {on a reviewing stand}, while the army marched out by battalions/hundreds and by divisions/thousands.

World English Bible The king said to them, What seems you best I will do. The king stood by the gate-side, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands.

Young's Updated LT And the king says unto them, "That which is good in your eyes I do;" and the king stands at the side of the gate, and all the people have gone out by hundreds and by thousands.

The gist of this verse: The king agrees to remain behind, and his troops march out to battle before him.

2Samuel 18:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

2Samuel 18:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
The relative pronoun ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] can also be used as the subject of a verb, as well as the direct object of a verb. ²² It can be translated <i>who, whoever, whomever, whom, [one] which, [one] whom; whatever</i> . Similarly, but rarely, this relative pronoun can be used as the defining adjunct for a 1 st or 2 nd person pronoun: <i>I who, you who</i> .			
yâṭab (יָטַב) [pronounced yaw-TA ^{BV}]	<i>to be good [well, commendable, pleasing]; to do good [well, commendably], to make glad, to make a thing good</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3190 BDB #405
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿēynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced ʿay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 2 nd person plural suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
This phrase is literally <i>in your eyes</i> , but it can be translated <i>in your opinion, in your estimation, to your way of thinking, as you see [it]</i> . The dual and plural forms of this word appear to be identical. Possibly, this could also mean, <i>as you please, as you want, as you desire, whatever you think is right</i> .			
ʾāsâh (אָשָׂה) [pronounced ʿaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: The king then replied, “Whatever [seems] good in your eyes, [that] I will do.” Notice this complete humility demonstrated by David. He does not have to have the last word, even though he is king. He doesn't have to take the thing told to him and give it a spin or a slight change, so that it seems as though it needed to come from him. He considers what was said, he agrees that this is for the best, and he goes along with it.

David was nearly always a humble person (that is, he was grace oriented). He understood the plan of God and his place in it; and even as the king over his people, he performed this as a function of his life (just as I would, as a teacher, perform the duties of a teacher in the classroom). David's high authority did not make him arrogant (he got there on his own). That David is recovering is seen in many of the good decisions that he makes (not all of his decisions are good, by the way). Here, he is willing to hang back and let Joab and the others lead his men into battle. An egomaniac has to be out in front, guiding everything, micro-managing everything. David, on the good advice of his men, does not require this in his own life.

Already in this chapter, I have been harsh on David, and pointing out some of his shortcomings, even before they have occurred in this chapter. However, his ability to stand back, in accordance with the wishes of his people, is admirable. This, in fact, is in great contrast with Absalom. You may recalled that Ahithophel had an outstanding plan which he presented to Absalom; a plan that would have very likely resulted in David's death. But Absalom rejected this plan for Hushai's plan because Hushai's plan was centered about Absalom being victorious over David; Ahithophel's plan had Ahithophel, as a representative of Absalom, being victorious over David. Absalom

²² *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 82.

is very self-centered; Absalom thinks only of himself. If something elevates him, he likes it; if something appears to diminish him, he does not like that.

If victory for David is achieved, it will be because of Joab, Abishai and Ittai. David is okay with this. He listened to the reasons for such an approach, understood these reasons, and agreed. He is not concerned about getting the credit or not; he is not concerned about being exalted or not. My point is, despite David's weakness regarding Absalom, he is a far more humble man than Absalom is.

If David is alive, Absalom has a problem; if David is dead, then there is no problem for Absalom. Absalom has no real opposition except for his father David. So, the foremost thing in his mind is, "Kill David." That is what must be done in order for Absalom to have complete control of Israel. Absalom's arrogance made him want to be in on it.

2Samuel 18:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamad (עמד) [pronounced gaw-MAHD]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand; to stop</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʿel (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
yâd (יד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axle-trees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
shaʿar (שער) [pronounced SHAH-gahr]	<i>gate [control of city can be implied]; area inside front gate; entrance</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044

Translation: [So the king stood at the side of the gate...](#) No doubt, David desired, with every fiber of his being, to be out there, with his faithful men, guiding them, giving orders, best penetrating the armed forces of Absalom. However, instead, it was for him to stay behind. Furthermore, he certainly would have preferred to have been there to act as a protector for Absalom. However, David fully understands that, if he is killed in battle, then these men are risking their lives for nothing.

This is a much more difficult decision to make if you are grace oriented, as David is. David is not overly concerned about his own life. He is not psycho with a death wish; but he does not fear death as most men. He understands that he will be with God at death. So David remains behind, not because he fears death, but because his soldiers are correct—if he is front and center and killed, then his men are fighting for no reason.

We guard our presidents carefully much for the same reason. It is not that a president is any better than you or I; nor will he occupy a better place in heaven (if that is where he ends up). But, as our leader, for our national stability, the president’s life must be preserved. The preservation of his life is related directly to the stability of our nation.

The mark of a good leader is, he can recognize good advice, no matter who it comes from. Some of the best advice I received came from a friend of mine who was in reversionism, but starting to come back from it. He was reading through some of these exegetical studies and was complaining about the Hebrew being strewn throughout the exegesis. At that time, I would mention one or two or more words in a verse, and give their spelling and meaning, and discuss that. For him, having this stuff thrown into the middle of the explanation was problematic, particularly since I did it often. After thinking about this, I separated out the Hebrew into the grayed tables you see above and below. That way, most of the Hebrew discussion can be easily skipped over. At the same time, when I translate a verse, and someone says, “Now, how the hell did he come up with that translation? That’s not what my Bible says.” The grey Hebrew exegesis tables contain all of the information necessary to justify the translation. If there is some kind of dispute about the reading, that is usually included as well. It would have been quite easy for me to look at this guy and say, “Look, I know what I am doing. You have been so far out of God’s will that you don’t have a clue. But thanks anyway for your advice.” It was good advice and it revolutionized the exegesis of each verse—in a good way, I believe.

Application: Let’s take this to a different realm: music. I heard an interview with an artist the other day (was it Barry Manilow?), and he writes his own music, but he has no clue whether this song is good, or great, or lame. There was someone else attached to him—I don’t recall if it was his record producer, his manager, or the head of his music label, but that person could hear the song and say, “That’s good; that will break big.” So the artist, the man who writes and often performs these songs, is willing to listen to someone else—someone without a tenth of his talent—and take his good advice.²³ We all have different parts to play, and we all rank differently when it comes to having authority.

This is quite important because, when all of this is said and done, David’s army will defeat Absalom’s army, and yet David will be in a funk because his son was killed in the battle. David ought to be rejoicing with his soldiers; and he ought to be giving out medals to his bravest men; but he is, instead, grieving over his worthless son. Joab will have to step in and straighten David out. David, in this area where he was most blind, must be able to hear Joab and to recognize the truth of what he says.

David and his troops are in a walled city, and here, he stands by the gate as his army exits the city.

2Samuel 18:4e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, while; since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

²³ Don’t get me wrong; I am not a Barry Manilow fan; I just recall the illustration from listening to an NPR interview.

2Samuel 18:4e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כָּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mê'ôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced may-OHTH]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural noun; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âlâpîhîym (אַלְפֵיַיִם) pronounced uh-law-FEEM]	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

Translation: ...while all the people have gone out by hundreds and by thousands. David's army is organized. They did not just leave this city as a mob, going wherever. They marched out, and they were in formation. They had authorities over them, and they respected these authorities. There were generals over groups of 3000 or so. Those brigades were broken down into battalions, each battalion under the command of a lieutenant colonel, each battalion was further broken down in companies of 100 men each, all under a captain or a major. My point here is, this was not a mob; these were not people who acted as a law unto themselves; this was not some rabble who were out to kill their opposition. These were organized military units with a clear line of authority over them; and each did as directed by their superiors. They marched out of this city in formation. They understood authority; they understood discipline; and they understood that a revolution must be stopped.

In case you missed it, the [Doctrine of Revolution \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

And so orders the king Joab and Abishai and Ittai, to say, “To gently for me to the youth to Absalom.” And all the people heard to order, the king, all the commanders upon a word of Absalom.

2Samuel
18:5

The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, “[Treat] the youth, Absalom, gently for me.” And all of the people heard the king give [this] order to all the commanders for the sake of Absalom.

As they were leaving, the king gave specific orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Treat this young man, Absalom, gently, for my sake.” And all the people heard the king give this order to his commanders on behalf of Absalom.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Dead Sea Scrolls	[The king gave orders t]o Joab, [Abishai, and Ittai, saying, “Deal gently, for my sake, with the young man Absalom.” And ever]y[one] heard [4QSam ^a and MT use different forms.] [the king give all the captains orders concerning Absalom].
Latin Vulgate	And the king commanded Joab, and Abisai, and Ethai, saying: <u>Save</u> me the boy Absalom. And all the people heard the king giving charge to all the princes concerning Absalom.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so orders the king Joab and Abishai and Ittai, to say, “To gently for me to the youth to Absalom.” And all the people heard to order, the king, all the commanders upon a word of Absalom.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, <u>Capture</u> for me the young man Absalom alive. And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all commanders concerning Absalom.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, <u>Spare</u> the young man Absalom for my sake. And all the people heard the king charging all the commanders concerning Absalom.
Significant differences:	The underlined verbs are quite different from the adverb which David uses in the Hebrew. However, the verbs used in the other ancient translations give the gist of what David is saying to Joab.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake, protect my boy Absalom." All the troops heard what the king ordered regarding Absalom to all the commanders.
Easy English	The king ordered Joab, Abishai and Ittai, 'Be gentle with the young man Absalom. I care about him.' All the soldiers heard David's orders about Absalom, which David gave to each leader.
Easy-to-Read Version	The king gave a command to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. He said, "Do this for me: Be gentle with young Absalom!"
Good News Bible (TEV)	He gave orders to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake don't harm the young man Absalom." And all the troops heard David give this command to his officers.
The Voice	Then David instructed <i>his generals</i> Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. David: For my sake, be merciful to the young man Absalom. Now everyone had heard about David's instructions to the commanders concerning Absalom.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king gave orders to JoAb, AbiShai, and ItTai, saying, 'Spare the young man AbSalom for me!' And all the people heard what the king said to them about AbSalom.
Christian Community Bible	The king ordered Joab, Abishai and Ittai, "Don't hurt the young man Absalom for my sake." All the army heard the king giving orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	One charge the king laid upon Joab and Abisai and Ethai alike, Spare me my son Absalom; and this charge about Absalom was so given to each of them that the men in the ranks could hear it.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But the king gave this command to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "Be gentle with young Absalom for my sake." All the soldiers heard as the king gave commands to the various leaders with regard to Absalom.
NIRV	The king gave an order to Joab, Abishai and Ittai. He commanded them, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom. Do it for me." All of the troops heard the king give the commanders that order about Absalom.
New Simplified Bible	The king ordered Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: »Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake.« All the troops heard him give the commanders this order regarding Absalom.
Today's NIV	The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake." And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Quiet the lad Absalom." All the people heard the king command all the leaders the word over Absalom.
Bible in Basic English	And the king gave orders to Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Because of me, be gentle to the young man Absalom. And this order about Absalom was given in the hearing of all the people.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Athai, saing,—“Spare the lad Absalom for me!” And the army heard the king’s orders about Absalom, to all the officers.
NET Bible®	The king gave this order to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake deal gently with the young man Absalom." Now the entire army was listening when the king gave all the leaders this order concerning Absalom.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The king gave orders to Yo'av, Avishai and Ittai, "For my sake, deal gently with young Avshalom."All the people were listening when the king gave all the commanders this order concerning Avshalom.
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign misvahs Yah Ab and Abi Shai and Ittay, saying, For my sake, be gentle to the lad Abi Shalom. And all the people hear the sovereign misvah the word to all the governors concerning Abi Shalom:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "Deal gently with my boy Absalom, for my sake." All the troops heard the king give the order about Absalom to all the officers.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And HaMelech commanded Yoav and Avishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the na'ar, even with Avshalom. And kol HaAm heard when HaMelech gave all the sarim charge concerning Avshalom.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and the king charges Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, 'Gently--for me, for the youth, for Absalom;' and all the people heard in the king's charging all the heads concerning Absalom.
English Standard Version	And the king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders about Absalom.
Green's Literal Translation	And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, For my sake deal gently with the young man, with Absalom. And all the people heard as the king commanded the commanders concerning Absalom.
Syndein/Thieme	{Officer's Call - David's last General Order - Into Emotional Arrogance for David} And the king 'issued a general order'/commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal with the young man Absalom . . . gently . . . 'for my sake'." Furthermore, the entire army heard when the king issued orders to the corps commanders concerning Absalom. {Note: David must have had a strong speaking voice. He boomed out this command and the word got around to everyone.}
World English Bible	The king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. All the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.
Young's Updated LT	And the king charges Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, "Gently—for me, for the youth, for Absalom." And all the people heard in the king's charging all the heads concerning Absalom.

The gist of this verse: David orders his generals to treat Absalom gently, and he does this so that the people hear this command as well.

2Samuel 18:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yôw'âb (יְאוֹב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father</i> and is transliterated <i>Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 18:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (אָן) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾĂbîyshay (אֲבִישַׁי) [pronounced ub-ʹee-SHAH-ee]	<i>my father is Jesse</i> and is transliterated <i>Abishai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #52 BDB #5
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אָן) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾIttay (אִתַּי) [pronounced iht-TAH-ee]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87

Translation: [The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai,...](#) David could not help himself with respect to Absalom. Even at this point, he has not fully come to grips with the viciousness of his own son, Absalom, who would kill him without a second thought. The king give orders to his commanders, and he gives these orders loudly. He wants all of those in his army to hear these orders.

2Samuel 18:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ²⁴ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i> . ²⁵			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

²⁴ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar-Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

²⁵ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

2Samuel 18:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾaṭ (אט) [pronounced af]	<i>softly, gently; softly; flowing</i>	adverb/substantive	Strong's #328 BDB #31
However, as combined with a lâmed preposition, this can mean <i>a gentle sound, a murmur, a whisper</i> .			
According to Barnes, the verbal cognate (if this is taken as one word) means <i>to wrap around, to muffle, to cover, to conceal</i> , and, therefore, <i>to make secret</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced lʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced lʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
naʿar (נער) [pronounced NAH-ġahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
lâmed (ל) [pronounced lʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אבִּישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...saying, “[Treat] the youth, Absalom, gently for me.” There is an interesting repetition of the lâmed preposition; it is found in this portion of v. 5 four times, which is a lot. In fact, before every word, there is a lâmed preposition, indicating somewhat of a soothing tone—pretty much the last thing men need to hear before going to war. “Now listen, men, I want you to treat the enemy nicely. I want you to be kind and gentle to him.” David is not saying this, but he might as well be. His enemy is Absalom. All of the people know this. His commanders know this. But David cannot see Absalom for who he is. Many people have a child, and once that child gets into his teens or into his 20's, he is nothing like that gentle, playful, precocious little man that you knew at age 3 or 5 or 8. To David, Absalom is whatever age that David has fond memories of. If the last time Absalom was this fun little man was age 10, then that is how David sees him. David cannot see him as the grasping, conniving vicious man that he is. Absalom is a power-hungry despot and he will do anything to take power from his father, including killing his father in order to gain this power. Absalom would not let anything stand in his way. Kill Joab, the one man in David's administration who has given him a fair shake, again and again? Absalom would kill Joab in a heartbeat. What Absalom sees is power, and he wants to take that power. With every fibre of his being, Absalom wants to rule of Israel, and he will not allow sentimentality or any emotion to stand in his way. It is highly unlikely that Absalom has strong emotional feelings about David or Joab.

David, on the other hand, tell his generals, “Be kind to Absalom; treat him gently. Do not allow any harm to come to him.” David is not ignorant of Absalom's designs. Recall 2Sam. 16:11a **And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Behold, my own son seeks my life."** David said this when excusing the behavior of a loudmouthed Benjamite. So, it is not as if David does not understand or cannot come to grips with Absalom's intent.

Some of these points were inspired by or taken from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, Lesson #631_0467.

The Doctrine of Negative Emotion

1. Every person has emotion; we all react in a variety of ways to different things, and sometimes this reaction involves emotion.
2. Believers and mature people are never to allow their lives to be run by emotion.
 - 1) This is the key to liberalism; nearly everything is emotional. People are emotionally involved, emotionally keyed in, emotionally stimulated, and they therefore respond to what liberalism is selling.
 - 2) Those who have a differing opinion are treated as evil or as having selfish motivation. If you do not understand this, bring up Dick Cheney's name or Sarah Palin's name amongst a group of liberals, and Cheney will be spoken of as evil incarnate and Palin will be made fun of for not being very smart (often by people who are less intelligent than she is).
 - 3) For many liberals any attempt to cut back on any liberal program, like food stamps (actually, a food stamp card) is starving hungry children, and the thought of doing this makes them sad or angry; and often self-righteous.
 - 4) From what I have personally observed, there is a great deal of self-righteousness which is closely related to most liberals. They are right and they have a kind heart, because they do not want these children to go hungry; and the conservative who suggests reducing the food stamp program is mean and wants children to go hungry.
3. Some people (the liberal example above works here) allow negative emotion to replace divine truth in all 3 categories:
 - 1) Instead of establishment thinking, they favor liberal ideology.
 - 2) Instead of salvation, some are offended that the Bible says that Jesus is the only way; they want people who follow Confucius, Mohammed, and Gandhi to all be accepted by God; emotionally, they cannot accept the idea that Jesus is **the way, the truth and the life**; and that **no man can come to the Father** except through Him (John 14:6).
 - 3) Instead of Bible doctrine, they go in for emotionalism in Christianity; they experiment with tongues; they allow music to stimulate their emotions; but they reject careful teaching of the Word of God.
4. In contrast to negative emotions, good emotions are the result of being subordinate to thought.
5. Any emotion that is considered to be superior to thinking or to truth or to reason is negative emotion and such a person might be involved in negative arrogance. The tongues movement is emotional arrogance, where negative emotion dominates the soul. How they feel about speaking in tongues is far more important than what the Bible says. They will twist any set of Scriptures to allow themselves the chance to speak in tongues.
6. When emotion dominates the soul, thinking is suppressed. Instead of thinking and reasoning guiding the soul, the soul is dominated by emotion.
7. After a period of time when emotions dominate the soul to the exclusion of any form of thinking, that individual becomes divorced from reality and generally is pulled into the arrogance complex.
8. David's failure in this chapter and the next is sentimentality over Absalom. He will be so emotional over Absalom that he cannot think straight.
9. When the believer or unbeliever becomes entangled in the **interlocking systems of arrogance**, they become vulnerable to flattery, fear, irresponsibility, and sociopathic behavior. Essentially, any of the other gates of the interlocking systems of arrogance can pull them in.
10. Humility is that state of the soul where the individual is related to reality through thinking, rather than through emotion. This does not mean that you cannot be moved by your emotion or that you must respond to all things with emotion; but you must be able to think in order to act.
 - 1) Again, liberals make a wonderful illustration here. If they cannot see something with their own eyes, then they are not likely to be moved. For instance, no one could watch an abortion without having some emotional response; and the more human the child looks when he is wrenched out of the womb, the greater the emotional response.
 - 2) Therefore, in order to preserve the liberal stance on abortion, liberals are against ultrasound photos being shown to the expectant mother. They do not want that person to see a baby with fingers and toes. They do not want to be the expectant mother, contemplating abortion, and look at a little face with little fingers and toes.

The Doctrine of Negative Emotion

- 3) So liberals support on-demand abortion, for whatever reason; and are absolutely against any view of the baby, because that would illicit an emotional response.
11. In order for a person to use the faith rest drill, they must be able to think. They must be able to concentrate on a promise or upon a principle, and then apply that to their personal situation. This cannot be done if a person is angry, upset, jealous, in great fear, etc. These various emotions will short-circuit the thinking of such a person. In order to use the various rationales, the believer must be oriented to reality.

David has a variety of facts at his disposal; he understands that Absalom seeks to kill him. He was one of Israel's greatest generals. However, because David is thinking with his emotion, he asks for Absalom to be treated gently.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

vv. 4–5b read: *However, the people protested, saying, “You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom’s army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you help us from this city.” As they were leaving, the king gave specific orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Treat this young man, Absalom, gently, for my sake.”* In emotional arrogance, David cannot seem to assemble all of the facts to develop a coherent plan. There is the possibility that David’s top generals got together and discussed this very fact, and that this was one reason David was asked to remain behind. They cannot say this to his face. Joab cannot say, “Listen, David, you are too emotional about your son, and you would jeopardize the mission in order to see him live.” The reason that was given for David remaining behind is reasonable; but this unspoken fact is even a greater reason that David should not go with them. In fact, from here and halfway into the next chapter, David will react emotionally to all that is going on, and finally, Joab will have to straighten him out in 2Sam. 19:4–7 (Joab is one of the very few who could get away with doing this).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. gave the best explanation for David’s psyche throughout these past 10 or so years of David’s life—he was in the interlocking systems of arrogance, the place in the believer’s life where he becomes vulnerable to a number of different forms of arrogance. David entered the interlocking systems of arrogance through sexual arrogance, where he placed his sexual desires above all else. This particular gate quickly interlocked with criminal arrogance and with emotional arrogance, which is where David appears to be trapped right now.

Emotional arrogance is where you allow your emotions to dominate your life, and you will set aside truth (in any of the 3 categories) in order to satiate your own emotions. David can only think of his son Absalom in emotional terms, and therefore cannot come to grips with the reality of what is going on right at this moment with Absalom.

There is a problem with David, and leaving him behind in Mahanaim is probably the best thing for Israel.

David Goes Astray

1. David has been in a slow recovery from the arrogance complex. This is because once one enters the arrogance complex, it is easy to become involved in other forms of arrogance.
2. David entered the arrogance complex by the sexual arrogance gate; however, he quickly interlocked with the criminal arrogance gate and the emotional arrogance gate.
3. David, in his recovery, has made some excellent decisions: he left Jerusalem, taking his supporters with him; he did not kill Shimei ben Gera, even though he would have been an easy target. David set up a spy network in Jerusalem, and he moved to a place from which he can fight and be victorious over Absalom. So David is recovering and David is thinking straight—in some areas.
4. Although David has made some excellent decisions up to this point, when he considers Absalom and what is about to happen, David falls apart. He cannot think logically. His emotions rule his decision-making process.

David Goes Astray

5. Therefore, David asks his 3 generals to deal gently with Absalom, indicating that he wanted Absalom preserved.
6. David is unable to see that he is part the point of no return with Absalom. There is Absalom or there is David; but, because of this revolution, these two men can no longer co-exist.
7. Apart from emotional arrogance, David could recognize this face; but his emotion is stronger than his thinking, with regards to Absalom his son.
8. Although these reasons are not cited by Joab or anyone else, this is probably the real reason why David is asked to remain behind in Mahanaim.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

vv. 4–5b read: However, the people protested, saying, “You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom’s army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you help us from this city.” As they were leaving, the king gave specific orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Treat this young man, Absalom, gently, for my sake.”

David’s Misguided Order

1. Absalom is the leader of the revolution. All of this happened because of what Absalom has done. Absalom would have been the next in line to become king; no violence and no revolution was necessary.
2. However, David cannot seem to wrap his mind around the fact that Absalom needs to be judged; and as the leader of the revolution, Absalom needs to be killed. As long as he remains alive, there will be those who support him. Killing Absalom is not revenge, it is justice.
3. David, asking for Absalom to be spared, is condoning revolution and evil.
4. David’s order reveals that his soul is still trapped in emotional arrogance. This will be the final gate from which he extricates himself.
5. The Bible records David’s failures so that we do not replicate them in our own lives.
6. The problem with David and Absalom is, David has never demanded righteousness of this son; he has never treated his son in justice; he has only been emotional in his dealings with Absalom. So asking for Absalom to be spared indicates that David continues to operate from his emotions regarding Absalom.
7. This revolution will continue as long as Absalom is alive; he will always have supporters. There are always those who like the new candidate, the young candidate, the cool candidate.
8. Probably many of Absalom’s supporters do not realize that he takes absolute control after he kills his father David. They are supporting more than just a new king; they are also supporting the death of David, whether they realize this or not.
9. The plan of God eventually demands the killing of Absalom. There is no order or stability in Israel as long as Absalom is in the wind.
10. The important details of life—evangelization and the teaching of God’s Word—are accomplished most effectively in a stable environment. So even a bad government is better than no government.
11. In a revolution, everyone’s attention is on who takes power, and not Who God is.
12. In an application to today, nation U.S.A. may be beginning to rot from the inside out, and we may end up seeing a series of Democratic presidents and Congresses as a result (I write this in 2013). These elections may be won fair and square and there may be some chicanery involved. However, whoever our leaders are, we support those leaders. Believers are not to become involved in a revolutionary movement against their own country. Unlike the times of David, once an election is over, it is over.
13. However, in David’s time, if both men remain alive at the same time, there will always be a possible revolution. So one of the men has to die.
14. God the Holy Spirit has clearly stated on several occasions that David is the king, even when he was on the run.

David's Misguided Order

15. Therefore, Absalom will have to die. David is unable to face this inevitability straight on.

Some of these points come from or are inspired by notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0468.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Samuel 18:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
shâma' (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHÇ</i>]	<i>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</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i>]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
sar (סָר) [pronounced <i>sar</i>]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #8269 BDB #978

2Samuel 18:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
Together, ‘al dâbâr (עַל דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>gahl-daw^b-VAWR</i>] mean <i>because of, because of [that], for the sake of, for the cause of [that]</i> .			
’Ăbîyshâlôwm (אֲבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: And all of the people heard the king give [this] order to all the commanders for the sake of Absalom. Unfortunately, most of David's army hears what he says. David speaks this order loudly, and, no doubt, each man tells his neighbor what David said.

More than likely, each commander passes in review, and stops and salutes David, and David salutes him back, and then David delivers that order, loudly, so that the 3000 or 4000 men in that brigade (or division if there are more) can hear his command.

This is going to be tough. Joab is tough—he will take out Absalom if necessary. In fact, he knows that he must kill Absalom. Joab knows Absalom for who he is; he knows the lust for power that Absalom has, and that Absalom is not going to let it rest.

Joab is the example of great humility in the life of David—he was always David's #2 man, and he would remain David's #2 man—and, at no time, does Joab say in his soul, "I can do a better job than David does. Let me take the reigns of power." Instead, Joab allows God to work His will; Joab allows events to transpire without having a need to seize the power when he sees his chance.

How do we know this? For all intents and purposes, much of this army is as loyal to Joab as it is to David.²⁶ Many of these men have had Joab as their commanding officer for a decade or more. So, what could Joab do? He could say, "David, you need to get out there, on your horse, and ride with your head held high and lead us into battle;" thinking, all the while, "...and get your damn fool head cut off." But Joab does not say that. Joab urges David to remain in this city, safe from the war, so that, no matter what happens on the battlefield, David remains alive. Joab is more than willing to take his own life into his own hands; but he is not willing to take that chance with his king. This is great humility. Joab's made a few mistakes along the way—no one lives a life devoid of mistakes—but when it counts, Joab is a stand-up guy, and man of true humility.

There are other circumstances which confirm Joab's lack of arrogance. When he was about to take Rabbah, the capitol city of Ammon, he called in David to lead the men, so that David received the credit in the eyes of these men, and the people of Israel understood that David led this final assault as well (2Sam. 12:26–31). When #2 man like Joab can see an obvious opening to being #1, and yet he never takes it, that is greatness and humility.

And this does not mean that Joab and David always see eye-to-eye; nor does it mean that Joab can easily persuade the king. You may recall that Joab hired an actress to speak to David in court in order to bring Joab back to Jerusalem. Joab could not have done what this woman did with a simple argument. Right now, Joab and

²⁶ We will see the example of the Cushite runner at the end of this chapter who bows before Joab, but does not bow before David.

David disagree greatly about the disposition of Absalom. If Joab finds Absalom, he will kill him—end of revolution. But David here is ordering Joab to treat Absalom gently.

V. 5 reads: *As they were leaving, the king gave specific orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Treat this young man, Absalom, gently, for my sake.” And all the people heard the king give this order to his commanders on behalf of Absalom.* This is the problem. David loves his son emotionally, to the point where he cannot apply the concept of righteousness and justice to him. Absalom is a revolutionary and he has organized an army against David. Many people will die because of Absalom’s rebellion. This cannot be ignored; it cannot be smoothed over. Righteousness and justice cannot be abandoned simply because of love. Absalom must face the final judgment; he cannot be pardoned by David if there is to be justice in Israel.

This is the final bit of arrogance that David is holding onto—the arrogance of emotion. He feels so strongly about his son that he cannot view him objectively. Joab knows that Absalom’s crimes cannot be overlooked; David is unable to get to that point yet.

Let’s take this to the parallel of God’s essence. We have heard so many times that God is love, and this is absolutely true; but God is also righteousness and justice. God is perfect righteousness, and therefore, cannot associate with unrighteousness or with relative righteousness. *What fellowship has light with darkness? How can righteousness and lawlessness be associated?* (2Cor. 6:14). Righteousness can only judge unrighteousness. We are saved, not because of any good thing that we have done, but because God’s Son died for our sins and took upon Himself the penalty for sin that we deserved (Titus 3:5 1Peter 3:18). Our relationship with God must stand upon His righteousness and justice. If not that, then there is no relationship between God and us.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Battle Between the Army of David and the Army of Absalom

And so go out the people [into] the field to meet Israel; and is the battle in a forest of Ephraim.

2Samuel
18:6

The people the went out [toward] the open area to meet Israel. The battle would be in the forests of Ephraim.

David’s army went out toward the open area to meet Israel; the battle would take place in the forests of Ephraim.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	So the people went out into the field against Israel, and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so go out the people [into] the field to meet Israel; and is the battle in a forest of Ephraim.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So the people went out into the field against Israel...
Septuagint (Greek)	And all the people went out into the woods against Israel; and the battle was in the woods of Ephraim.

Significant differences: The Syriac is missing a phrase.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So the troops marched into the field to meet the Israelites. The battle was fought in the Ephraim forest.
Easy English	David's army went out into the open country to fight the army of *Israel. They fought in the forest of Ephraim.
Easy-to-Read Version	David's army went out into the field against Absalom's Israelites. They fought in the forest of Ephraim.
Good News Bible (TEV)	David's army went out into the countryside and fought the Israelites in Ephraim Forest.
<i>The Message</i>	The army took the field to meet Israel. It turned out that the battle was joined in the Forest of Ephraim.
New Berkeley Version	The troops took to the field to engage Israel, and the battle was joined in the woods of Ephraim.
New Life Bible	Then the people went out into the field to fight against Israel. The battle was fought among the trees of Ephraim.
New Living Translation	So the battle began in the forest of Ephraim, and the Israelite troops were beaten back by David's men. A portion of v. 7 is included for context.
The Voice	Then the army went out to fight against Israel, and the battle was fought in the wooded areas of Ephraim.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, they marched to a forest that was directly opposite [the army of] IsraEl, and the battle started there in the Woods of Ephraim.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So his army took the field against Israel; it was in the forest of Ephraim that battle was joined.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Defeat of Absalom's Forces.</i> David's army then took the field against Israel, and a battle was fought in the forest near Mahanaim.
NIRV	David's army marched into the field to fight against Israel. The battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.
Revised English Bible	The army took the field against the Israelites, and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephron.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The people proceeded to the field to greet Israel. The war was in the forest of Ephraim...
Bible in Basic English	So the people went out into the field against Israel, and the fight took place in the woods of Ephraim.
The Expanded Bible	David's army went out into the field against Absalom's Israelites [Israel], and they fought in the forest of Ephraim.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Thus the force went into the field to meet Israel, and the battle occurred in the forest of Ephraim.
HCSB	Then David's forces marched into the field to engage Israel in battle, which took place in the forest of Ephraim.
NIV – UK	David's army marched out of the city to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	So the people went out into the field against Isra'el; the battle took place in the forest of Efrayim.
exeGeses companion Bible	...and the people go to the field to meet Yisra El: and the war is in the forest of Ephrayim;...

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The troops marched out into the open to confront the Israelites [The usual term in this narrative for the supporters of Absalom.], and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim [Some Septuagint manuscripts read “Mahanaim”; compared 2Sam. 17:24.].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	HaAm went into the sadeh against Yisroel; the milchamah was in ya'ar (forest) of Ephrayim;...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the people goes out into the field to meet Israel, and the battle is in a forest of Ephraim;...
The Geneva Bible	So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim. So called, because the Ephraimites (as some say) fed their cattle beyond Jordan in this wood.
New RSV	So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 6-8: Battle of the Forest of Ephraim} So the {establishment} army marched out/advanced to oppose Israel {revolutionary forces} into the field. And the battle occurred {was fought} in the forest/'forested terrain' of Ephraim. {Note: Joab selected the battlefield. The one who selects the battlefield normally wins. And, Joab selected a battlefield that was rugged terrain where the individual characteristics of the soldier will win out over sheer numbers.}.
Webster's Bible Translation	So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim;...
World English Bible	So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim.
Young's Updated LT	And the people go out into the field to meet Israel, and the battle is in a forest of Ephraim.

The gist of this verse: The two armies meet in the forest of Ephraim.

2Samuel 18:6a

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, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
'am (אָם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced saw-DEH]	field, land, country, open field, open country	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961

2Samuel 18:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ' (אָרָה) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
<p>The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i>.²⁷ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i>.²⁸</p>			
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: The people the went out [toward] the open area to meet Israel. The people refer to David's supporters; *Israel* refers to those who support Absalom.

Their going out to the open field or to the open area was to move away from the city to allow the armies to fight it out. David did not want to subject women and children to the harshness of warfare. This is one of the reasons that he left Jerusalem in the first place.

We have 2 very different armies

When I was much younger, I was a boxing fan, and often the **two boxers** would be set up side-by-side with a list of their comparative sizes and record. This was often called **Tale of the Tape**.

Tale of the Tape

Category	David's Army and David	Absalom's Army and Absalom
Size	Probably 6,000 to 60,000 strong. R. B. Thieme, Jr. estimates 30,000 versus 250,000. ²⁹	Absalom has collected an army from all over Israel, so he probably has 100,000 or more. His army may be 10x the size of David's army.
Experience	Mostly experienced soldiers.	A mixture of experience and inexperienced soldiers; many reservists have been called up.
Skill	Very skilled and organized.	Moderately skilled; and not well-organized, given that Absalom is their general.

²⁷ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

²⁸ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

²⁹ R. B. Thieme, Jr. 19 72David Series; lesson #631_0469.

Tale of the Tape		
Category	David's Army and David	Absalom's Army and Absalom
Leadership	Joab, Abishai and Ittai—3 great leaders. They have also shown themselves to be authority orientated.	Absalom is the only leader of note (it does not appear that Hushai went with him; and Ahithophel hanged himself); and Absalom has perhaps no military experience at all.
Organization	David twice organized his troops; he interacted with his top generals prior to the first battle. A supply line had been set up and his army was fed and supported.	We do not know much about Absalom. Nothing is said about the organization of his army or of its logistical support. Since Absalom had never led an army before, it is likely that he had no idea what to do in this regard.
Spiritual power	David and many of those under him believe in the power of the God of their armies.	Absalom has never mentioned God; and there is no one named in his army who seems to have a strong dependence upon God.
Establishment orientation	David is establishment oriented.	Absalom is anti-establishment, and he is sneaky. His drumming up of support was very dishonest.
Personal perception of leaders	David has agreed to wait in Mahanaim during this battle, so he had no need to be seen as the conquering hero.	In going with Hushai's idea, Absalom understood only two things: he would be glorified as the general of his army and his army would greatly outnumber David's army.
Motivation of the leadership	David looks to glorify God and to do His will.	Absalom seeks personal power and glorification.
Motivation of the army	To protect and retain the life which they have enjoyed. R. B. Thieme, Jr. said ³⁰ that one of the greatest motivations in war is fighting for the love of a woman and to preserve her freedom.	To support a leader and a plan which they have never seen put into place before. They are not fighting for freedom; they are fighting for change. This is very much like the <i>hope and change candidate</i> of the 2008 election in the United States.
Battleground	Chosen by David or Joab. Heavily forested area which favors small hand-to-hand combat and smaller military groupings.	Lured into this particular battleground. The worst battleground for a large army.

Some of these differences will become more clear as we continue through this narrative. For instance, at the end of this battle, Absalom's soldiers will be retreating, and Absalom will be left by himself riding a mule, not sure what to do next. This shows a lack of organization and a lack of courage on the part of his soldiers.

To Absalom, size was everything. He knew nothing about warfare, which was why his leading these men into battle was such a mistake.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

³⁰ R. B. Thieme, Jr. 1972 David Series; lesson #631_0469.

2Samuel 18:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
mil ^e châmâh (הַמַּחְלָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ya'ar (רַעִי) [pronounced <i>YAH-ġahr</i>]	<i>wood, forest, thicket; a beehive; an excess of honey; a thicket of trees</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3293 and #3264 (plural form) BDB #420
ʿEph ^e rayim (עִפְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>ef-RAH-yim</i>]	<i>to bear fruit, to be fruitful; double ash heap transliterated Ephraim</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #669 BDB #68

Some LXX manuscripts read *Mahanaim* here. For some reason, the REB has *Nephron* here.

Translation: [The battle would be in the forests of Ephraim.](#) Now, you will recall that David left Jerusalem on the northeast quadrant, going up the Mount of Olives, and then heading over to the River Jordan, where he would cross over at the word of the sons of the two priests (2Sam. 17:21–22). However, Ephraim is on the other side of the River Jordan, opposite to where David probably went originally (2Sam. 17:24).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. says that the Ephraimites took their cattle and sheep to the other side of the Jordan to graze, and that became known as the *forests of Ephraim*.

There was a war between the Ephraimites and the Gileadites, both of whom are on opposites sides of the Jordan River from one another. This is recorded in Judges 12:4–6 [Jephthah then mustered all the men of Gilead and made war on Ephraim, and the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim -- since the latter used to say, 'You are only fugitives from Ephraim, you Gileadites in the heart of Ephraim and Manasseh.'](#) Gilead then cut Ephraim off from the fords of the Jordan, and whenever Ephraimite fugitives said, 'Let me cross,' the men of Gilead would ask, 'Are you an Ephraimite?' If he said, 'No,' they then said, 'Very well, say Shibboleth.' If anyone said, "Sibboleth", because he could not pronounce it, then they would seize him and kill him by the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites fell on this occasion. (NJB) Gilead here is victorious. Did they somehow choose to name that area across the Jordan River from Ephraim, *the forests of Ephraim*?

Barnes writes: *It seems certain that the scene of this battle was on the east of Jordan. It seems therefore inevitable to conclude that some portion of the thick wood of oaks and terebinths which still runs down to the Jordan on the east side was for some reason called "the wood of Ephraim," either because it was a continuation on the east side of the great Ephraimitic forests on the west, or because of some transaction there in which Ephraim had taken part, such as the slaughter of the Midianites*

(Judges 7:24–25), or their own slaughter (Judges 12:6).³¹ After all, there is a Kansas City in Kansas; but there is also a Kansas City in Missouri.

The other option is that David's army went back across the river to fight with Absalom. That would mean that Absalom originally came over the river, in pursuit of David, and then went back across the river again. This makes less sense, as it appears that the river can be crossed near the opening to the Dead Sea, but not much is found in the Bible about crossing the Jordan anywhere else.

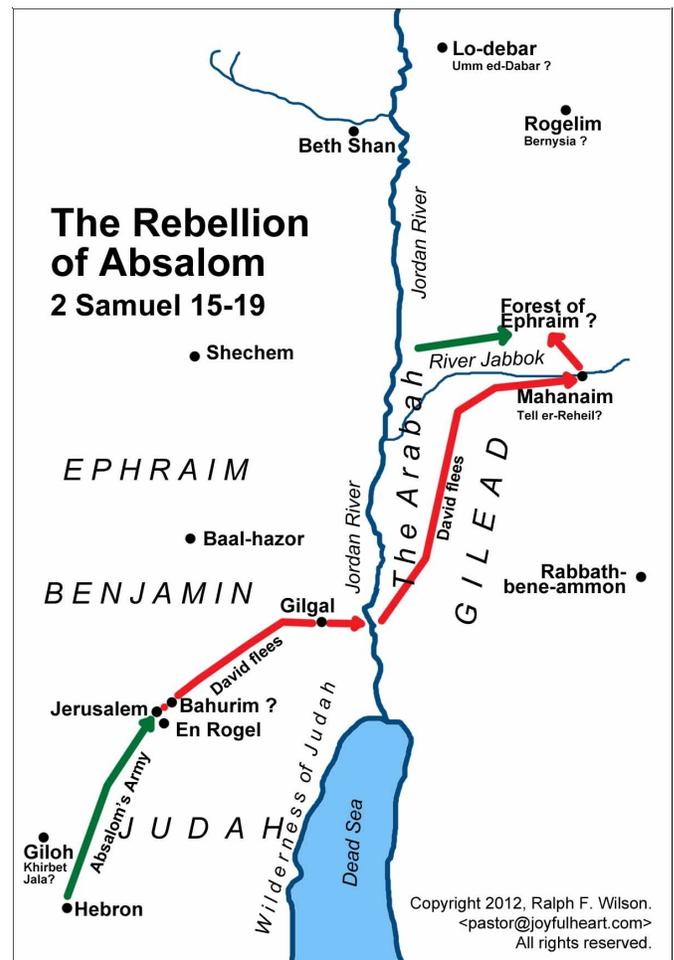
The Rebellion of Absalom (map) from [Jesus Walks](#). The only thing which is somewhat difficult here is the location of *the forests of Ephraim*.

In any case, the battlefield that they choose is going to be a thick forest, where the advantage of having a large army is neutralized by having a battlefield which encourages small forays here and there, and allows the men of the smaller army to, whenever necessary, to suddenly disappear into the forest once again.

Furthermore, as we will discover, it will appear as if the forest allies itself with David's troops, as it will take the lives of the soldiers in Absalom's rebellion in greater numbers than will the battle itself.

It will become clear that the battlefield chosen was not an open flat plain, but a very rugged terrain with a great many trees, bushes, hills, etc. The foliage is quite thick here, so that you might be 20 ft. away from the enemy and not be able to see him. This is very difficult terrain for a large army to do battle on, as it is more difficult to move them about as needed as a large unit. However, David's army is smaller, and therefore more adept at fighting in this environment. Furthermore, David's army has been broken down into smaller units—companies under the leadership of a captain—so that these smaller units may strike, move, strike, disappear. We are not given a great many details of this battle, but enough to know that David's army was very well-disciplined and organized, and that it appears as if they lured Absalom's much larger, much less-disciplined army into this forest.

Here we learn one more thing about Hushai's advice.³² If Absalom has to take the time to gather an army from all over Israel, then this gives David more time to plan out the battle and, in particular, to choose the place of battle. This is key to the victory. If Ahithophel went after David immediately with his shock troops,³³ David would have had no chance to organize and no chance to lure Absalom's army into a particular battlefield. Absalom's army is the aggressive army, so they will pursue David's army to wherever it is. Therefore, because of the extra time Hushai's advice entailed, David's army is able to choose the battlefield, because they choose where to stand and fight. David's army has been given the chance to increase in size, to organize, to choose the battlefield, and to become ready for Absalom's army.



³¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:6.

³² You will recall that Ahithophel, Absalom's advisor, was ready to gather up an army for a quick assault on David. Hushai, David's mole in Absalom's upper echelon, suggested that Absalom gather a huge army and lead that army against David. Absalom liked Hushai's plan, which was his own undoing, as we are studying in this chapter.

³³ Which is a group of soldiers trained specially for carrying out a sudden assault.

And so were struck there the people of Israel to faces of servants of David. And so is there the slaughter great in the day the that twenty a thousand.

2Samuel
18:7

The people of Israel were struck down there before the servants of David. The slaughter was great that day—20,000 [men died].

The people of Israel were struck down before the army of David. It was a great slaughter, where 20,000 men died.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the people of Israel were defeated there by David's army, and a great slaughter was made that day of twenty thousand men.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so were struck there the people of Israel to faces of servants of David. And so is there the slaughter great in the day the that twenty a thousand.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And there was a battle, and the people of Israel were defeated there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter on that day of twenty thousand men.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the people of Israel fell down there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter in that day, even twenty thousand men.

Significant differences: Nothing significant.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The army of Israel was defeated there by David's soldiers. A great slaughter of twenty thousand men took place that day.
Contemporary English V.	Battles were being fought all over the forest, and David's soldiers were winning. Twenty thousand soldiers were killed that day, and more of them died from the dangers of the forest than from the fighting itself.
Easy English <i>The Message</i>	And David's army defeated the army of *Israel. 20 000 men died that day. The army of Israel was beaten badly there that day by David's men, a terrific slaughter--twenty thousand men!
New Berkeley Version	At that place the forces of Israel were overthrown before the servants of David and the slaughter there that day was heavy, amounting to twenty thousand men.
New Century Version	There David's army defeated the Israelites. Many died that day--twenty thousand men.
New Living Translation The Voice	There was a great slaughter that day, and 20,000 men laid down their lives. David's forces won a great victory against Absalom's men, and 20,000 men were killed in the battle that day.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But the army of IsraEl didn't fare well against the followers of David, for they lost twenty thousand of their men.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	There David's men defeated Israel's army, and the massacre was sizable that day--20,000 men.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And the Israelites were routed by David's men, with great loss; twenty thousand men fell that day,...
New American Bible (R.E.)	The forces of Israel were defeated by David's servants, and the casualties there that day were heavy--twenty thousand men.

NIRV	There David's men won the battle over Israel's army. A huge number of men were wounded or killed that day. The total number was 20,000.
New Jerusalem Bible	There, the army of Israel was beaten by David's retainers; it was a great defeat that day, with twenty thousand casualties.
New Simplified Bible	Battles were fought all over the forest. David's soldiers were winning. Twenty thousand soldiers were killed that day.
Revised English Bible	There the Israelites were routed before the onslaught of David's men, and the loss of life was great, for twenty thousand fell.
Today's NIV	There Israel's troops were routed by David's men, and the casualties that day were great--twenty thousand men.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	...and there the people of Israel plagues in front of the servants of David. There that day 20,000 had a great plague.
Bible in Basic English	And the people of Israel were overcome there by the servants of David, and there was a great destruction that day, and twenty thousand men were put to the sword.
The Expanded Bible	There David's army defeated the Israelites. Many died [The slaughter was/casualties were great] that day--twenty thousand men.
Ferar-Fenton Biblewhere the army of Israel was routed before the generals of David; and in the great rout of that day twenty thousand perished,..
HCSB	The people of Israel were defeated by David's soldiers, and the slaughter there was vast that day--20,000 <i>casualties</i> .
NET Bible®	The army of Israel was defeated there by David's men [Heb "servants" (also in v. 9)]. The slaughter there was great that day - 20,000 soldiers were killed.
NIV – UK	There Israel's troops were routed by David's men, and the casualties that day were great - twenty thousand men.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The people of Isra'el were defeated there by David's servants; there was a terrible slaughter that day of 20,000 men.
exeGesés companion Bible	...where the people of Yisra El are smitten at the face of the servants of David; and that day there is a great plague of twenty thousand:...
PS (Tanakh—1985)	The Israelite troops were routed by David's followers, and a great slaughter took place there that day—twenty thousand men.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Where Am Yisroel were slain before the avadim of Dovid, and there was there a magefah gedolah that day of esrim elef.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	[Absalom's] men of Israel were defeated by the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter that day of 20,000 men.
Darby Translation	And the people of Israel were routed before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter there that day: twenty thousand men.
English Standard Version	And the men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the loss there was great on that day, twenty thousand men.
Green's Literal Translation	And the people of Israel were stricken before David's servants. And there was a great destruction on that day of twenty thousand.
NASB	The people of Israel were defeated [Lit smitten] there before the servants of David, and the slaughter there that day was great, 20,000 men.

New King James Version

The people of Israel were overthrown there before the servants of David, and a great slaughter of twenty thousand took place there that day.

Syndein/Thieme

Therefore the army/people of Israel {revolutionary army} were defeated by the soldiers of David, and there the casualties that day were great . . . twenty thousand men. {Note: Joab apparently sent one corps into an open meadow where the Amasa's forces could see them. Amasa had dispersed his army and Joab now concentrated his. So, Amasa's men were marching in column to attack and Joab's 2 corps in hiding hit them in line and routed them. Because of the rugged terrain casualties were heavy. RBT says that the men who died were most likely the hard core revolutionists and that was their punishment. The other 230,000 or so men in the revolutionary army will be pardoned by David. So, in panic many ran off cliffs, fell into marshes/ quicksand, and finally wild animals could have taken some.}

World English Bible

The people of Israel were struck there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men.

Young's Updated LT

And struck there are the people of Israel before the servants of David, and the striking down there is great on that day—twenty thousand.

The gist of this verse:

20,000 men belonging to Absalom's army were struck down in this battle.

2Samuel 18:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgaph (נָגַף) [pronounced naw-GAHF]	to be struck down, to be smitten, to be hit; [possibly] beaten, wounded	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5062 BDB #619
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun in the construct state	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
Yis ^o râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	face, faces, countenance; presence	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning in the judgment of. This can also mean forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]. L^epânîym (לפְּנֵי) can take on a temporal sense as well: before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times.

2Samuel 18:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: [The people of Israel were struck down there before the servants of David.](#) David's army was quite proficient at killing the solders of Absalom (who are called *the people of Israel* here). David's men were better trained, better deployed, and better motivated. It is possible that they had surprise and a choice of the terrain here as well.

It is logical for David to divide up the army into 3 brigades. Two can be used to maneuver, and the third can be kept in reserve. In a battle, you do not necessarily put all of your troops out there en masse from the very start. Joab's brigade might hit Absalom's forces head-on. Abishai's brigade might do a flanking movement. Ittai's might move to the other side, but not attack and allow the retreating soldiers to come to them. Finally, this might be done in such a way that the heavy forest is directly behind Absalom's army.

Absalom can have a much larger army, but because of the terrain, there are limitations on the area over which his troops meet up with Joab's troops. On a large battlefield, Absalom's army could overrun David's army; but where the battlefront is limited by the terrain, Absalom cannot exploit the size of his army. David's smaller army can move more quickly and outmaneuver Absalom's army. Furthermore, Absalom does not know how to lead an army; he does not understand strategy and tactics. So, not only is he sucked into a battlefield which robs him of the advantage of numbers, but he does not know how to get out of it; he does not know what to do next. He just expects his larger army to take out David's smaller army.

We will discover Absalom later wandering about, apparently separated from his troops, not leading in any possible way.

2Samuel 18:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
maggêphâh (מַגֵּפָה) [pronounced mahg-gay-FAW]	<i>a blow, a slaughter, plague, pestilence</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4046 BDB #620

2Samuel 18:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gādōwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i>]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	feminine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hūw' (אוּהוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>that; this; same</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
'es ^e rīym (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced <i>ges^e-REEM</i>]	<i>twenty</i>	plural numeral adjective	Strong's #6242 BDB #797
'eleph (אֶלֶף) [pronounced <i>EH-lef</i>]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

Translation: [The slaughter was great that day—20,000 \[men died\]](#). There were about 10,000 soldiers fighting for David, so, on average, each of them killed two men. The 20,000 here like refers only to those of Absalom's army, and these are likely at the hands of David's soldiers (although it is possible these numbers include those killed by the Forest of Ephraim, as in v. 8).

Matthew Henry: *[God judged these criminal revolutionaries] justly for their treason against their lawful prince, their uneasiness under so good a government, and their base ingratitude to so good a governor; and they found what it was to take up arms for a usurper, who with his kisses and caresses had wheedled them into their own ruin. Now where are the rewards, the preferments, the golden days, they promised themselves from him? Now they see what it is to [take counsel against the Lord and His Anointed](#), and to think of [breaking his bands asunder](#).³⁴ This is indicative of any time that man places himself in opposition to the Lord. [The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Y^ehowah, and against His Anointed](#) (Psalm 2:2). Such men say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." (Psalm 2:3).*

This is how men revolt against God; in this instance, they are revolting against God's anointed. This might be a good place to examine [Psalm 2 \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Bear in mind what is going on here—this is a revolution and there are a great many people who support Absalom. Revolution is evil and God will see that many of the revolutionaries die here. Revolutionaries are a cancer to a society, and God will remove them in some instances, thus fulfilling Prov. 11:21, which states: [Be assured, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered](#). (ESV) The revolutionaries which God strikes down here are the worst of the worst; they support Absalom and they will go to war against the

³⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:1–8 (slightly edited).

establishment king, David, in order to install Absalom as king over all Israel. See the **Doctrine of Revolution** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Application: It is not enough for liberals to get their own way; they must be able to impose it upon people who disagree with them as well. Absalom is not content with ruling in Jerusalem; he must kill his father and clearly subjugate all of Israel to his personal whims. He will not allow for a divided kingdom or for there to be any opposition remaining. This is one of the reasons Absalom must die.

<p>And so is there the battle being scattered upon faces of all the earth; and so multiplies a forest to eat in the people from which ate the sword in the day the that.</p>	<p>2Samuel 18:8</p>	<p>The battle was scattered there upon all the earth; and the forest multiplied the devouring among the people in that day more than the sword devoured.</p>
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The battle spread out over that land, so that the forest devoured more people in that day than the sword did.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the battle there was scattered over the face of all the country, and there were many more of the people whom the forest consumed, than whom the sword devoured that day.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is there the battle being scattered upon faces of all the earth; and so multiplies a forest to eat in the people from which ate the sword in the day the that.
Peshitta (Syriac)	For there was a great battle which spread over the face of the country; and the wild <u>beasts</u> of the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the battle there was scattered over the face of all the land. And the woods consumed more of the people than the sword consumed in that day.

Significant differences: The Syriac has Absalom's soldiers being devoured by the beasts of the forest.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Easy English	The battle spread over a large area. More people died in the forest than in the battle.
Easy-to-Read Version	The battle spread through all the country. But that day more men died in the forest than by the sword.
<i>The Message</i>	There was fighting helter-skelter all over the place--the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword!
New Berkeley Version	The battle, moreover, spread over the face of the whole country there, and the wooded terrain that day caused more destruction among the people than did the sword.
New Life Bible	The battle was spread over the whole country. Dangers from the trees destroyed more people that day than the sword.
New Living Translation	The battle raged all across the countryside, and more men died because of the forest than were killed by the sword.
The Voice	The battle spread all across the landscape, and more of his opponents were lost to the forest than to the sword.

David takes the fight into a forested area rather than staying out in the open field. Since his army is more experienced in fighting in such terrain, there is an

opportunity for a smaller force to defeat a larger one. Absalom's men (and Absalom himself, as illustrated in the following verses) die as a result of not knowing how to fight in the forest and avoid its pitfalls.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	However, the war raged on throughout the land. And the thick forest killed as many men as were killed with swords that day.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	...and more of them perished in the woods than in the fighting itself, so scattered was their flight over all the country-side.
New American Bible	The battle spread out over that entire region, and the thickets consumed more combatants that day than did the sword.
New American Bible (R.E.)	The battle spread out over that entire region, and the forest consumed more combatants that day than did the sword.
NIRV	The fighting spread out over the whole countryside. But more men were killed in the forest that day than out in the open.
New Jerusalem Bible	The fighting spread throughout the region and that day the forest claimed more victims than the sword.
New Simplified Bible	More soldiers died from the dangers of the forest than from the fighting.
Revised English Bible	The fighting spread over the whole countryside, and the forest took toll of more people that day than the sword.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the fighting went on over all the face of the country: and the woods were responsible for more deaths than the sword.
The Expanded Bible	The battle spread through all the country [countryside], but that day more men died [^l were devoured/swallowed up] in the forest than in the fighting [^l by the sword].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...for the battle was spread over all the district, and more of the people were destroyed in the forest than what the sword destroyed at the moment.
HCSB	The battle spread over the entire region, and that day the forest claimed more people than the sword.
NET Bible®	The battle there was spread out over the whole area, and the forest consumed more soldiers than the sword devoured that day.
NIV – UK	The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	For the battle there was spread all over the countryside; the forest devoured more people that day than did the sword.
exeGesés companion Bible	...for the war scatters over the face of all the land: and that day the forest abounds and consumes more people than the sword consumes.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	For the milchamah was there scattered over the face of kol ha'aretz; and the ya'ar devoured more people that day than the cherev devoured.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and the battle is there scattered over the face of all the land, and the forest multiplies to devour among the people more than those whom the sword has devoured in that day.
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New RSV	The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.
Syndein/Thieme	For the battle was there was 'scattered in fright' over the 'entire terrain'/'face of all the country'. {the revolutionary troops were routed and ran in fear} And the forest devoured more people/'revolutionary troops' that day than the sword consumed. {Note: The people in front were frightened and they panicked. Many were killed in combat, but more were killed because of panic and the difficulty of the mountainous and wooded terrain.}.
Third Millennium Bible	For the battle there was scattered over the face of all the country; and the woods devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.
World English Bible	For the battle was there spread over the surface of all the country; and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.
Young's Updated LT	And the battle is there scattered over the face of all the land, and the forest multiplies to devour among the people more than those whom the sword has devoured in that day.

The gist of this verse: More men were killed by the terrain of the forest than by the actual battle.

2Samuel 18:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָהּ) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
pûwts (פָּוְטָהּ) [pronounced <i>poots</i>]	<i>dispersed, scattered, being scattered; being broken into pieces</i>	feminine singular, Niphal participle	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>‘ah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ‘âl and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh]</i>	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 18:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: *The battle was scattered there upon all the earth;...* The war did not go as Absalom expected. He had a much larger army than David did, so he expected to overpower David's troops. In a flat, open area, man against man, this might have been the case. However, they were in the forest of Ephraim, scattered all over, so it was not just several men against one. War is rarely based upon one factor. Here terrain, training, organization and surprise were all on David's side; and these factors far outweighed Absalom's numerical superiority.

The word *to scatter* is the Niphal participle of pûwts (פָּוַץ) [pronounced *poots*], and it means *dispersed, scattered, being scattered; being broken into pieces*. Strong's #6327 BDB #806. So the battle was broken down into many pieces—a few fighting here, a few fighting there, and scattered throughout this thick forested area. This is ideal for a smaller army—particularly one which is so well organized that it can be broken down into much smaller fighting units (recall how David had organized his army with men over units of 100). It appears that Absalom's entire battle strategy was, "There's the enemy; *charge!*"

2Samuel 18:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râbâh (רָבַח) [pronounced raw ^b -VAWH]	to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7235 BDB #915
ya'ar (רָעִי) [pronounced YAH-ğahr]	wood, forest, thicket; a beehive; an excess of honey; a thicket of trees	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3293 and #3264 (plural form) BDB #420
Clarke: <i>the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, state that they were devoured by wild beasts in the wood.</i> ³⁵			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #398 BDB #37

³⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:8.

2Samuel 18:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The lamed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ³⁶ (4) Lamed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i> . ³⁷			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...and the forest multiplied the devouring among the people... It appears as if the forest itself was devouring the men who were at war there. Although the verb here commonly means *to eat*, it can also mean *to devour, to consume, to destroy*. So the forest itself was working against the people of Israel. This is because God was against these revolutionists, and God was going to destroy some of them as well.

2Samuel 18:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'asher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, the min preposition and the relative pronoun can mean <i>from where; more than</i> .			
'akal (אָכַל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced khe-RE ^B V]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

³⁶ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar-Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

³⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

2Samuel 18:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hūw' (אוה) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that; this; same</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...in that day more than the sword devoured. In fact, so many died at the hands of the forest, that there were more men killed by the forest than by hand-to-hand combat.

*Gill: The ranks of Absalom's soldiers were broken, and they were thrown into the utmost confusion, and ran about here and there all over the field or plain in which the battle was fought, and into the neighbouring wood.*³⁸

There are some mechanics of Scripture which are not fully made clear to us. God often sends out angels to do His work, and it is possible that is what happened here. How exactly these forests killed the people of Israel, we do not know exactly—nor can we say without reservation that avenging angels of God were killing these revolutionaries. However, there are men that God needed to remove from society, and they were either taken out by the sword, or by misfortune as they tromped through the thick woods. According to Clarke,³⁹ the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic translations have Absalom's soldiers being devoured by wild animals in the thick forest. This is not out of the question, whether this is a part of the original Hebrew or not. Satan appeared to speak through a serpent in the Garden of Eden, so it would not be too far out there to suggest that angels used animals to kill some of Absalom's soldiers.

Based upon other Scriptures, we know that there are lions and bears in Palestine. We may reasonably assume there are poisonous snakes there as well. There are pits and precipices, forested areas so thick as to stop a person in their tracks, if not entangle them as if by a spider's web. When running in a heavy forest, a person can trip or become disoriented—and who knows what they may fall upon. Poole suggests⁴⁰ that some soldiers could have been impacted by hunger, thirst and weariness as well. For whatever reason, the soldiers who supported Absalom appear to be the ones who are discombobulated by the forest, whereas the soldiers under Joab's command seem to be organized and oriented to their environment.

We will only be given on case history of the forest working against David's enemies, and that is Absalom riding along on his mule, and branches catch him on the head and pull him off. He was probably a good rider of mules, but it is unlikely that he rode much in heavily forested areas, and these branches took Absalom by surprise. This may be an example of how angels used the forest against Absalom. They may well have guided his donkey to suddenly take Absalom under a low-hanging branch. Based upon Gen. 3 and Num. 22, angels can have interactions with animals which are outside of that which is normal for man.

Along with Absalom, there were many incidents where men were killed simply by running through this forest. It was as if God was working against them (which He was).

There also seems to be an authority orientation among David's soldiers, as well as great organization, despite the environs. This will be made clear in the verses which follow. One of David's soldiers will refuse to kill Absalom because of David's order (that is authority orientation). However, he seems to have little trouble finding Joab and Joab seems to have little trouble finding his way to Absalom. All of this suggests excellent organizational skills in David's army.

³⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:8 (edited).

³⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:8.

⁴⁰ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:8.

On the other hand, Absalom is going to find himself riding around on a mule, ostensibly on his own. His soldiers will be running in all directions to the point where they are dying in the forest due to a variety of forest-related accidents. That suggests a total lack of organization as well as no careful line of authority.

Taking the example of Absalom, we may suppose that there are allies of Absalom running through the forest, and some are tripped, some are trapped here or there, some fall into holes. These are revolutionists, but this does not make them great soldiers or even good soldiers. A revolutionist is different from an establishment army type, inasmuch as, the establishment-type knows exactly what he is fighting for—he is fighting for his land, his wife and his children (Neh. 4:14). The revolutionist is fighting for something which does not yet exist and may not exist. He is fighting for some kind of ideal which does not exist nor can this ideal be guaranteed.

Furthermore, a soldier is professionally trained; a revolutionary may or may not have training; and a revolutionary must be reached emotionally in order for them to be a part of the revolution. A well-trained soldier dispatches his enemies unemotionally.

Application: Anyone can look at any country and find flaws throughout. However, that does not mean that a revolution will solve any of those flaws. Quite obviously, when you plunge your country into war, no matter what happens, life is going to be much more difficult on the other side of that war. And the revolutionist trusts leaders who are no less corrupt and no less power-hungry than the men they claim they will replace.

Application: The only time that a country might be better off after a revolution is when the revolutionary forces are killed or thoroughly neutralized.

Application: In Egypt, over the past few years (I write this in 2013), there was the famous facebook revolution, where people decided that their long-time dictator, Mubarak, was just not a very nice person, and now they could tweet this to everyone that they knew; and they could arrange meetings and demonstrations. Although many Americans saw this, at first, as a great triumph for democracy, once Mubarak had been ousted from office, a new power arose—that of the evil Muslim brotherhood. They hung back during the actual revolution, but in the election, they became more and more visible, and Egypt, being an Islamic country, voted for the Muslim brotherhood. In a nation with dozens, if not hundreds of factions, there was no requirement of 51% of the people to stand behind a Muslim candidate.

Application: This candidate won, and then began to push through Islamic reforms, making him a pariah among the people of Egypt. They persecuted Christians, Christian neighborhoods, and all but destroyed the tourist industry for a nation that was heavily dependent upon tourists. At the time that I write this, the Muslim leader has been forced out, but he has not been replaced—and the words I hear more often than any others are *failed state*. Egypt could become one of the largest countries in the world to become a failed state—and all of this because they had a revolution. My point here is, a revolution does not insure a better government. In fact, most of the time, you can expect a more oppressive regime to seize power.

Application: As has been discussed in previous chapters, there are the idealists, who are manipulated into beginning the revolution; and the hard-core revolutionaries, who, if the revolution is won, then seize power, being even more extreme than the power they replaced. This is exactly what occurred in Egypt. There were the idealists, the facebook revolutionaries; but then, the Muslim Brotherhood seized power (even though they got power legitimately, they are an illegitimate force in Egypt).

Application: The War for American Independence (mistakenly called the American Revolutionary War) was fighting for their homes, their wives and their children. They were fighting for what they had, which the British were trying to take away from them. They were not trying to overthrow the British; they were not trying to kill George III and replace him with someone else. They were fighting for their personal sovereignty, much of which they already had a taste of. There was no nirvana promised by a few revolutionaries—there was simply the life which they already knew and loved that they fought for.

Application: This does not mean that the American War for Independence was lacking in sin or lacking in men who desired power and control. However, there was a reasonable consensus among the Americans who favored throwing off the shackles of English rule to not allow the federal government to grow to a point where it was needlessly oppressive (as it is today).

Application: I have started to go pretty far afield here, but let me strongly note that I am not suggesting or endorsing any sort of revolution in the United States today. We get the government we deserve and we get the leaders that we deserve. We certainly have a country which is rotting from the inside out; people who are willing to take government handouts in exchange for not working and voting Democrat. However, a revolution does not solve that problem—Bible doctrine in the souls of believers and **establishment** values solves that problem.

Bear in mind that the vocabulary of this Bible and its expository section is designed to be simple. Although they do not specify a grade level, there is a **slide show** that give the general idea behind the Easy English Bible (it will open up PowerPoint or Presentations on your computer).

The Easy English Bible Summation (so far)

More men had probably joined David's army. He organised them so that they were ready for the battle with Absalom. David's army was much smaller than Absalom's army. But David's men were good soldiers. And they had three strong leaders. David wanted to lead his army himself. But his men did not want to risk David's life. Two men, David and Absalom, were claiming to be king of *Israel. But only one man could be king. David's army could defeat Absalom's army in this battle. But, if David died, then Absalom would be the king. So, David had to stay in the city, where he was safe.

The gate of the city was an important place. David watched his army go to the battle. And he waited there until he heard news from the battle. Absalom had taken the *kingdom of *Israel from David. So, Absalom was David's enemy. But Absalom was also David's son. David wanted his army to win the battle. But he did not want them to hurt his son. Everyone heard what David said about this.

David's small army defeated Absalom's huge army. But many men died. In those days, there was a forest on the east side of the River Jordan. It was easy to fight in a clear area. But it was difficult to fight in a forest. Trees grow close together in a forest. So, it is usually quite dark. Also, there are very few clear paths. Nobody could take food or drink to the soldiers in the forest. They would have lost their way. Some men may have fallen down holes in the ground. And wild animals may have attacked other men. Each soldier had to fight on his own or in a small group. They could not protect each other. Absalom had more men, but David's men were more skilled in those surroundings.

From <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/2samuel-lbw.htm> accessed July 19, 2013.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Vv. 7–8 read: **The people of Israel were struck down before the army of David. It was a great slaughter, where 20,000 men died. The battle spread out over that land, so that the forest devoured more people in that day than the sword did.** The Bible at times requires us to dig carefully for some of the details which are not explicit. We have a very large (but probably untrained) army led by Absalom, pursuing David's army. They are led into a thick forest where the battle takes place. This thick forest favors a more mobile, better organized army, and David's army was quite successful in beating down their opponents. And those that David's army did not kill, many died in those forests, running into trees, into branches, falling into holes, etc.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Absalom is Discovered and Killed

And so meets Absalom to faces of servants of David and Absalom was riding upon the mule. And so goes the mule under thick branches of the oak the great and so is held fast his head in the oak. And so he was delivered up between the [two] heavens and between the earth and the mule which [was] under him passed on.

2Samuel
18:9

Absalom [unexpectedly] met up face to face with David's servants while Absalom was riding upon his mule [lit., *the mule*]. The mule went under the thick branches of the great oak so that his head was held fast by the oak [branches]. Consequently, he was delivered up [to them, hanging] between heaven and earth while the mule which [was] under him kept going.

Absalom unexpectedly met up with some of David's servants while Absalom was riding his mule. The mule went under some thick branches of a great oak tree so that Absalom's head was caught up in the branches of the oak. Consequently, he was delivered up there to his enemies by God, suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule under him kept on going.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Dead Sea Scrolls	[Absalom happened on some of David's troops. As] he [4QSam ^a LXX ^L . <i>Absalom</i> MT LXX ^B] [rode his mule, the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, and his head got caught in the] oak and he hung [4QSam ^a . <i>Was stuck</i> MT] [between the sky and the ground, while the mule under him continued on].
Latin Vulgate	And it happened that Absalom met the servants of David, riding on a mule: and as the mule went under a thick and large oak, his head stuck in the oak: and while he hung between the heaven and the earth, the mule on which he rode passed on.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so meets Absalom to faces of servants of David and Absalom was riding upon the mule. And so goes the mule under thick branches of the oak the great and so is held fast his head in the oak. And so he was delivered up between the [two] heavens and between the earth and the mule which [was] under him passed on.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And <u>it happened that</u> Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom was riding upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and Absalom's head caught fast in the great oak, and he was hanging between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom went to meet the servants of David. And Absalom was mounted on his mule, and the mule came under the thick boughs of a great oak; and his head was entangled in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth; and the mule passed on from under him.
Significant differences:	The Syriac seems to have the verb <i>to be</i> at the beginning of this verse. There seems to be some disagreement on the 2 nd to the last verb (bold in the MT above), the MT having the Hophal of <i>to give</i> . <i>To hang</i> is found in the 4QSam ^a .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Absalom came upon some of David's men. Absalom was riding on a mule, and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's head got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair while the mule under him kept on going.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom was riding his mule under a huge tree when his head caught in the branches. The mule ran off and left Absalom hanging in midair. Some of David's soldiers happened by,...

Easy English	Then Absalom suddenly met some of David's soldiers. Absalom was riding his royal *mule. The *mule went under the thick branches of a large oak (a type of tree). The branches went into Absalom's hair and they stayed there. His *mule ran away. So Absalom was hanging in the air.
Easy-to-Read Version	It happened that Absalom met David's officers. Absalom jumped on his mule and tried to escape. The mule went under the branches of a large oak tree. The branches were thick, and Absalom's head got caught in the tree. His mule ran out from under him, so Absalom was hanging above the ground [Literally, "between heaven and earth."].
Good News Bible (TEV)	Suddenly Absalom met some of David's men. Absalom was riding a mule, and as it went under a large oak tree, Absalom's head got caught in the branches. The mule ran on and Absalom was left hanging in midair.
<i>The Message</i>	Absalom ran into David's men, but was out in front of them riding his mule, when the mule ran under the branches of a huge oak tree. Absalom's head was caught in the oak and he was left dangling between heaven and earth, the mule running right out from under him.
New Berkeley Version	Now Absalom was confronted unexpectedly by the servants of David. He had been riding his mule; but the mule had passed under a network of branches of a large tree, so that his head was caught in the tree and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule on which he had been mounted trotted on. His luxurious locks were caught in its branches, or his head caught in a fork of the tree
New Century Version	Absalom Dies Then Absalom happened to meet David's troops. As Absalom was riding his mule, it went under the thick branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's head got caught in the tree, and his mule ran out from under him. So Absalom was left hanging above the ground.
New Life Bible	Absalom met the servants of David. He was going on his horse, and the horse went under the many branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's hair caught in the branches of the oak. He was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the horse under him kept going.
New Living Translation	During the battle, Absalom happened to come upon some of David's men. He tried to escape on his mule, but as he rode beneath the thick branches of a great tree, his hair [Hebrew his head.] got caught in the tree. His mule kept going and left him dangling in the air.
The Voice	Absalom himself encountered David's forces, and as he was riding away on his mule, the animal took him into the thick <i>overhanging</i> branches of a huge oak tree. There his hair was caught, and he dangled between the sky and earth as his mule fled from underneath him.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then David's men caught up with AbSalom, who was riding his mule. And as the mule took off into a dense thicket, his head got caught in the branches of an oak tree, and he hung there between the sky and the ground, because the mule took off and left him hanging there.
Christian Community Bible	Absalom was riding a mule and happened to meet the guards of David. As the mule passed under the thick branches of a big oak tree, his head was caught in the oak tree and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule he was riding went its way.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Some of David's men encountered Absalom himself, riding on a mule; and away the mule went, under the tangled branches of a great oak, which caught him by the head and kept him hanging there between earth and sky, while the beast that carried him pressed on.

New American Bible	Absalom happened to get in front of some of David's men. Absalom was riding on a mule, and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree, and his head was caught in the tree, and so he was suspended [Greek; <i>suspended</i> ; omitted in Hebrew] between heaven and earth when the mule that was under him ran away.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Death of Absalom.</i> Absalom unexpectedly came up against David's servants. He was mounted on a mule, and, as the mule passed under the branches of a large oak tree, his hair caught fast in the tree. He hung between heaven and earth while the mule under him kept going.
NIRV	Absalom happened to come across some of David's men. He was riding his mule. The mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's head got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in the air. The mule he was riding kept on going.
New Jerusalem Bible	Absalom happened to run into some of David's guards. Absalom was riding his mule and the mule passed under the thick branches of a great oak. Absalom's head got caught in the oak and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule he was riding went on.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom happened to come face to face with some of David's men. He was riding on a mule. The mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree. Absalom's head became caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair when the mule under him ran away.
Revised English Bible	Some of David's men caught sight of Absalom; he was riding his mule and, as it passed beneath a large oak, his head was caught in its boughs; he was left in mid-air, while the mule went on from under him.
Today's NIV	Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom visited in front of the servants of David: Absalom rode over a mule, and the mule came tangled under a great terebinth-tree. The terebinth-tree fortified on his head, giving him between the heaven and the land. The mule under him passed on.
Bible in Basic English	And Absalom came across some of David's men. And Absalom was seated on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great tree, and his head became fixed in the tree and he was lifted up between earth and heaven, and the beast under him went on.
The Expanded Bible	Absalom Dies Then Absalom happened to ·meet [run into; come upon] David's ·troops [^l servants]. As Absalom was riding his mule, it went under the thick branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's head got caught in the tree, and his mule ran out from under him. So Absalom was left hanging ·above the ground [^l between heaven and earth].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Absalom also fled before the servants of David. Absalom was mounted on a mule, and the mule ran under the boughs of a great oak-tree, and his head was caught in the oak, so he hung between the sky and the earth. But the mule that was under him passed on.
NET Bible®	Then Absalom happened to come across David's men. Now as Absalom was riding on his [Heb "the."] mule, it [Heb "the donkey."] went under the branches of a large oak tree. His head got caught in the oak and he was suspended in midair [Heb "between the sky and the ground."], while the mule he had been riding kept going.
New Heart English Bible	Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold

of the oak, and he was taken up between the sky and earth; and the mule that was under him went on.

NIV – UK

Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in mid-air, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

Avshalom happened to meet some of David's servants. Avshalom was riding his mule, and as the mule walked under the thick branches of a big terebinth tree, his head got caught in the terebinth, so that he was left hanging between earth and sky, as the mule went on from under him.

exeGesés companion Bible

THE DEATH OF ABI SHALOM

And Abi Shalom faces the servants of David:
and Abi Shalom rides on a mule;
and the mule goes under the thicket of a great oak;
and the oak holds his head
given between the heavens and between the earth;
and the mule under him passes on.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

Absalom encountered some of David's followers. Absalom was riding on a mule, and as the mule passed under the tangled branches of a great terebinth, his hair got caught in the terebinth; he was held [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain. Ancient versions and 4QSam^a read "was left hanging."] between heaven and earth as the mule under him kept going.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Avshalom met the avadim of Dovid. And Avshalom rode upon a pered (mule), and the pered went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his rosh (head) caught hold of elah (tree, oak), and he was suspended between HaShomayim and ha'aretz; the pered under him went on.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible

Then Absalom [unavoidably] met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and Absalom's head caught fast [in a fork] of the oak; and the mule under him ran away, leaving him hanging between the heavens and the earth.

Concordant Literal Version

And Absalom meets before the servants of David, and Absalom is riding on the mule, and the mule comes in under an entangled bough of the great oak, and his head takes hold on the oak, and he is placed between the heavens and the earth, and the mule that [is] under him has passed on.

A Conservative Version

And Absalom chanced to meet the servants of David. And Absalom was riding upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak. And he was taken up between sky and earth, and the mule that was under him.

Darby Translation

And Absalom found himself in the presence of David's servants. And Absalom was riding upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of the great terebinth, and his head caught in the terebinth, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.

English Standard Version

And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak, and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

Green's Literal Translation

And Absalom came before David's servants. And Absalom was riding on a mule, and the mule came in under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught

hold in the oak, and he was lifted up between the heavens and the earth. And the mule under him passed on.

NASB

Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging [Lit placed] between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going.

New RSV

Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging [Gk Syr Tg: Heb was put] between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

Syndein/Thieme

And Absalom {happened to} meet the soldiers of David. And Absalom fled {in panic} on a {royal} mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree, and his '{long hair on his} head' got caught in the {branches of the} oak tree, {Absalom only went to a barber once a year and his hair here is very long RBT says that long hair is usually the sign of a lack of respect for authority} with the result that he was suspended between heaven and the earth {he was hanging by his hair caught in the branch of a tree} while the mule he was riding 'kept on going'/road away without him'. {Note: A good military tactic is to send out a reconnaissance patrol behind enemy lines to locate their reserve troops. Apparently, Joab sent out such a patrol and they encountered Absalom who felt save enough to be riding alone and riding without a helmet.}.

Third Millennium Bible

And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak; and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that was under him went away.

World English Bible

Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the sky and earth; and the mule that was under him went on.

Young's Updated LT

And Absalom meets before the servants of David, and Absalom is riding on the mule, and the mule comes in under an entangled bough of the great oak, and his head takes hold on the oak, and he is placed between the heavens and the earth, and the mule that is under him has passed on.

The gist of this verse:

Absalom, while on a mule, has his head caught up in some thick branches of a tree, just as he encounters David's guard. He remains suspended there as his mule rides off.

2Samuel 18:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to meet; to meet unexpectedly; to have been met, to have encountered</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

2Samuel 18:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> . This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part</i> [or, the edge of a sword]. L ^e pânîym (לפָּנִים) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> .			
‘ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: Absalom [unexpectedly] met up face to face with David's servants... The verb used here is generally understood to be in the passive, but there is also the idea here of this meeting being unexpected. Absalom has not really been in an all-out war before, and, as we have seen, he tends not to get his own hands dirty (he had his servants kill his half-brother Amnon). So he was not looking for a confrontation. He might have been a bit confused by the horror and chaos of warfare. However, all of a sudden, there is Absalom and there are some of David's soldiers.⁴¹

My guess is, Absalom's soldiers were getting beat, they retreated, and Absalom was essentially just left there, to fend for himself. He was probably trying to escape himself. However, how do you escape from a forest that is working against you and you are so completely turned around anyway because of the war?

R. B. Thieme, Jr. suggests⁴² that Joab has sent out a reconnaissance patrol behind enemy lines to locate their reserve troops (or to determine the position taken by the enemy). Joab's patrol apparently encountered Absalom who felt save enough to be riding alone and riding without a helmet. My guess is, not having been in a war before, and not having his troops really organized, Absalom ending up alone riding his mule more as a result of the chaos of war, and the lack of training of his own troops, who should have had a perimeter guard around him. For whatever reason—the reality of the battle moved to close to Absalom—he appears to be off on his own, on a mule, trying to be inconspicuous.

What appears to be the case is, Absalom sees the soldiers, but they do not see him at first. He may have the idea to surreptitiously ride out of there.

⁴¹ The Pulpit Commentary paints a more heroic picture of Absalom in *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:9. However, based upon the text I have found, I believe this description is more apt.

⁴² From http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_18.html accessed July 19, 2013.

2Samuel 18:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, while; since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁיבָא) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
râkab (רָכַב) [pronounced <i>raw-KAH^BV</i>]	<i>is riding</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7392 BDB #938
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahʕ</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pered (דָּרָב) [pronounced <i>PEH-red</i>]	<i>mule</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6505 BDB #825

Translation: ...while Absalom was riding upon his mule [lit., *the mule*]. It was routine for royalty to ride mules. Absalom appears to be in a fairly well-hidden place, while he rides around during this war. It does not appear as if he is personally doing battle with anyone. Recall that, although Absalom has ordered the death of his half-brother, he has not personally killed anyone, insofar as we know; nor is there any Biblical record of him having been in military service. It is as if he believes that the actions of the king in war are things he can fake; and what is happening in reality is not exactly what he expected.

2Samuel 18:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
pered (דָּרָב) [pronounced <i>PEH-red</i>]	<i>mule</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6505 BDB #825
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced <i>TAH-khahth</i>]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
sôwbek (בְּוֹשֶׁבֶת) [pronounced <i>SOH-behk</i>]	<i>thick branches, entangled branches, a network [of boughs]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7730 BDB #959

2Samuel 18:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êlâh (אֵלָה) [pronounced <i>ā-LAW</i>]	<i>oak, terebinth; tree</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #424 BDB #18
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i>]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	feminine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

Translation: *The mule went under the thick branches of the great oak...* Now, either the mule is spooked or Absalom is a bit spooked, so it appears as though he tries to ride off. There is nothing to indicate that he was charging David's soldiers.

As mentioned, it does not appear as if David's soldiers see Absalom quite yet, but Absalom surely sees them, and he is a bit panicked as he gets his mule to move.

Absalom has not really been in a situation like this before. He does not appear to have any protection around him—if he does, they are not mentioned. So Absalom appears to be making a run for it. However, everywhere, the forest is overgrown and thick with foliage (much of Palestine was probably like this), and the mule goes under the branches of a huge oak tree. What is suggested here is, the mule does this on his own. As if God is involved somehow, guiding this mule. Absalom seems to be an appendage to this mule.

2Samuel 18:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châzaq (חָזַק) [pronounced <i>khaw-ZAHK</i>]	<i>to tie up, to bind; to hold fast, to adhere to, to be stuck to; to be strong, to be firm, to increase in prosperity, to strengthen</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2388 BDB #304
rô'sh (רֶשֶׁת אוֹר שֶׁאֵר) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'êlâh (אֵלָה) [pronounced <i>ā-LAW</i>]	<i>oak, terebinth; tree</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #424 BDB #18

Translation: ...so that his head was held fast by the oak [branches]. Absalom, if you will recall, has all kinds of hair—a huge amount of hair which he keeps very long, and it distinguishes him from everyone else (2Sam. 14:25–26). In a time when there were no newspapers and People Magazine was not yet in circulation in this part of the world, Absalom was known by description, and men who then saw him recognized him by his description. Personally, given the hair, I think of Phil Spector, except that Absalom is a very handsome young man who looks like a young David with very long and thick hair. So many people, based upon this description, would be able to pick Absalom out of a crowd.



The picture is **Absalom Hanging on the Oak Tree**. Illustration for The Old Testament - Part II (Brunoff, 1904), taken from Psalmbird.net. I rightly assumed that this incident would have inspired a number of artists over the centuries. I am surprised that most of the graphics I saw were disappointing, including this one. Is that a mule? And the forest does not appear to be very thick. However, Absalom’s thick red hair is probably reasonably rendered here (if indeed it is red).

Some discussion is made of Absalom wearing a helmet or not. We really do not know for certain, but it is my guess, given his unfamiliarity with warfare, that Absalom probably chose no helmet so that he might be known far and wide to his soldiers. Clearly, he did not expect for his army to be routed.

Wesley remarks at this point: *[Absalom was] probably entangled by the hair of the head, which being very long and thick, might easily catch hold of a bough, especially when the great God directed it. Either he wore no helmet, or he had thrown it away as well as his other arms, to hasten his flight. Thus the matter of his pride was the instrument of his ruin.*⁴³ This gives a good description—particularly the final sentence, which, in many ways, describes Absalom’s life.

Absalom is probably not hanging by his head alone, but his entire upper body is probably caught up in these thick branches, but it is likely his hair that is the most tangled up. He cannot simply extricate himself because of his full head of hippy hair. The illustrations just do not do this justice.

It is as if God is serving Absalom up on a silver platter for David’s soldiers.

2Samuel 18:9e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	to be given, be bestowed, be given up, be delivered up; to be put upon	3 rd person masculine singular, Hophal imperfect	Strong’s #5414 BDB #678

⁴³ John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:9 (slightly edited).

2Samuel 18:9e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bēyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among;</i> when found twice, it means <i>between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bēyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among;</i> when found twice, it means <i>between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: Consequently, he was delivered up [to them, hanging] between heaven and earth... The notion suggested here is that Absalom is delivered up on a silver platter for these soldiers of David. They could not have asked for more. There is Absalom in front of them, helpless and caught up in several thick branches. It is as if God has given Absalom over to these men. They don't quite see him yet, suggesting that this forest in which they are fighting is quite thick.

Matthew Henry: [Absalom] hung between heaven and earth, as unworthy of either, as abandoned of both; earth would not keep him, heaven would not take him, hell therefore opens her mouth to receive him.⁴⁴

The phrase *heavens and earth* occurs often in the Bible.

The American English Bible on "The Heavens and the Earth"

In both the Ancient Scriptures of Israel (OT) and the Christian Era Scriptures (NT), we find all the realm of non-living creation divided into just three entities; the heavens (or sky), the earth (the land or ground), and the seas (or the waters) and rivers.

Now, in contemporary English, we understand that there is a difference between the heavens and the sky, the earth and the land (or ground), and the seas and waters. However, in both Hebrew and Greek, these fine distinctions that we accept because of our modern technology, can't be found. So, Genesis 1:1 is literally translated herein as, 'In the beginning, The God created the skies and the lands.' This is very accurate, because it was man's view of creation from the earth. There was just the land that he stood on, the sky above him, and the waters or seas over there. He had no technical understanding of the earth as a planet, because men had never seen the earth as a globe in space, as most of us have done today. However, because of these

⁴⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:9–18.

The American English Bible on “The Heavens and the Earth”

distinctions that we are aware of, translators must choose the proper words to provide the right nuances in English, in order for readers to grasp the proper meaning of each text. And as you will see, something as simple as selecting another synonym can give us a quite different view of the meanings of some common verses.

The Greek word ourano(n), for example, can be correctly translated as heaven, heavens, sky, and skies, depending on the context and tense. But if the translator should choose the wrong word, people will reach very different (and often wrong) conclusions, because of the nuances implied in English.

Likewise, the Greek words ge, ges, and gen can be translated as earth, earths, ground, grounds, land, or lands, depending on the context and tense. So, the symbolic words at 2 Peter 3:5, 6, for example, are translated herein as, 'The thing that they don't want to understand is this: That the ancient skies and land were out of the water, but (in obedience to God's instructions) they stood together between the waters.' (For an example of the problems created by the wrong use of the words ge, ges, and gen, see the linked document, 'Isaiah 24 - Is It Speaking of Armageddon?').

Notice that the 'skies and land' were located 'between the water.' So, although other Bibles translated this verse as speaking of the 'heavens and earth,' the reference is to the portion of the heavens that are close to the earth. to the skies.

The same is true of the famous words of Jesus at Matthew 5:5, which read in Greek: 'Makarioi oi praeis hoti outoi kleronomesousin ten gen,' or, 'Blest the meek, for they will/inherit the (earth, ground, or land).' Notice that in some Bibles Jesus is recorded as saying, 'The meek will inherit the earth;' while in others he said, 'The meek will inherit the land.' Do you see the difference in nuances implied here? Yet, both word choices are equally correct.

And finally, when it comes to the seas (gr. tas thalassan), there are already distinctions as to different types of waters in the Greek text. For instance, seas are called thalassan and rivers are called potamos (or 'flowing'). However, notice how (at Revelation 20: 13) the resurrection of the dead is divided between those who died on land and those who were lost in the water: 'The sea gave up its dead, death and the grave gave up those dead in them, and they were all judged by the things that they did.'

We again find all three of these realms of creation brought together symbolically at Revelation 21:1, which we have translated as saying, 'Then I saw new skies and new lands, because the previous sky and land had disappeared, as did the sea.' So, did John see 'a new heavens and a new earth,' as some translate his words, or did he see 'new skies and new lands,' as we have quoted him? The Greek words that are used in the beginning of this verse are both in the plural tense, but in the singular tense in the latter half of the verse. So, what John says that he saw was 'new skies and new lands' which took the place of the old 'sky, land, and sea' that had just disappeared before him (he didn't see the globe and the realm of God disappear).

Also, in the case of where EliJah was taken away in a celestial chariot; most people think he was taken (as their Bibles put it) 'to heaven,' where he went to live with God. This isn't true, because King JehoRam later received a letter from Elijah (see 2 Chronicles 21:12). So, God had apparently used the celestial chariot to take him into 'the sky' (the proper translation here), where he was then sent to another place here on the earth. For more information on this, see the linked document, The Hereafter.

From: http://www.2001translation.com/Second_Samuel.htm#_The_Heavens_or_Sky_the_Earth_or_th accessed July 19, 2013.

2Samuel 18:9f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, while; since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pered (פֶּרֶד) [pronounced <i>PEH-red</i>]	<i>mule</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6505 BDB #825
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced <i>TAH-khahth</i>]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
ʾâbar (אָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #5674 BDB #716

Translation: ...while the mule which [was] under him kept going. While Absalom is caught up in this tree growth, his mule just keeps on going. So Absalom is just going to hang there helpless before David's soldiers. At this point, there is no way that Absalom hides from the soldiers who are there. If they did not see him before, they can certainly hear him struggling to free himself, so that they move to a vantage point where they can see him. This movement might not be more than a few feet, given the description of this forest.

Matthew Henry: *[Absalom's] mule went away from under him, as if glad to get clear of such a burden, and resign it to the ignominious tree.*⁴⁵

David gave clear instructions to treat this son of his gently. All of the soldiers knew about these instructions, including the soldiers before whom Absalom hung. And suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere, there is Absalom, in this tree, struggling to get free, and the commotion gets the attention of the soldiers who are nearby.

This leaves this patrol in a quandary. They had all heard David give the orders to *deal gently* with Absalom, which order was given to David's generals, but heard by all. It will become apparent that Absalom offered a reward for the dead body of Absalom in v. 11. So, what is this patrol to do?

And so sees [this] a man one and so he makes [this] known to Joab and so he says, "Behold, I have seen Absalom hanging in the oak."

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One man saw [this] and he made [it] known to Joab, saying, "Listen, I have seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree."

⁴⁵ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:9–18.

One man saw Absalom and he went to Joab and told him about it, saying, “Listen, I know where Absalom is; he is over yonder, hanging in a tree.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Dead Sea Scrolls	A man [4QSam ^a . <i>A certain man</i> MT.] [sa]w it, and reported it [to Joab, said, “I saw Absalom hanging in an oak!”]
Latin Vulgate	And one saw this and told Joab, saying: I saw Absalom hanging upon an oak.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sees [this] a man one and so he makes [this] known to Joab and so he says, “Behold, I have seen Absalom hanging in the oak.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And a certain man saw it and told Joab and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.
Septuagint (Greek)	And a man saw it, and reported to Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.

Significant differences: I don’t observe any dramatic differences among the texts.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	One of the men saw this and reported to Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging from an oak tree."
Contemporary English V. Easy English	...and one of them went and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree!" One of the men saw this. So he said to Joab, 'I have just seen Absalom. He was hanging in an oak tree.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	One of David's men saw him and reported to Joab, "Sir, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!"
<i>The Message</i>	A solitary soldier saw him and reported it to Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging from an oak tree!"
New Berkeley Version	A certain man saw it and informed Joab, saying, "Look here! I have seen Absalom hanging on a tree!"
New Century Version	When one of the men saw it happen, he told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!"
New Living Translation	One of David's men saw what had happened and told Joab, "I saw Absalom dangling from a great tree."
The Voice	A soldier saw this and told Joab. Soldier: I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree, <i>helpless</i> .

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, a man saw what had happened and he told Joab: 'I've found Absalom; he's hanging in an oak tree!'
New Advent (Knox) Bible	A soldier, who witnessed it, went and told Joab that he had seen Absalom hanging from an oak.
New American Bible (R.E.) NIRV	Someone saw this and reported to Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging from an oak tree." One of David's men saw what had happened. He told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree."
Today's NIV	When one of the men saw what had happened, he told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	One man saw it and told Joab saying, "I saw and beheld Absalom hanging in a terebinth-tree."
The Expanded Bible	When one of the men saw it happen, he told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging [dangling] in an oak tree!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	One of the men of David, however, saw him, and informed J'oab, and said, "I have seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree."
HCSB	One of the men saw <i>him</i> and informed Joab. He said, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!"
NET Bible®	When one [4QSam ^a lacks the word "one."] of the men saw this, he reported it to Joab saying, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.
NIV – UK	When one of the men saw what had happened, he told Joab, 'I have just seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Someone saw it and told Yo'av, "I saw Avshalom hanging in a terebinth."
exeGesés companion Bible	And one man sees it and tells Yah Ab and says, Behold, I see Abi Shalom hang in an oak.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And a certain ish saw it, told Yoav, and said, Hinei, I saw Avshalom [ben Dovid] talui (hanged) b'elah (on a tree, oak) [ZECHARYAH 12:10].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And one man sees, and declares to Joab, and said, `Lo, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	And a certain man saw it, and told Joab,—and said—Lo! I saw Absalom suspended in an oak.
New King James Version	Now a certain man saw it and told Joab, and said, "I just saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth tree!"
Syndein/Thieme	When a 'certain officer' saw him {the patrol commander}, he reported to Joab, and said, "Behold, I have seen Absalom suspended in an oak tree." {Note: 'Echad means one, unique, or even a 'unique category' and that is what we have here. A 'unique category' of an 'iysh or man. This man was unique from the others in that he must have been the officer in charge. So apparently this officer left the patrol there to guard (and protect) Absalom while he went back and reported the situation to General Joab. He had heard David's command to not harm Absalom.}
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Look, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.
World English Bible	A certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak.
Young's Updated LT	And one man sees, and declares to Joab, and says, "Lo, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak."

The gist of this verse: One of the men who witnessed Absalom hanging in the tree went to Joab to tell him.

2Samuel 18:10a

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

2Samuel 18:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

Translation: *One man saw [this]...* We have a series of wâw consecutives followed by imperfect verbs, following a verse with very much the same thing. Therefore, we have a series of actions which are either consecutive or coterminous.

So there is Absalom—he sees enemy soldiers and he begins to ride away, somewhat hidden by the thick forest (he was probably hiding himself in a area that was quite thick with trees and foliage). When he begins to ride away, his head and upper body are caught up in a tree. He is not yet seen, but he still sees David's soldiers, and he is struggling to get free. Although the Bible says that his head is caught in the tree, more than likely, this includes his hair being entangled.

Then one of David's soldiers sees him.

2Samuel 18:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yôw'âb (יְאוֹב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: *...and he made [it] known to Joab,...* Likely, this man first tells the soldiers that he is with and these soldiers secure the area, determining that Absalom is not going anywhere. It might take Absalom an hour to extricate himself. So, given this time, the soldier who first saw Absalom goes to find Joab.

Nothing is said about the soldiers of Israel (in Absalom's army). Normally, the commander-in-chief would be surrounded by armor bearers, but that does not appear to be the case.

I wonder if any of Absalom's soldiers wanted to find him—would they have known where to look? Probably not. But Joab's soldiers know where Joab is and, for important information, they are ready and able to go to Joab and find him and tell him whatever is important. As the general over his brigade, Joab is probably not out in front killing the enemy, but he is directing his men from behind. However, he is not hiding himself, and his men, when necessary, know where he can be found. He ran an organized command.

2Samuel 18:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
tâlâh (תָּלָה) [pronounced <i>taw-LAWH</i>]	<i>hanging [up], suspended</i>	Qal passive participle	Strong's #8518 BDB #1067
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'êlâh (הָאֵלָה) [pronounced <i>ā-LAW</i>]	<i>oak, terebinth; tree</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #424 BDB #18

Translation: ...saying, "Listen, I have seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree." The man tells Joab, "I've seen Absalom; he is hanging in a tree. He is still there. He's not going anywhere. What should we do with him?"

This soldier did not try to buy any favor with Joab. He could have killed Absalom, brought Joab his head, and asked for a reward. However, this man knows the order delivered by David, and, no matter what he thinks of this order, he obeys it. He is oriented to authority.

And so says Joab to the man, the one telling [him], “And behold, you saw and why did you not strike him earth-ward? And on account of me to give to you 10 [pieces of] silver and a belt—one.”

2Samuel
18:11

Then Joab said to the man, the messenger, “Really, you saw [Absalom]? Why did you not strike him to the ground? On my account, I would have given you 10 [pieces of] silver and a certain [military] belt [signifying a promotion].”

Then Joab upbraided this messenger, saying, “Listen, you saw Absalom and you did nothing? Why didn’t you kill him right then and there? I would have rewarded you with 10 pieces of silver and a military promotion.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Joab said to the man that told him: If you sawest him, why did you not stab him to the ground, and I would have given you ten <u>sicles</u> of silver, and a belt?
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Joab to the man, the one telling [him], “And behold, you saw and why did you not strike him earth-ward? And on account of me to give to you 10 [pieces of] silver and a belt—one.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Joab said to the man who told him, When you saw him, why then did you not smite him there <u>and throw him</u> to the ground? And I would have given you ten <u>shekels of silver and a garment</u> .
Septuagint (Greek)	And Joab said to the man who reported it to him, Behold, did you indeed see him? Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten <u>pieces of silver</u> , and a belt.

Significant differences: There appears to be an extra verb in the Syriac text. The Syriac appears to add *shekels* (as does the Greek and Latin) and the Syriac has *garment* instead of a *belt*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Joab said to the man who told him, "You saw this? Why didn't you kill him on the spot? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt."
Contemporary English V.	Joab said, "You saw Absalom? Why didn't you kill him? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a special belt."
Easy English	Joab said to the man, 'If you saw him, you should have killed him. I would then have given you 10 pieces of silver and a special belt.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	Joab answered, "If you saw him, why didn't you kill him on the spot? I myself would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt."
<i>The Message</i>	Joab said to the man who told him, "If you saw him, why didn't you kill him then and there? I'd have rewarded you with ten pieces of silver and a fancy belt."
New Berkeley Version	Joab replied to his informant, "You have really seen him? Then why did you not strike him down to the ground on the spot? It would have been up to me to reward you with ten pieces of silver, and a belt!"
New Life Bible	Joab said to the man, "You saw him! Why did you not kill him and let him fall to the ground? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt."

New Living Translation	"What?" Joab demanded. "You saw him there and didn't kill him? I would have rewarded you with ten pieces of silver [Hebrew 10 shekels of silver, about 4 ounces or 114 grams in weight.] and a hero's belt!"
The Voice	Joab: ¹¹ You saw Absalom? Then why didn't you kill him while he was hanging there? I would have given you 10 pieces of silver and a belt!

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Joab said: 'You saw this and you didn't cut him to the ground? I would have given you ten large silver coins if you had.'
Beck's American Translation	"What! You saw that!" Joab said to the man who told him, 'Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have felt obligated to give you 10 shekels of silver and a belt.'
Christian Community Bible	Joab said to the man who reported this, "What! You saw him but did not strike him at once? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt."
God's Word™	"What! You saw that!" Joab said to the man who told him. "Why didn't you strike him to the ground? Then I would have felt obligated to give you four ounces of silver and a belt."
New American Bible (R.E.)	Joab said to the man who told him this: "If you saw him, why did you not strike him to the ground on the spot? Then it would have been my duty to give you fifty pieces of silver and a belt."
NIRV	Joab said to the man, "What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him down right there? Then I would have had to give you four ounces of silver and a soldier's belt."
New Jerusalem Bible	Joab said to the man who had informed him, 'If you saw him, why did you not strike him to the ground then and there? I would have made it my business to give you ten silver shekels and a belt!'
Revised English Bible	While the man was telling him, Joab broke in, 'You saw him? Why did you not strike him to the ground then and there? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt.'
Today's NIV	Joab said to the man who had told him this, "What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a warrior's belt."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And Joab said to the man who had given him the news, 'If you saw this, why did you not put your sword through him, and I would have given you ten bits of silver and a band for your robe?'
The Expanded Bible	Joab said to him, "You saw him? Why didn't you ·kill him and let him fall to [·strike him to] the ground? I would have given you a belt and ·four ounces [·ten pieces] of silver!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	When J'oab said to the man, "Show him to me! And where have you seen him? —But why did you not strike him to the earth? For then I would have given you ten silvers and a girdle."
NET Bible®	Joab replied to the man who was telling him this, "What! You saw this? Why didn't you strike him down right on the spot [Heb "Why did you not strike him down there to the ground."]? I would have given you ten pieces of silver [Heb "ten [shekels] of silver." This would have been about 4 ounces (114 grams) of silver by weight.] and a commemorative belt [Heb "and a girdle" (so KJV); NIV "a warrior's belt"; CEV "a special belt"; NLT "a hero's belt."]"
New Heart English Bible	Joab said to the man who told him, "Behold, you saw it, and why did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten pieces of silver, and a sash."

NIV – UK Joab said to the man who had told him this, `What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels [That is, about 115 grams] of silver and a warrior's belt.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Yo'av asked the man who told him, "Here now, you saw it; so why didn't you strike him to the ground then and there? I would have had to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt besides."

exeGeses companion Bible And Yah Ab says to the man that tells him, Behold, you see! Why smote you not him there to the earth? - and I had given you ten silver and one girdle.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) Joab said to the man who told him, "You saw it! Why didn't you kill him then and there [Lit., "to the ground"]? I would have owed you ten [Some Septuagint manuscripts and 4QSam^a read "fifty."] shekels of silver and a belt."

Judaica Press Complete T. And Joab said to the man who told him, "Now if you had seen it, then why did you not smite him there to the ground? And it would have been incumbent upon me to give you ten *pieces* of silver, and a belt."

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Yoav said unto the ish that told him, And, hinei, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not strike him down to the ground there? And I would have given thee ten shekels of kesef, and a khagorah.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Joab said to the man, You saw him! Why did you not strike him down to the ground? I would have given you ten shekels of silver and a girdle.

Concordant Literal Version And Joab said to the man who is declaring [it] to him, `And lo, you have seen--and wherefore did you not smite him there to the earth--and on me to give to you ten silverlings and one girdle?

English Standard Version Joab said to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt."

New King James Version So Joab said to the man who told him, "You just saw *him!* And why did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten *shekels* of silver and a belt."

New RSV Joab said to the man who told him, `What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt.'

Syndein/Thieme Then Joab reprimanded the officer who had reported to him, "Now look here, you saw him, why didn't you strike him to the ground right then and there? Furthermore, I would have given/rewarded you with a decoration {idiom: literally: 'ten pieces of silver' - which reward went with a promotion}, and a promotion." {idiom: literally a 'belt' meaning a 'military belt that denotes rank' (chagowr)}.

Updated Bible Version 2.11 And Joab said to the man that told him, And, look, you saw it, and why didn't you strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten [pieces of] silver, and a belt.

World English Bible Joab said to the man who told him, Behold, you saw it, and why didn't you strike him there to the ground? and I would have given you ten *pieces of silver*, and a sash.

Young's Updated LT And Joab says to the man who is declaring it to him, "And lo, you have seen—and why did you not strike him there to the earth—and on me to give to you ten silver coins and one belt?"

The gist of this verse: Joab indicates his displeasure with the soldier who saw Absalom hanging from a tree, and yet did not kill him. Joab said that there would have been a reward involved.

2Samuel 18:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yôw'âb (יְאוֹב) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i>]	<i>a messenger, one who makes known, an informant; one who expounds [explains, declares]</i>	masculine singular, Hiphil participle with the definite article	Strong's #5046 BDB #616

Translation: [Then Joab said to the man, the messenger...](#) Joab is a bit frustrated at this point. He speaks pointedly at this man who has made this known to him. Quite obviously, Joab is concerned that Absalom might escape. The messenger knows that Absalom is not going anywhere; Joab does not yet have this assurance.

2Samuel 18:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

Translation:...”Really, you saw [Absalom]?” Joab is making sure he has the facts straight. “You saw Absalom? You saw him helpless hanging from a tree? You did nothing about it?” Joab may have paused briefly after this question, just in case this man would answer. Or perhaps he paused for effect.

2Samuel 18:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
maddu'ā (מַדּוּעַ) [pronounced <i>mah-DOO-ahg'</i>]	<i>why, wherefore, on what account, and it is probably a contraction of a word which means what being known</i>	adverb	Strong's #4069 BDB #396
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
<p>There are several ways this negation is used. (1) It is an absolute <i>no</i> given to a question. (2) It can be used as an interrogative when an affirmative answer is expected. 2Kings 5:26 Job 2:10 Jer. 49:9. (3) It can be used to mean <i>without</i>. 1Chron. 2:30 Psalm 59:4 Job 12:24 34:24. (4) It can be translated <i>not yet</i>. 2Kings 20:4 Psalm 139:16. (5) The negative is prefixed to adjective to negate them; to substantives to indicate that they are not that thing. Although some claim that this negation can stand on its own to mean <i>nothing</i>; there is no clear proof of that.⁴⁶</p>			
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i>]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earthward (all or a portion thereof), on [toward, upon] the earth; on [upon, toward] the land [territory, country, continent; ground, soil]</i>	feminine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: *Why did you not strike him to the ground?* Joab is not asking, “Why didn’t you rough him up a little?” Joab is asking, “Why didn’t you kill him?” Absalom is David’s greatest enemy. Without Absalom, there is no Absalom revolution. This is an easy fix. You kill Absalom and the revolution is over.

Joab would hope that his soldiers can think their way through this. Furthermore, he would prefer not to have his hands all over this. Killing the king’s son could have great repercussions for him.

Joab is in a difficult position. He heard the order from David and he knew that was a ridiculous order. As long as Absalom is alive, the Absalom revolution is alive; as soon as Absalom is dead, the revolution is over. Joab would have preferred that this soldier killed Absalom and then came and told him about it.

⁴⁶ Taken from H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 425 (abbreviated).

2Samuel 18:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>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</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ⁴⁷ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall or must</i> . ⁴⁸			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿasârâh (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced <i>gah-saw-RAW</i>]	<i>ten</i>	feminine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
keçeph (כֶּסֶף) [pronounced <i>KEH-sef</i>]	<i>silver, money; silver [as a metal, ornament, color]; shekels, talents</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3701 BDB #494
Barnes: <i>The word "shekel" is understood, as in Gen. 20:16 37:28.</i> ⁴⁹			
Gill: <i>Josephus says fifty shekels; the Arabic version has it ten thousand talents of silver, too great a sum by far.</i> ⁵⁰			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

⁴⁷ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

⁴⁸ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

⁴⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

⁵⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11. Gill references Josephus' *Antiquities* I. 7. c. 10. sect. 2.

2Samuel 18:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chăgôwrâh (חַגְוֵרָה) [pronounced <i>khuh-goh-RAW</i>]	<i>apron; girdle, belt; loin-covering</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2290 BDB #292
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

Translation: On my account, I would have given you 10 [pieces of] silver and a certain belt [signifying a promotion].” The use of the first preposition suggests that Joab is going to take this out of his own pocket. This would be a reward directly from him. This is how important Absalom’s death is to him.

Now, surely Joab did not make leather belts on the side; nor did he have Mrs. Joab make these belts to hand out as special presents. This belt would have signified a higher ranking, meaning that Joab would have promoted any soldier who killed Absalom (Barnes, instead, suggests⁵¹ that this is a present, as in 1Sam. 18:4). Gill, however, identified the belt as *a token of a commission under him, and of investing: him with a military office.*⁵² Jamieson, Fausset and Brown agrees, saying the belt *would have raised him from the ranks to the status of a commissioned officer.*⁵³

Clarke: *The military belt was the chief ornament of a soldier, and was highly prized in all ancient nations; it was also a rich present from one chieftain to another. Jonathan gave his to David, as the highest pledge of his esteem and perpetual friendship, 1Sam. 18:4. And Ajax gave his to Hector, as a token of the highest respect (Hom. Il. vii., ver. 305).*⁵⁴ Poole adds: *a military belt of more than ordinary price, as a testimony of thy valour and good service.*⁵⁵

Whichever, this would be valuable and an honor. However, it only makes sense that Joab would have promoted such a man.

That Joab says this suggests that Joab has made this offer known. He did not just make this up on the spot, but that this information had been made known throughout his division. The man, in his answer, will make it clear that he knew this was a private reward that Joab had offered. He was not ignorant of it.

In any case, we are dealing with several factors here: David unrealistically wanted his son preserved alive, which this situation allowed for; and he gave the order to be gentle with Absalom. Joab realized that keeping Absalom alive was a bad idea and will disobey David’s direct order, something that this particular soldier refused to do.

⁵¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

⁵² Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

⁵³ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

⁵⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

⁵⁵ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:11.

And so says the man unto Joab, “And if I am weighing out upon my palms a thousand [pieces] of silver, I would not put forth my hand unto a son of the king, for in our ears commanded the king you and Abishai and Ittai, to say, ‘Guard [according to my] wish in the young man in Absalom.’

2Samuel
18:12

The man said to Joab, “Even if a thousand silver [coins] are weighed out into my hands, I would not raised [lit., *put forth*] my hand against the king’s son; for in our hearing, the king commanded you, [General] Abishai and [General] Ittai, saying, ‘Guard [according to my] wishes Absalom, the young man.’

The man who saw Absalom responded to Joab: “It would not matter even if you had given me a thousand silver coins—I still would not put forth my hand against the king’s son. In fact, if you will recall, the king commanded all of you, in our hearing, ‘Preserve the young man, Absalom, alive, for my sake.’

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And he said to Joab: If you would have <u>paid down</u> in my hands a thousand pieces of silver, I would not lay my <u>hands</u> upon the king’s son for in our hearing the king charged you, and Abisai, and Ethai, saying: <u>Save me the boy Absalom.</u>
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the man unto Joab, “And if I am weighing out upon my palms a thousand [pieces] of silver, I would not put forth my hand unto a son of the king, for in our ears commanded the king you and Abishai and Ittai, to say, ‘Guard [according to my] wish in the young man in Absalom.’
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the man said to Joab, Though you should <u>count</u> to me a thousand shekels of silver, I would not put forth my hand against the kings son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, <u>Be careful not to harm</u> the young man Absalom for my sake.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the man said to Joab, <u>Were I even to receive</u> a thousand shekels of silver, I would not <u>lift</u> my hand against the king’s son; for in our ears the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, <u>Take care</u> of the young man Absalom for me,...

Significant differences: The English translations from the Latin, Syriac and Greek all have a different first verb than the Hebrew in what the man tells Joab. The Latin appears to have *hands* instead of *hand*. The Greek appears to have a slightly different second verb. There may be minor disagreements on the final verb in all of the ancient translations when compared to the Hebrew. Despite these many differences, what the literal translation from the Hebrew says is not dramatically different from any of the ancient translations.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But the man said to Joab, "Even if I had a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, I wouldn't touch the king's son! We heard what the king commanded you, Abishai, and Ittai-`For my sake, take care of my boy Absalom [LXX, Vulg, Syr; Heb uncertain].'
Contemporary English V.	The man answered, "Even if you paid me a thousand pieces of silver here and now, I still wouldn't touch the king's son. We all heard King David tell you and Abishai and Ittai not to harm Absalom.
Easy English	But the man replied, `I would not hurt the king's son even if you gave me 1000 pieces of silver. I heard the king give this command to you, Abishai and Ittai, "Protect the young man Absalom. I care about him."

Easy-to-Read Version	The man said to Joab, "I would not try to hurt the king's son even if you gave me 1,000 {pieces of} silver. Why? Because we heard the king's command to you, Abishai, and Ittai. The king said, 'Be careful not to hurt young Absalom.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	But the man answered, "Even if you gave me a thousand pieces of silver, I wouldn't lift a finger against the king's son. We all heard the king command you and Abishai and Ittai, 'For my sake don't harm the young man Absalom.'
New Berkeley Version	"But if I were to hold in my palms a thousand pieces of silver," the man answered Joab, "I could not lift my hand against the son of the king, because in our hearing the king commanded you, Abishai, and Ittai to the effect, 'For my sake be sure to protect the young man Absalom.'
New Century Version	The man answered, "I wouldn't touch the king's son even if you gave me twenty-five pounds of silver. We heard the king command you, Abishai, and Ittai, 'Be careful not to hurt young Absalom.'
The Voice	Soldier: ¹² If you put 1,000 pieces of silver into my hand, I wouldn't raise it against the king's son. We all heard the king say to you generals, "For my sake, protect young Absalom."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But the man told Joab: 'If you had given me a thousand large silver coins I wouldn't have done that; for, I would never raise a hand against a son of the king. Why, we all heard the king tell you (AbiShai and ItTai) to guard the young man AbSalom for him.
Christian Community Bible	But the man answered Joab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not raise my hand against the king's son, for we heard the king command you, Abishai and Ittai: 'For my sake, spare the young man Absalom.'
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Nay, said he, thou mightest count out a thousand silver pieces into my purse, and still I would not lift a hand against the king's son. We were all of us within hearing when the king bade thee and Abisai and Ethai spare his son Absalom.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But the man replied to Joab: "Even if I already held a thousand pieces of silver in my two hands, I would not lay a hand on the king's son, for in our hearing the king gave you and Abishai and Ittai a command: 'Protect the youth Absalom for my sake.'
NIRV	But the man replied, "I wouldn't lift my hand to harm the king's son. I wouldn't do it even for 25 pounds of silver. We heard the king's command to you and Abishai and Ittai. He said, 'Be careful not to hurt the young man Absalom. Do it for me.'
New Jerusalem Bible	The man replied to Joab, 'Even if I could feel the weight of a thousand silver shekels in my hand, I would not lift my hand against the king's son. In our own hearing, the king gave you and Abishai and Ittai these orders, "For my sake, spare young Absalom."
Revised English Bible	The man answered, 'If you were to put into my hands a thousand pieces of silver, I would not lift a finger against the king's son; we all heard the king giving orders to you and Abishai and Ittai to take care of the young man Absalom.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The man said to Joab, "If I weighed a thousand silver in my palm, I would not send my hand to the king's son. For in our ears the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Keep the lad Absalom.'
Bible in Basic English	And the man said to Joab, Even if you gave me a thousand bits of silver, I would not put out my hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king gave orders to you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Take care that the young man Absalom is not touched.

The Expanded Bible	The man answered, "I wouldn't touch [I raise my hand against] the king's son even if you gave me [I felt in my hand the weight of] twenty-five pounds [a thousand pieces] of silver. We heard the king command you, Abishai, and Ittai, 'Be careful not to hurt [For my sake protect/spare] young Absalom.'
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But the man replied to Joab, "Even if you jingled a thousand silvers on my hand, I would not assail the son of the king! For in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai, and Athai, saying, 'Spare for me the lad Absalom!'
NET Bible®	The man replied to Joab, "Even if [The translation follows the Qere and many medieval Hebrew mss in reading וְלוֹ (v'לו, "and if") rather than MT וְלֹא (v'lo', "and not").] I were receiving [Heb "weighing out in my hand."] a thousand pieces of silver [Heb "a thousand [shekels] of silver." This would have been about 25 pounds (11.4 kg) of silver by weight.], I would not strike [Heb "extend my hand against."] the king's son! In our very presence [Heb "in our ears."] the king gave this order to you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake [The Hebrew text is very difficult here. The MT reads מי (mi, "who"), apparently yielding the following sense: "Show care, whoever you might be, for the youth Absalom." The Syriac Peshitta reads לי ("for me"), the Hebrew counterpart of which may also lie behind the LXX rendering μοι (moi, "for me"). This reading seems preferable here, since it restores sense to the passage and most easily explains the rise of the variant.]'
NIV – UK	But the man replied, 'Even if a thousand shekels [That is, about 12 kilograms] were weighed out into my hands, I would not lay a hand on the king's son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, "Protect the young man Absalom for my sake [A few Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts may be translated Absalom, whoever you may be.]'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The man replied to Yo'av, "Even if I were to get a thousand pieces of silver, I still wouldn't raise my hand against the son of the king! After all, while we were listening, the king ordered you, Avishai and Ittai, 'Be careful that no one touches young Avshalom.'
exeGesés companion Bible	And the man says to Yah Ab, If I weigh a thousand silver on my palm I send not my hand against the son of the sovereign: for in our ears the sovereign misvahed you and Abi Shai and Ittai saying, Guard against the lad - against Abi Shalom: ...
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the man said to Joab: "Though I should weigh on my palms a thousand pieces of silver, I would not stretch out my hand against the king's son, because before our ears did the king charge you and Abishai and Ittai saying, 'Take care whoever it may be of the youth, of Absalom.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the ish said unto Yoav, Though I should receive elef kesef in mine palm, yet would I not put forth mine yad against the ben HaMelech; for in ozneinu (our hearing) HaMelech charged thee and Avishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the na'ar Avshalom.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The man told Joab, Though I should receive 1,000 pieces of silver, yet I would not put forth my hand against the king's son. For in our hearing the king charged you, Abishai, and Ittai, Have a care, whoever you be, for the young man Absalom.
Concordant Literal Version	And the man said unto Joab, 'Yea, though I am weighing on my hand a thousand silverlings, I do not put forth my hand unto the son of the king; for in our ears has

the king charged you, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, Observe you who [is] against the youth--against Absalom;..."

Darby Translation

And the man said to Joab, Though I should receive a thousand silver pieces in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Take care, whoever it be [of you], of the young man Absalom.

English Standard Version

But the man said to Joab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not reach out my hand against the king's son, for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, 'For my sake protect the young man Absalom.'

Green's Literal Translation

And the man said to Joab, Yes, though I weighed a thousand silverlings in my hand, I would not put forth my hand to the king's son. For in our ears the king commanded you, and Abishai, and Ittai saying, Take heed, whoever goes against the young man, against Absalom.

Syndein/Thieme

{Integrity of Patrol Leader}
Then that officer replied to Joab, "Even if 'you gave me the highest decoration' (medal of honor) {idiom: literally: "Even if . . . I were weighing on my palm one thousand pieces/shekels of silver"}, I would not raise my hand against the king's son . . . for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, {this means this man truly was a junior commander and heard David's command to the corps commanders} 'For my sake . . . protect the young man Absalom.' " {this is not a direct quote of what David said, but the young officer's interpretation of what David ordered} {Note: The integrity of this officer made him incorruptible. No matter the reward offered, he would not go against the direct order of his king. He was protecting the honor in his soul as comes out next.}.

Webster's Bible Translation

And the man said to Joab, Though I should receive a thousand [shekels] of silver in my hand, [yet] would I not put forth my hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none [touch] the young man Absalom.

World English Bible

The man said to Joab, Though I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in my hand, I still wouldn't put forth my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom.

Young's Updated LT

And the man says unto Joab, "Yea, though I am weighing on my hand a thousand silverlings, I do not put forth my hand unto the son of the king; for in our ears has the king charged you, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, Observe you who is against the youth—against Absalom.

The gist of this verse:

The man said that, even at 1000 pieces of silver, he is not going to violate the mandate of the king.

2Samuel 18:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 18:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yôwʾâb (יֹאבָב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: [The man said to Joab](#) You will note that Joab used the simple lâmed preposition in addressing this man, suggesting perhaps that he was a little frustrated with the choice that this soldier made. However, the soldier addresses Joab with the preposition of respect and deference.

The soldier here both respects David, which is why he did not kill Absalom; and he respects Joab, given the use of the preposition of respect used here. This shows authority orientation. He apparently understands what Joab would like and what David has ordered. He is too far down on the totem pole to cast the deciding vote, so he respectfully obeys David, who is king.

2Samuel 18:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lû (לוּ) [also writteen lû' (לוֹ)] [pronounced lue]	<i>O that, would that, if only, if</i>	conjunction	Strong's #3863 (and #3808?) BDB #530
ʾânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
shâqal (שָׁקַל) [pronounced shaw-KAHL]	<i>weighing [out]; paying out; a grieving</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8254 BDB #1053
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kaph (כַּף) [pronounced kaf]	<i>palm, hollow or flat of the hand, sole of the foot; bowl, spoon</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3709 BDB #496
ʾelep (אֶלֶף) [pronounced EH-lef]	<i>thousand, family, (500?); military unit</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

2Samuel 18:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
keṣeph (כֶּסֶף) [pronounced KEH-sef]	silver, money; silver [as a metal, ornament, color]; shekels, talents	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3701 BDB #494
lō' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated hand	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	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
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: “Even if a thousand silver [coins] are weighed out into my hands, I would not raised [lit., put forth] my hand against the king’s son;... The man explains why he did not choose to take the reward offered him by Joab. The reward amount was not the issue. Joab offers 10 silver coins; the man here says, “It could be a thousand silver coins and I would not harm the king’s son.”

Quite obviously, this man could not hold 1000 coins in his hands. So, what the man is saying here is an exaggeration. We use the same expression today: “I don’t care if you gave me million dollars, I wouldn’t do that.”

2Samuel 18:12c

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
b ^e (ב) [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
'ôzen (אָזְנֵי) [pronounced OH-zen]	ears; metaphorically for hearing	feminine plural noun with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #241 BDB #23

2Samuel 18:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>you; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ăbîyshay (אֲבִישַׁי) [pronounced ub- ^v ee-SHAH-ee]	<i>my father is Jesse and is transliterated Abishai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #52 BDB #5
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ittay (אִתִּי) [pronounced iht-TAH-ee]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87

Translation: ...for in our hearing, the king commanded you, [General] Abishai and [General] Ittai,... Joab knew that David did this. He did not just give the 3 generals a private command; David said this loud enough so that the other soldiers could hear the command. In doing this, David was giving this order to all of the men.

Joab was certainly right that Absalom needed to be killed; however, this soldier was following the orders of his king, and he cannot be faulted for that. Killing Absalom would have been above his paygrade, given when David had ordered.

2Samuel 18:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 18:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
shamar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>keep, guard, protect, watch, preserve</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
Under some circumstances, the mîy pronominal interrogative can express a wish or a desire, as in 2Sam. 15:4 or 23:15. ⁵⁶			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced NAH-ġahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

The NET Bible note⁵⁷ here: The Hebrew text is very difficult here. The MT reads מִי (mi, “who”), apparently yielding the following sense: “Show care, whoever you might be, for the youth Absalom.” The Syriac Peshitta reads li (“for me”), the Hebrew counterpart of which may also lie behind the LXX rendering μοι (moi, “for me”). This reading seems preferable here, since it restores sense to the passage and most easily explains the rise of the variant.

Translation: ...saying, ‘Guard [according to my] wishes Absalom, the young man.’ This is not a direct quote, insofar as we know. David’s orders were for them to *deal gently* with Absalom; however, this gist of this command was to guard or preserve Absalom. The bēyth prepositions found here simply point to what the verb is acting upon. The pronominal interrogative above is also use to indicate a wish or a desire, which is how it is used here.

The highest ranking officer, David, gave an order. This may be a good order or a lousy one, but he gave an order. As a military man, the noncom here must follow David’s orders, simply because he knows them. Now, had David not made certain that all the men could hear this order, that would have been another thing. Then this man would not have known. But he knows, and he must obey the order, because David outranks Joab.

You will note that this junior officer is not arguing whether or not Absalom ought to be killed; he is simply saying that, given the circumstances, he will not make the decision to kill Absalom, no matter how much Joab rewards

⁵⁶ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 566.

⁵⁷ From: <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?2sa18.htm> accessed July 19, 2013.

him. The key here is authority orientation; and this man is oriented to the authorities over him. So his mind is not clouded about temporal rewards. What happens to Absalom is up to Joab at this point—it is above this noncom's paygrade to make such a decision.

This noncom is being both honorable and smart. Honorable, because he is both obeying the authorities over him, and yet still coming to Absalom with this information, fully aware that Absalom is not going to extricate himself from that tree in the meantime. This man is smart because, he could have taken the short-term reward, but he would have possibly been exposed to punishment from David. Whether Joab would have backed him is an unknown. However, this young man knew that David would find out what happened.

Sometimes, you might be going through an Old Testament and thinking, "What is there here for me? I'm not a king or a soldier." This man has received mixed messages from those in authority over him. David has said one thing and Joab has said something different. This man is smart enough not to get in the middle of it, but carefully navigates these waters with the superior officer whose decree he has ignored. There was a reward for killing Absalom, and Joab had, in some way, made this known to his troops.

Application: Whether or not you are in the armed forces is immaterial; you will face situations where you receive conflicting directions from above (I am speaking of those over you in business); and you will have to decide on how to deal with that. This noncommissioned officer is respectful, direct, and clear as to what he will do and won't do. When dealing with authorities, we often will find ourselves have conflicting directives from God and those who are over us. We also need to be able to navigate these waters. It won't be 10 pieces of silver and a promotion; but you may be told to take clients out and entertain them at a strip club—and this may involve a 20% raise and a promotion. It is the same deal. You have to obey God rather than man.

Application: Conflicting authorities occurs all of the time. In the school system where I worked, the push for a period of time was higher level thinking skills, which I believed were accomplished in geometry proofs (as an example). At the same time, I had a department head who wanted to dumb down the material and eliminate the proofs. So, on the one hand, I heard all of this about critical thinking skills from the highest in authority where I worked; but, on the other hand, the authority directly over me wanted less emphasis upon these things. These are the sort of waters that we have to navigate all of the time.

Or I construct in my soul a lie, and every word will not be hidden from the king and you will set yourself from in front."

2Samuel
18:13

[Even] if I make a lie in my soul then every word would not be hidden from the king and you will take a stand afar off."

If I kill the king's son and then lie about it everything about this will be known to the king; and you would not stand up for me."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

Yea and if I should have acted boldly against my own life, this could not have been hid from the king, and would you have stood by me?

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Or I construct in my soul a lie, and every word will not be hidden from the king and you will set yourself from in front.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And if I should have done it, then I would have been guilty; and nothing would have been hidden from the king, and you yourself would have stood against me.

Septuagint (Greek)

...so as to do no harm to his life: and nothing of the matter will be concealed from the king, and you will set yourself against me.

Significant differences: The first phrase of the Hebrew is very difficult to translate and to interpret; and the other ancient languages appear to have gone a completely different route with this first phrase. The final phrase appears to have been given a more relaxed treatment in the other ancient languages as well.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	If I had taken Absalom's life behind the king's back then-though nothing is hidden from the king-you would have kept your distance from me." Or <i>Otherwise, I would have been dealing recklessly with my own life, because nothing is hidden from the king and you were stationed far from me;</i> Heb uncertain.
Contemporary English V.	He always finds out what's going on. I would have been risking my life to kill Absalom, because you would have let me take the blame."
Easy English	If I had killed Absalom, I would not have obeyed the king. The king would have discovered who did it. And you would not have protected me.'
Easy-to-Read Version	If I had killed Absalom, the king himself would find out. And you would punish me."
Good News Bible (TEV)	But if I had disobeyed the king and killed Absalom, the king would have heard about it--he hears about everything---and you would not have defended me."
<i>The Message</i>	Why, I'd be risking my life, for nothing is hidden from the king. And you would have just stood there!"
New Berkeley Version	Or again, could I have acted treacherously against his life, when there is nothing that lies hidden from the king? And you yourself would have left me to my fate."
New Century Version	If I had killed him, the king would have found out, and you would not have protected me!"
New Life Bible	If I had gone against his life, there is nothing hidden from the king. And you would not have helped me."
New Living Translation	And if I had betrayed the king by killing his son--and the king would certainly find out who did it--you yourself would be the first to abandon me."
The Voice	If I had taken his life despite that, you would stand back and watch as they strung me up. Nothing is hidden from the king.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, it would be wrong to kill him! For then the king would surely hear about it, and thereafter, you and I would be on opposite sides.'
Christian Community Bible	If I had not done my duty, the king would come to know about it and you yourself would have kept your distance."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	If I had done something treacherous to him, would you have stood by me? Like everything else, it wouldn't stay hidden from the king."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	It would have been at the risk of my life, and the thing would never have passed unnoticed by the king; why, thou wouldst thyself be laying information against me.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Had I been disloyal and killed him, it would all have come out before the king, and you would stand aloof."
NIRV	Suppose I had put my life in danger by killing him. The king would have found out about it. Nothing is hidden from him. And you wouldn't have stood up for me."
New Jerusalem Bible	Even if I had deceived myself, nothing stays hidden from the king and you would have dissociated yourself from me.'
Revised English Bible	If I had dealt him a treacherous blow, the king would soon have known, and you would have kept well out of it.'
Today's NIV	And if I had put my life in jeopardy--and nothing is hidden from the king--you would have kept your distance from me."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	You abode before the king with me! Never withhold the word or I <i>would</i> do falsehood with my soul."
Bible in Basic English	And if I had falsely put him to death <i>and nothing may be kept secret from the king</i> , you would have had nothing to do with me.
The Expanded Bible	If I had ·killed him [betrayed the king by killing his son], ·the king would have found out [and there is nothing hidden from the king], and you would ·not have protected [have kept your distance/alooof from] me!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...—If I had done, I should have been false to my life, for no event is hidden from the king, and you would have set yourself against me!"
HCSB	If I had jeopardized my own life--and nothing is hidden from the king--you would have abandoned me."
NET Bible®	If I had acted at risk of my own life [The translation follows the Qere, many medieval Hebrew mss, and a number of the ancient versions in reading וַיִּנְאַפְשִׁי (v'yñafshi, "against my life") rather than the MT וַיִּנְאַפְשׁוּ (v'yñafsho, "against his life").] - and nothing is hidden from the king! - you would have abandoned me [Heb "stood aloof."]."
NIV – UK	And if I had put my life in jeopardy [Or <i>Otherwise, if I had acted treacherously towards him</i>] - and nothing is hidden from the king - you would have kept your distance from me.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Or, if I had pretended that I didn't know, the king would have known otherwise anyway; and you wouldn't have interceded for me either."
exeGesés companion Bible	...or I had worked falsehood against my own soul: for no word is concealed from the sovereign - and you yourself had set yourself against me.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Otherwise I should have dealt sheker against mine own nefesh; for there is no matter hid from HaMelech, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"Otherwise I would have been untrue to my own life. For no matter is hidden from the sovereign, and you yourself would have set yourself against me."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Otherwise, if I had dealt falsely against his life-for nothing is hidden from the king-you yourself would have taken sides against me.
Concordant Literal Version	...or I had done against my soul a vain thing, and no matter is hid from the king, and you--you do station yourself over-against.
English Standard Version	On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof."
New King James Version	Otherwise I would have dealt falsely against my own life. For there is nothing hidden from the king, and you yourself would have set yourself against <i>me</i> ."
New RSV	On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life [Another reading is <i>at the risk of my life</i>] (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Honor of Patrol Leader} Otherwise I would have "made/manufactured 'lies/deceit/falsehood'/"acted deceitfully' in my soul. {Note: This is the internal honor code that convinced this great young officer to go with David and not join the revolution in the first place. Joab will come to understand it is against the army's best interests to TRY and get him to break his own honor code!} Furthermore, the entire matter can not be concealed from the king. And you yourself would have taken a stand against me. {Note: This is the CYA (cover your backside) principle that exists today. The young man most likely was aware of David's command to Joab to have Uriah the Hittite

World English Bible
Young's Updated LT

killed. And, Joab followed this immoral command. So, here if he had disobeyed David's order, Joab would not have backed him, but, hypocritically, reprimanded him and court-martialed him, but certainly would not have backed his action.}.
Otherwise if I had dealt falsely against his life (and there is no matter hid from the king), then you yourself would have set yourself against me.
Or I had done against my soul a vain thing, and no matter is hid from the king, and you—you will station yourself over-against."

The gist of this verse: This man alleges that the king would find out if he had killed Absalom and Joab would not have stood by him.

2Samuel 18:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ôw (או) [pronounced oh]	or, or rather, otherwise, also, and; if, perchance; except, or else; whether, not the least	conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14
When there are two things being considered, this word often implies that the second thing is the better choice.			
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
b ^e (ב) [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
nepesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	soul, life, living being; breath; mind; desire, volition; will	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
sheqer (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced SHEH-ker]	a lie, lying words, deception, falsehood; a liar; whatever deceives, fraud, vanity; falsely [absolute used as adverb]	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8267 BDB #1055

Translation: [Even] if I make a lie in my soul... This phrase is quite difficult, and the ancient translations appear to have gone in a number of different directions. It appears as if Joab wanted this man to do was to lie about what happened after killing the king's son, or that this soldier was anticipating Joab making a suggestion like this. This man is suggesting that is a bad idea. The killing of the king's son is not a matter that can be lied about. Furthermore, he is completely right about this. Whereas David did very little by way of investigations of Absalom's actions, had he gotten back a story about Absalom that he did not believe, then he would have investigated the matter thoroughly.

2Samuel 18:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 18:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
It is possible that these two words together mean <i>everything</i> .			
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kâchad (כָּחַד) [pronounced kaw-KHAHD]	<i>to be hidden; to be effaced; to be disowned, to be denied, to be removed from the earth; destroyed, cut off, removed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #3582 BDB #470
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...then every word would not be hidden from the king... The negative plus every word means that nothing would be hidden from the king. David would find out somehow.

If King David ordered that his son not be killed, and then he is killed, David is not going to just let this go. He will not say, "Oh, Absalom was killed in battle? Oh, well." David is going to initiate an investigation and David will find out who killed Absalom. Even though the number of witnesses was limited, given the thick forest, killing Absalom could not have been covered over. For instance, no soldier could say, "I did not know it was Absalom." Absalom has one of the most striking figures in human history. Based upon your knowledge of the Bible's description of Absalom, you could pick him out of a lineup. His huge head of hair, combined with his penchant to appearing to play the part of king would have resulted in Absalom looking far different than his officers or his soldiers. Not one of David's soldiers could have accidentally killed Absalom, not knowing who he was.

Therefore, this non-commissioned officer cannot keep something like this hidden; he knows that.

As an aside, there are things which we find in Scripture, and they strike us as odd. Why does God the Holy Spirit want us to have a physical description of Absalom? Why does God the Holy Spirit reveal to us Absalom and his entourage when he was building up support for himself? At this point, these descriptions all make sense. Any man in David's army would know what Absalom looked like. No one could have killed Absalom by mistake.

This is interesting for another reason—there is no physical description of Jesus Christ. There are reasons why we believe that Jesus was of an average height and powerfully built; and there is an Old Testament passage which tells us that He had a beard; but, apart from this information, which can be gleaned from Scripture, we have not even the slightest clue as to His appearance. In fact, physically, Jesus was so nondescript that, Judas could not merely give a description of Him to the priests and pharisees, but he had to go with them and point Jesus out, to

distinguish Him from the rest of the disciples. Nearly all of us, because of the impact of art, have a particular physical impression of Jesus, but this comes from the imagination of an artist and not from anything else. *The oldest known portrait of Jesus, found in Syria and dated to about 235, shows him as a beardless young man of authoritative and dignified bearing. He is depicted dressed in the style of a young philosopher, with close-cropped hair and wearing a tunic and pallium - signs of good breeding in Greco-Roman society. From this, it is evident that some early Christians paid no heed to the historical context of Jesus being a Jew and visualised him solely in terms of their own social context, as a quasi-heroic figure, without supernatural attributes such as a halo (a fourth-century innovation).*⁵⁸ The visage with which we are all familiar, came at a later date (probably the 6th century A.D.

2Samuel 18:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
yâtsab (יָצַב) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAHB^v</i>]	<i>to set oneself [in a place], to take a stand</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #3320 BDB #426
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
neged (נֶגֶד) [pronounced <i>NEH-ged</i>]	<i>what is conspicuous when it is a substantive and, as a preposition, in front of, in the sight of, opposite to, before (in the sense of being in front of)</i>	preposition	Strong's #5048 BDB #617

Literally, these words mean *from before, from in front of, away from and opposite to*. Together, these words mean *from in front of, in front of, from before; a far off; in the presence of, before; from the front of; in front of, over against, opposite [to]; against; in opposition to*. When followed by the lamed preposition, these prepositions often mean *against*.

Translation: *...and you will take a stand afar off.*" If it became clear that this soldier had killed Absalom, then there is a reasonable chance that he would have borne the responsibility himself alone. And if that were the case, then Joab would act as if he had nothing to do with it; he would stand afar off from this soldier—that is what this man alleges. That is, the soldier is concerned that Joab might allow the blame to be laid upon him.

Ending the revolution with a live Absalom presents a great many problems for David and Joab. There would be a contingent of Israelites who would keep hope alive for the revolution. Small revolts might have been inspired by his continued life. No doubt, there would have been attempts to free Absalom. This is a quandary for Joab to be in: the simple solution stares him right in the face, but that solution requires him to disobey David.

Joab has previously disobeyed David. General Abner was a part of David's opposition, but he then defected to David. However, previous to this, Abner had killed Joab's brother. Joab could not let this go by, so Joab killed Abner even though his allegiance was then to David.

⁵⁸ From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Depiction_of_Jesus accessed August 1, 2013.

And so says Joab, “No, therefore, should I wait in your faces.” And so he takes three spears in his hand and so he thrusts them into a heart of Absalom, yet he [is] alive in a heart of the oak.

2Samuel
18:14

Therefore, Joab said, “I will not, therefore, wait in front of you.” Then he took 3 spears in his hand and he thrust them into Absalom, yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak.

Therefore, Joab said, “I will not waste any more time standing around talking to you.” He grabbed 3 spears in his hand, went to the tree where Absalom was hanging and thrust them into Absalom. However, Absalom remained alive, still caught in the oak.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Joab said: Not <u>as you wilt</u> , but <u>I will set upon him</u> in your sight. So he took three lances in his hand, and thrust them into the heare of Absalom: and whilst he yet panted for life, <u>sticking on</u> the oak,...
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Joab, “No, therefore, should I wait in your faces.” And so he takes three spears in his hand and so he thrusts them into a heart of Absalom, yet he [is] alive in a heart of the oak.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Joab said <u>to him</u> , <u>That is not true</u> , <u>I will do it now myself</u> . Then <u>Joab</u> took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was still alive and <u>hanging from</u> the oak.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Joab said, <u>I will begin this</u> ; I will not thus remain with you. And <u>Joab</u> took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the heart of the oak.

Significant differences: What Joab said was a bit difficult in the Hebrew, which is probably why the translations vary so dramatically. The Syriac includes *to him*. Joab’s name appears to be found a second time in this verse in the Syriac and the Greek.

The English translation makes it appear as if Joab does this while Absalom is alive (which makes sense—why kill Absalom if he is already dead); but that is not the sense of the Hebrew. Finally, the Hebrew has *in the heart of the oak*; the Latin and Syriac are somewhat different.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Joab said, "I won't waste time like this with you!" He took three sticks in his hand and drove them into Absalom's chest while he was still alive in the oak.
Contemporary English V.	Joab said, "I'm not going to waste any more time on you!" Absalom was still alive, so Joab took three spears and stuck them through Absalom's chest.
Easy English	Joab said, 'I will not waste any more time with you.' Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. So Joab took three *spears and pushed them into Absalom's heart.
<i>The Message</i>	Joab said, "I can't waste my time with you." He then grabbed three knives and stabbed Absalom in the heart while he was still alive in the tree;...
New Berkeley Version	"I must not waste time with you this way," said Joab and, taking three darts in his hand, he drove them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the center of the tree.
New Century Version	Joab said, "I won't waste time here with you!" Absalom was still alive in the oak tree, so Joab took three spears and stabbed him in the heart.

New Living Translation	"Enough of this nonsense," Joab said. Then he took three daggers and plunged them into Absalom's heart as he dangled, still alive, in the great tree.
The Voice	Joab: ¹⁴ I can't stand here talking to you <i>all day</i> . Joab took three spears, and finding Absalom still dangling <i>by his hair</i> inside the oak, he thrust them into his heart.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But JoAb said: 'Well, that's what's going to happen, for I'm not going to put up with this!' So, JoAb took three arrows and shot them into the chest of AbSalom as he was still alive, hanging there in the midst of the oak tree.
God's Word™	Then Joab said, "I shouldn't waste time with you like this." He took three sharp sticks and plunged them into Absalom's heart while he was still alive in the tree.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	That will not serve, answered Joab; I will smite him myself, and thou shalt be there to witness it. So he took three javelins with him, and thrust Absalom right through with them; then, as he still hung there writhing on the oak,...
New American Bible	Joab replied, "I will not waste time with you in this way." And taking three pikes in hand, he thrust for the heart of Absalom, still hanging from the tree alive.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Joab replied, "I will not waste time with you in this way." And taking three pikes in hand, he thrust for the heart of Absalom. He was still alive in the tree. 2 Sm 12:10; 13:28-29.
NIRV	Joab said, "I'm not going to waste any more time on you." So he got three javelins. Then he went over and drove them into Absalom's heart. He did it while Absalom was still hanging there alive in the oak tree.
New Jerusalem Bible	Joab then said, 'I cannot waste time arguing with you!' And, taking three darts in his hand, he planted them in Absalom's heart, while he was still alive, deep in the oak-tree.
Revised English Bible	'That's a lie!' said Joab. 'I will make a start and show you.' He picked up three javelins and drove them into Absalom's chest while he was held fast in the tree and still alive.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Joab said, "I <i>can</i> not rely on you." He took three staffs in his palm, and stuck them in the heart of Absalom, still living in the heart of the terebinth-tree.
Bible in Basic English	Then Joab said, I would have made it safe for you. And he took three spears in his hand, and put them through Absalom's heart, while he was still living, in the branches of the tree.
The Expanded Bible	Joab said, "I won't waste time here with you!" Absalom was still alive in the oak tree, so Joab took three spears and stabbed him in the heart.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	J'oab, however, replied, "I can't dawdle in this way with you!" and took the three darts in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom whilst he yet lived in the middle of the oak.
NET Bible®	Joab replied, "I will not wait around like this for you!" He took three spears in his hand and thrust them into the middle of Absalom while he was still alive in the middle of the oak tree. There is a play on the word "heart" here that is difficult to reproduce in English. Literally the Hebrew text says "he took three spears in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the heart of the oak tree." This figure of speech involves the use of the same word in different senses and is known as antanaclasis. It is illustrated in the familiar saying from the time of the American Revolution: "If we don't hang together, we will all hang separately." The present translation understands "heart" to be used somewhat figuratively for "chest" (cf. TEV, CEV), which explains why Joab's armor bearers

NIV – UK could still "kill" Absalom after he had been stabbed with three spears through the "heart." Since trees do not have "chest" either, the translation uses "middle."
 Joab said, 'I am not going to wait like this for you.' So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Yo'av said, "I can't waste time arguing with you!" He took three darts in his hand and rammed them through Avshalom's heart while he was still alive, hanging from the terebinth.

exeGesés companion Bible Then Yah Ab says,
 Not so: I await at your face.
 And he takes three scions in his palm
 and stakes them through the heart of Abi Shalom
 while he is yet alive in the heart of the oak:...

JPS (Tanakh—1985) Joab replied, "Then I will not wait for you." [Some Septuagint manuscripts and Targum read "Therefore, I will begin before you."] He took three darts in his hand and drove them into Absalom's chest. [Absalom] was still alive in the thick growth of the terebinth, when ten of Joab's young arms-bearers closed in and struck at Absalom until he died. V. 15 is included for context.

Orthodox Jewish Bible Then said Yoav, I will not tarry thus with thee. And he took three shevatim in his yad, and thrust them through the lev Avshalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak tree [Yn 19:34]. Yochanan (= John) 19:34 in the Orthodox Jewish Bible (OJB) reads: **But one of the chaiyalim pierced [ZECHARYAH 12:10] his side with a romakh (spear) and immediately out came dahm and mayim.**

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Darby Translation Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into Absalom's body, while he was yet alive in the midst of the terebinth.

English Standard Version Joab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." And he took three javelins in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the oak.

Green's Literal Translation And Joab said, I will not wait this wait before you. And he took three darts in his hand and struck them into Absalom's heart while he was alive, in the midst of the oak.

New King James Version Then Joab said, "I cannot linger with you." And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart, while he was *still* alive in the midst of the terebinth tree.

Syndein/Thieme Then Joab retorted, "Not so {denying the truth} . . . I won't waste any more time here with you." {Idiom: literally Not so . . . I may not delay thus with you.} {Note: Looks like Joab might have retorted that the man was incorrect in what he said, but he knows that man is right in what he said! So, Joab halts the interrogation and realizes that it was wrong for this man to kill Absalom, but since Absalom was placed in his custody, he now realizes that it would also be wrong for he himself to NOT kill Absalom personally. If David were permitted to not punish Absalom, again there would be no law and order in the land, and the country would suffer. Joab know he has to act.}
 So he {Joab} grabbed three javelins {and carried them} in his hand, and he thrust them through the heart {region} of Absalom . . . while he was yet alive {hanging} in the heart/middle of the oak tree. {Note: There is no record that the young officer took Joab to where Absalom was. But either he did, or one of the men of his patrol went back with him to report to Joab and he guided Joab to Absalom. Absalom put

three javelins into the chest cavity of Absalom. Absalom probably was wearing a breast plate of some fashion - maybe thick leather with horn or metal sown in - the horn would deflect the javelin from his actual heart.}

World English Bible

Then said Joab, I may not wait thus with you. He took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.

Young's Updated LT

And Joab says, "Not right—I tarry before you;" and he takes three darts in his hand, and strikes them into the heart of Absalom, while he is alive, in the midst of the oak.

The gist of this verse:

Joab ends his discussion with the non-com and goes to where Absalom is and plunges 3 spears into him.

2Samuel 18:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yôw'âb (יוב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
lô' (לא or לו) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kên (כן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
yâchal (יחל) [pronounced yaw-KHAHL]	<i>to expect, to wait in [or, with] trust and confidence, to hope in, to trust in, to place confidence in</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect with the cohortative hê	Strong's #3176 BDB #403
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פני) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *before you, before your face, in your presence, in your sight, in front of you*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in Your judgment*.

Translation: Therefore, Joab said, “I will not, therefore, wait in front of you.” Joab realizes that he does not have time to spend talking to this man, and that he needed to deal with Absalom.

Joab fully understood that, take Absalom out of the equation and there is no revolution; keep Absalom alive, and he will revolt again. This is just the way things were. He expected that those under him would understand this simple principle as well. Obviously, this man did not, and Joab knew that he was wasting time. He could not chance that Absalom might escape.

The Pulpit Commentary contrasts this noncom with Joab: *Here was a simple countryman unwilling to touch the life of Absalom, solely because of the king's commandment (vers. 5, 12, 13). The question of the prudence or imprudence of the act was not for a moment entertained. Obedience to the royal authority was the prime duty. This belief was the governing rule of conduct. No imaginary advantage to Israel, no example or persuasion of a great general, could turn the man from this fixed principle. On the other hand, Joab swept aside a such forceful pressure of supreme obligation to the royal will, because his conduct was governed, in this case at least, by a worldly wisdom, a consideration of what seemed to himself to be the best thing to do a policy of expediency. There was a general admission of the existence and value of what the countryman regarded as primary principles of conduct on the part of subjects; but theory was good for theorists, and Joab was a man of deeds when matters were urgent! These men certainly represent two classes those who accept first principles of obligation, primary conceptions of duty as lying at the very basis of society and of the individual life; and those who, while formally admitting the existence and propriety of such principles, nevertheless set them aside whenever, for prudential reasons, they think it well to do so. There are such primary principles: in government, the law of the ruler is supreme; in the family, e.g., the expressed will of the father is binding; in matters of religion, e.g., God prohibits unholiness of feeling, malice, cruelty, and commands men to repent, believe, and in all things do justly, irrespective of consequences. There are men who do base their action on these principles. But there are men who, like Joab, break the law of their land, and set aside supreme authority for reasons of their own; there are children who violate the fundamental principle of domestic order, because their judgment goes against their parents; there are men of the world who dare to disobey the Eternal King's commandment in relation to repentance, faith, and unswerving righteousness of life, for reasons which seem to them sufficient at the time. Do all Christians follow out the regal commands as to righteousness in all things? Is there not too much expediency in Christian conduct? (cf. Mt 6)...This plain countryman simply followed the order of the king because the king's will to him was sacred. He was not learned in casuistry, not versed in diplomacy, not skilled in keeping the letter and violating the spirit of the Law. He was amazed that any one should think of deviating from a command so plain. Its justice or injustice, its prudence or imprudence, were no matters for him to settle. Law was binding. The king must be obeyed. This was the instinct of a guileless nature. The force of the principle of obedience to the authority of God's anointed was recognized, because his spirit was politically and morally sound and pure. Joab was a man of the world, a man of many designs and combinations of thought, a man whose purity and guilelessness were gone.⁵⁹ Then the Pulpit Commentary adds: *There may be advantages in being versed in affairs, familiar with the tricks and ways of men, and famed for astuteness and such like qualities; but on the whole, in matters of pure right and strict adherence to clear duty to God and man, the guileless man is most likely to be the most dependable. Moral intuitions are swift in the pure hearted, and to debate their applicability is at once to weaken their force.*⁶⁰*

This does raise the obvious question: *which of these men is right?* The soldier is obeying his king, and he cannot be faulted for that. However, at the same time, Joab is considering his country as a whole, David's sentimentality, and the unlikelihood of Absalom's rehabilitation. In this, I lean toward both of them being correct in their actions. Joab has been assigned, in effect, guardianship over Absalom. Joab has been more personally involved with

⁵⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1-18 (edited).

⁶⁰ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1-18 (edited).

Absalom than David. As David's lead general, this is a decision that only Joab can make. However—and this is something which I find fascinating—Joab is not listed among David's mighty men.

The discussion of Joab and David's mighty men opens up quite a bit of discussion. Joab is *not* listed among David's mighty men. Much of this discussion can be found in **1Chron. 11** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). We are essentially left with 4 options (1) Joab is the 3rd man of the 3 who is not named (although the exegesis in 1Sam. 11:14 would disagree with this assessment); (2) Joab, because of his many misdeeds, was left out of the list of David's mighty men; or (3) Joab, because of his position over all of David's armies would not be listed, just as David is not listed as one of his mighty men. (4) It is even possible that Joab assembled this list of great soldiers, and therefore would not include himself. At this point, I lean toward the latter explanation. Saying that Joab should be left off off this list because he failed here and elsewhere is not reason enough. David failed all over the place, and he is still the standard by which all Israel's kings are measured (1Kings 15:3, 11 2Kings 14:3 16:2 18:3).

2Samuel 18:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
shêlôshâh (שְׁלֹשָׁה) [pronounced <i>shiloh-SHAW</i>]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025
shêbet (שֵׁבֶט) [pronounced <i>SHAY^B-vet</i>]	<i>rod, staff, club; spear; scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #7626 BDB #986
bê (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kaph (כַּף) [pronounced <i>kaf</i>]	<i>palm, hollow or flat of the hand, sole of the foot; bowl, spoon</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3709 BDB #496

Translation: [Then he took 3 spears in his hand...](#) Joab has one simple solution to the problem of Absalom—kill him. Cut the head off the snake to stop the snake from being dangerous. Joab grabs 3 spears. Obviously, he is disobeying David, but David is not thinking straight when it comes to his own son.

Joab has no reason to continue arguing with this soldier, who is obeying David. This is not the route Joab wants to take. Killing Absalom is at the forefront of Joab's mind, so what good would continuing this argument do him?

2Samuel 18:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tâqa' (תָּקַע) [pronounced <i>taw-KAHG</i>]	<i>to fasten, to thrust; to drive, to clap [or strike] [hands], to give a blow, to give a blast</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8628 BDB #1075
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^{bv}</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...and he thrust them into Absalom,... We do not know how far away Absalom was, but Joab is decisive in his action. Going directly from grabbing the spears to thrusting them into Absalom indicates purpose and singleness of mind. Even though there was the intervening action of saying, "Oh, hell, I will kill him then. Lead me to him." And the soldier led Joab to Absalom, who was still in the tree. This is known as ellipsis. There are intervening logical actions which are not referenced here, simply to indicate Joab's clear purpose. We do not need these intervening actions specified, because they can be logically deduced from the narrative. They are not left out because they can be logically deduced; they are left out so as not to interfere with Joab's single-mindedness.

Even though the text reads that Joab thrust these spears into Absalom's heart, this word is not necessarily used to refer to a literal heart. Properly, in this context, we could understand that Joab thrust the spears into Absalom's chest.

2Samuel 18:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ôwd (וַו) [pronounced <i>gohd</i>]	<i>still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; more, farther, besides; as yet, even yet</i>	adverb with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>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]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

2Samuel 18:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
lêb (לב) [pronounced lay ^{bv}]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
The NET Bible ⁶¹ makes this comment: There is a play on the word "heart" here that is difficult to reproduce in English. Literally the Hebrew text says "he took three spears in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the heart of the oak tree." This figure of speech involves the use of the same word in different senses and is known as antanaclasis. It is illustrated in the familiar saying from the time of the American Revolution: "If we don't hang together, we will all hang separately." The present translation understands "heart" to be used somewhat figuratively for "chest" (cf. TEV, CEV), which explains why Joab's armor bearers could still "kill" Absalom after he had been stabbed with three spears through the "heart." Since trees do not have "chests" either, the translation uses "middle."			
ʿêlâh (אֵלָהּ) [pronounced ā-LAW]	<i>oak, terebinth; tree</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #424 BDB #18

Translation: ...yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak. Surprisingly, Joab, the great warrior that he is, did not kill Absalom with these 3 spears. This is an oddity indeed because, at one time, Joab was one of the greatest warriors in Israel's history. He has been a general for a long time, so that the number of times that he kills men becomes less and less as time goes on.

My translation is quite different from the others, so I need to explain this. What often happens is, the KJV is used as the basis of a translation for many Bibles and great deference is given this translation. If there is some slight uncertainty as to how to understand a verse, most translations will line up behind the KJV.

Nearly Every Translation of 2Samuel 18:14 is Wrong

- Most every translation of 2Sam. 18:14 reads something like this: *Then Joab said, I will not delay thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.* (A Conservative Version)
- It sounds as if Joab is alive, hanging in the tree, and then Joab kills him with 3 spears to the heart.
- It makes little sense for the author to point out that Absalom is alive when hanging in the tree. If Absalom is dead, then why would Joab put 3 spears into him? Obviously, Absalom is alive when Joab puts 3 swords into him. Why say something which is so patently obvious?
- Note carefully that nowhere in this verse does it say that Joab kills Absalom.
- In fact, Absalom is killed in the next verse: *And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded and struck Absalom and killed him.* (The Amplified Bible)
- The proper way to translate this is: *Therefore, Joab said, "I will not, therefore, wait in front of you." Then he took 3 spears in his hand and he thrust them into Absalom, yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak.* (Kukis nearly literal) This translation is, in part, an interpretation, but an accurate one.
- Most importantly, Joab does not kill Absalom; ...yet, he [remained] alive... The first word is ʿôwd (וֹדַע) [pronounced ʿohd], which means *still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; more, farther, besides; as yet, even yet.* Strong's #5750 BDB #728. There is no word for *while* here. This portion of the translation is 2 words: the adverb ʿôwd (וֹדַע) [pronounced ʿohd] with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix (which refers to Absalom); and the masculine singular adjective *living, alive,*

⁶¹ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?2sa18.htm> accessed July 20, 2013.

Nearly Every Translation of 2Samuel 18:14 is Wrong

active, lively, vigorous. Literally, this reads *yet he [is] alive*. So Joab did not kill Absalom while he was hanging from the tree. Ten soldiers finish the job for Joab in the next verse.

8. Taken as a whole, this interpretation makes sense: Joab puts 3 spears in Absalom, but yet he remains alive, so that 10 armor bearers finish the job for Joab.
9. One more thing: this literally reads that Joab puts 3 spears into the heart of Absalom. Now, that sounds pretty dead to me. However, the word for heart is *lêb* (לֵב) [pronounced *lay^bv*], which means, *heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst*. Strong's #3820 BDB #524. Compare Psalm 46:2 Deut. 4:11 Ezek. 27:4 Matt. 12:40. Here, this simply means that Joab put 3 spears into Joab's midst (torso), and he is still alive. This is a reasonable interpretation because, the remainder of this verse reads: *...yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak*. The word *midst* is also *lêb*.
10. So, the understanding of this verse is not that Joab plunges 3 spears into Absalom *while he is yet alive*, but that *after* Joab plunges 3 spears into Absalom, *he is yet still alive*.

Interestingly enough, the 1609 Douay Old Testament, the Easy English version, the New Living Translation, the New Advent (Knox) Bible and the New American Bible (Revised Edition) are the only translations to get this right. None of these are known for their careful adherence to original Hebrew (with the possible exception of the Douay Old Testament, which was translated from the Latin).

Keil and Delitzsch agree with my approach. They write: *The last clause of the verse belongs to what follows: "Still living (i.e., as he was still alive) in the midst of the terebinth, ten young men, Joab's armour-bearers, surrounded him, and smote him to death."*⁶²

Poole writes: *While he was yet alive, or, yet he continued alive—i.e. the darts did not despatch him—and therefore Joab's armor bearers strike him again, and kill him (2Sam. 18:15).*⁶³ The Pulpit Commentary also agrees⁶⁴ with this interpretation.

How important this is in the overall scheme of things, I don't know; but it is always best to correctly understand a verse.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We have the word *heart* used again for the tree; and this simply means that Joab was still hanging in the midst of the tree.

The entire verse reads: *Therefore, Joab said, "I will not, therefore, wait in front of you." Then he took 3 spears in his hand and he thrust them into Absalom, yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak.* Joab leaves the military man and goes to where Absalom is hanging, and he thrusts 3 spears into his body, but he remains alive somehow.

There are some remarkable mis-interpretations of this passage. One is found in the Christian Community Bible, where a footnote⁶⁵ reads: *This account, very lively and beautiful, is difficult to abridge. The scene, doubtless, reminds us of the parable of the Prodigal Son. Even though the son left his father's house and did him much harm, the father does not lose hope. Moreover, so much love has he that he stands at the gates of the city waiting for word, like the father in the parable who was the first to see his son as he returned. Joab is right from the political standpoint, but David is closer*

⁶² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:14–15.

⁶³ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:14 (edited).

⁶⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:14. Prior to looking at the other commentaries, I have already completed the translations and have made 3 pass-through's of this chapter.

⁶⁵ From <http://www.bibleclaret.org/bibles/> (2Samuel, p. 368) accessed July 20, 2013.

to God's thinking. Although the interpretation is nuanced, it is nuanced for a different reason. David's problem with Absalom is, he has never dealt with his son in justice, and therefore, Absalom began as a good kid who went bad, because there were no well-defined boundaries for him to remain within. The parent who raises his son without boundaries so that his son might discover his own boundaries is a fool raising a greater fool. Absalom is a lost cause at this point as an adult. He has gone this way, in part, because of his father David; however, as an adult, he no longer is afforded that excuse. Because he has had no boundaries and faced no justice, he has developed into a narcissistic criminal who does whatever he wants to gain whatever he wants.

Here is where the nuance is, which is missed above: David is king and makes the calls; yet Joab is right that killing Absalom will end the revolution. Joab is under David's authority. There are two problems: (1) David has not yet fully recovered from the arrogance complex, discussed in previous chapters. If memory serves, R. B. Thieme, Jr. said that David was suffering from an arrogance hangover, although this was not fully defined (at least, to my own memory). (2) Joab is right when it comes to Absalom. This is quite the conundrum which Joab faces because David is still influenced by arrogant thinking and sentimentalism, but David outranks him and gets to make the call.

What is the solution? Is Joab right to disobey David's direct but misguided order and ask forgiveness later? He certainly was not right to try to put this responsibility off on a non-commissioned officer, as he tried to do. Should Joab have demanded this of David, in private, threatening to take a neutral position in this war if David continued with this arrogant thinking?

By the way, this is clearly arrogant thinking because, David not treating Absalom in justice is why his country was in the midst of a civil war. Had David stopped at any point in time and dealt with his son in justice—a trial where David was not allowed to be a part because of his relationship to Absalom—this revolution would have never happened.

If anything, that is the clear lesson here. David may be thinking of his son with a sentimental love, but you cannot raise a child apart from righteousness and justice. Absalom would have killed his father or had him killed, given half a chance. On the other hand, David cannot bear to raise a hand against his own son.

Apart from Joab demanding Absalom's death or demanding a military trial for Absalom, without any participation by David (although the king does have the ability to pardon), there appear to be no good options here, and this may be the intention of this narrative.

God's love, by itself, cannot solve the problem of sin.

There is no good solution to the problem of sin apart from righteousness and justice. God's love doesn't get us there. God's love, by itself, is not enough to save us. God's love, by itself, cannot solve the problem of sin. God cannot look at us with sentimental love and say, "I cannot allow man to die; I love mankind too much." That leaves us in a state of perpetual sin, as well as the Angelic Conflict unresolved. God must deal with our sin in a righteous and just manner. God must deal with sin in a way that is consistent with His character and essence.

David's sentimental love for his son is normal, but allowing Absalom to live leaves his kingdom in a state of revolt. Nothing is ever resolved. Until David treats his own son in a manner consistent with righteousness and justice, as David might with any revolutionary, there is no solution or shortcut to this problem of revolution.

What we have here is a very difficult matter to unravel.

General Joab Disobeys King David

1. Some of the facts here are quite clear: David gave an unequivocal order concerning Absalom, that Absalom was to be delivered over by Joab to David in such a way that he could have preserved Absalom alive. Also, a noncom refused to kill Absalom because that would have violated David's direct order. Of

General Joab Disobeys King David

- course, Joab is upset over this, because he understands that once Absalom is dead, the revolution stops.
2. What is also the case is, this revolution is based upon two men: David and Absalom; if either man is killed, then the revolution is over, which potentially would save thousands of lives.
 3. Furthermore, we have a modern-era example of nearly the exact same thing. When General MacArthur was fighting the Korean War, the Chinese were sending soldiers over to fight against him. He wanted to take offensive action against them, and he wanted to bomb out some bridges that would have made it much more difficult for the Chinese to be involved in the war. President Truman, the civilian commander-in-chief, would not agree to this, preferring to fight this war to a stalemate rather than to a victory (which, in many ways, set the stage for the war we fought in Vietnam). Truman did not want to widen the war to where China was clearly recognized as being the enemy, as that could have plunged us into a world war or into a much larger armed conflict, which Truman wanted to avoid. Militarily, MacArthur was right, and there was no little arrogance on the part of Truman who said, "I fired him because he went against the Constitution. I didn't fire him because he's a stupid son of a bitch, though he's that too, because that's not against the law. If it was, I'd have to fire half my generals." Truman has also remarked that he did not understand how the US Army could "produce men such as Robert E. Lee, John J. Pershing, Eisenhower and Bradley and at the same time produce Custers, Pattons and MacArthur." revealing his ignorance of the greatness of Patton and MacArthur."
 4. We do not know today whether the more aggressive action that MacArthur was proposing would have deterred the Chinese or not, but MacArthur issued a communiqué offering a ceasefire to the Chinese, which read thus: *Of even greater significance than our tactical successes has been the clear revelation that this new enemy, Red China, of such exaggerated and vaunted military power, lacks the industrial capability to provide adequately many critical items necessary to the conduct of modern war. He lacks the manufacturing base and those raw materials needed to produce, maintain and operate even moderate air and naval power, and he cannot provide the essentials for successful ground operations, such as tanks, heavy artillery and other refinements science has introduced into the conduct of military campaigns. Formerly his great numerical potential might well have filled this gap but with the development of existing methods of mass destruction numbers alone do not offset the vulnerability inherent in such deficiencies. Control of the seas and the air, which in turn means control over supplies, communications and transportation, are no less essential and decisive now than in the past. When this control exists, as in our case, and is coupled with an inferiority of ground firepower in the enemy's case, the resulting disparity is such that it cannot be overcome by bravery, however fanatical, or the most gross indifference to human loss.*
 5. This showdown between Truman and MacArthur was unfortunate, and it is easy to see how there are those who come down on either side of this issue. Most military types understand that MacArthur knew what he was doing far more than Truman did, and that one of Truman's orders, that MacArthur could bomb the bridges, but not enter into Chinese air space, were unnecessarily restrictive. However, the fact remains, right or wrong, Truman outranked MacArthur.
 6. For those who believe, in retrospect, that Truman kept us from getting into an all-out war with China, several things ought to be noted: (1) we had atomic weapons and they did not. It did not matter that both Truman and MacArthur would probably not have used such weapons, the fact was, we had them. (2) China had just had a revolution, which would have weakened them considerably. And (3) as MacArthur noted, China did not have the ability to manufacture weapons to keep pace with the United States. China had men, but if they did not have weapons, they were limited in what they could do.
 7. In Korea, despite the disagreements about what could have happened there, this allowed for two nations, growing up side-by-side, one free and the other communist, one infused with the gospel of Jesus Christ, the other filled only with fear and respect for their national leader, to reveal communism for the false hope and evil government that it is. North Korea even today has prison camps where people are held for as long as three generations to break their will and often to destroy their genetic line of resistance. South Korea, on the other hand, is one of the greatest nations in the world today—and in South Korea, there is freedom.
 8. In our narrative, Joab is correct militarily—this is the easy solution, and one might well argue, the logical and military solution. David is wrong to issue the order that he did, just as Truman was wrong to make

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- many of the public statements that he did besmirching the character of General MacArthur.
9. If Absalom were preserved alive, then he should have faced a trial and an execution for his actions, something that David appeared to be incapable of doing. That is certainly worth thinking about—*what if Joab preserved Absalom alive?* How could David just forgive him and allow him freedom? This is almost beyond our ability to make sense of David’s future actions concerning Absalom. Would David be forced to finally try Absalom? It should be clear that this would go against every fibre of David’s being.
 10. Just like Truman and MacArthur, Joab is doing what is right militarily and for the nation; and David is indulging his selfish sentimentality; but David is king, and therefore has the authority.
 11. Just as Korea ended up in a stalemate, which gave the world a clear view of communism versus freedom, we do not know what may have happened with Absalom had he been kept alive. Quite frankly, I have a very difficult time with the idea of preserving Absalom alive—but had I been old enough to have an opinion when Truman and MacArthur were disagreeing, I would have no doubt been on MacArthur’s side. Truman was not right, but he was right, because he was president. David was not right, but he was right because he was king.
 12. Had MacArthur knuckled under President Truman, he would have remained our top general for a few more years. The stalemate in Korea would have stood, as a result of Truman’s decisions, and not MacArthur’s; but MacArthur would have still been in charge of our troops. He faced the most difficult situation of doing what he knew was best militarily versus doing what he was ordered to do. Joab faces the same sort of choice right here.
 13. Don’t misunderstand me here—I cannot imagine what might have happened had Absalom been allowed to live, as that would have been such a bad decision militarily. However, David is in charge, and David is coming out of the interlocking systems of arrogance. We know this because Joab will brace David in the next chapter and David will take it and agree with him. Perhaps there would have been a similar outcome had Absalom been kept alive.
 14. This gives us one of the most nuanced situations that we find in Scripture. However, justice will eventually catch up to Joab in 1Kings 2:5–6.

Although the Bible issues a clear declaration of God’s approval for covert warfare, the disagreement here between the civilian leadership (David) over the military leadership (who is Joab) is a great deal more subtle.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Because both Jesus and Absalom are hanging from the wood when they die, there are a few who speak of a parallel here. However, there are too many problems with setting up such a parallel.

Absalom: Not Quite a Parallel to Jesus on the Cross

Absalom	Jesus
Absalom was very recognizable even in an era before photography. Whether there were paintings or statues, we do not know, but his description was quite unique.	No one knows what Jesus looked like, apart from being probably of a medium height, and very strong build, and He had a beard. He was so indistinguishable from His disciples that Judas had to actually point Him out to the chief priests and elders.
Absalom is killed when hanging from the wood (that is, a tree).	Jesus dies when hanging from the wood (that is, the cross).
Absalom was rebelling against his father. At no time in the Bible is there a relationship between him and God discussed.	Jesus did the will of God the Father.

Absalom: Not Quite a Parallel to Jesus on the Cross

Absalom	Jesus
Absalom was completely guilty and deserved to die (contrast this with Isaac when Abraham offered him up).	Jesus was completely innocent and did not deserve capital punishment under the Roman government.
Absalom was executed by the establishment but exiled government for all Israel.	Jesus was executed by the imposed but establishment government of Rome.
While on the tree and still alive, 3 spears were thrust into Absalom. Absalom remained alive after this.	When hanging from a cross, one spear was thrust into Jesus after his physical death.
Absalom was betrayed by an associate—but one who was openly hostile to him (Joab). Recall that Absalom burned down Joab’s field.	Jesus was betrayed by an associate—a disciple, in fact (Judas). Judas was not openly hostile to Jesus, but tried to keep his betrayal quiet.
There was a disagreement between the two levels of authority—the civilian government, headed by David, who trumped the authority of the military, headed by Joab.	The Jewish hierarchy and the Roman government agreed together that Jesus must die. The Jewish pharisees and sadducees demanded it, while the Roman authorities—who were in charge—went along with their desires.
The great problem of Absalom is, his father never deals with him in justice. David, in his arrogance, set aside righteousness and justice in order to love his son.	The great thing about salvation is, God’s justice is key to our salvation. God does not set aside His Own righteousness and justice in order to save us. God, in His grace, loves us without abandoning his righteousness and justice.
Absalom fights off death while hanging on the tree.	Jesus allowed Himself to die when His work was completed.
Ten young men finally killed Absalom.	Jesus died physically of His Own volition.
Absalom built a monument to himself.	Jesus did no such thing nor did He encourage anyone to do that.
Absalom is dead and buried in his grave.	Jesus rose again.

Those who are obedient to the call of the Revealed God are often seen as **types** of Jesus or of His crucifixion. However, those who rebel against God usually are not. It is almost as if this is a false type put forth by Satan.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Taking that final statement, and going on a tangent, it is a curious thought as to whether Satan understood types or had some suspicion of types. A type is a person, a thing or an act which looks forward to Jesus or to Jesus on the cross. My guess, at this point is, Satan knows “that there is something happening here but you don’t know what it is.”⁶⁶

Allow me one additional tangent, if you will: the Christian Community Bible is a Catholic translation. Of the translations which I use, I rarely make mention that this or that Bible is approved by Rome. There are several reasons for this.

⁶⁶ A play on words from **Ballad of a Thin Man**.

Attacking Certain Religious Christians or Denominations

1. I try to avoid attacking particular denominations and particularly individual pastors when I write. When I present this or that interpretation and application, I make every attempt to give good reasons for that position. Only occasionally do I attach a position to a particular denomination or to a particular teacher.
2. What is of utmost importance is the accurate understanding of the Word of God and the principles found in the Word of God. It is much less important to attack individual or groups. I attempt to lay out a group of principles which I believe to be accurate; and let these principles stand on their own. I do not want to spend my time evaluating every person's ministry (and there are several websites which do this). One of the main reasons for this is, someone may not get something exactly right, and yet, their ministry is used by God. Evangelists often do not get the gospel completely correct and too many talk about Jesus standing outside the door of the unbeliever's heart, and He is knocking away and you need to answer that door. This is an okay illustration, but an incorrect interpretation of this passage from Rev. 3 (a dictated epistle sent from Jesus to *believers* and not *unbelievers*).
3. There are a host of problems with the Catholic church. However, in the past, they did everything that they could to hide the Word of God from their flock. Today, there must be 10 approved translations by the Catholic Church, if not more; with a myriad of commentaries. Even though there are some great, gaping problems with some doctrines of the Catholic Church, their attempt to put an accurate Bible into the hands of their parishioners is admirable and important. Most of their translations are quite good, apart from including the apocrypha as Scripture.
4. Finally there are many people who have been saved in the Catholic faith. If a person believes in Jesus Christ, they are saved (as long as they are not simultaneously depending upon their works as well). I have known many Catholics in my life, and in talking with them, most of them appear to be saved. Now, there is certainly a problem with a person experiencing spiritual growth in a Catholic church. However, that is true of many protestant churches as well. How productive would it be for me to examine each and every protestant church and then attempt to tell you how good or bad it is? What is productive is to give you accurate Bible doctrine, and then let you make your choices with your life, which includes the church that you go to.

For this reason, you will not find a list of disapproved men and churches on my website.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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V. 14 reads: [Therefore, Joab said, "I will not waste any more time standing around talking to you." He grabbed 3 spears in his hand, went to the tree where Absalom was hanging and thrust them into Absalom. However, Absalom remained alive, still caught in the oak.](#) Few of the commentators write about the importance of Absalom facing justice; Clarke lays out 4 violations of the law for which Absalom ought to face justice.

Clarke: "Justice for Abraham is Long Overdue"

1. In having murdered his brother Amnon.
2. In having burned down Joab's field.
3. In having excited an insurrection in the state.
4. In having taken up arms against his own father, Deut. 21:18, 21.
5. In having lain with his father's concubines, Lev. 18:29.

Clarke: Joab should have obeyed the king's commandment: and yet the safety of the state required the sacrifice of Absalom. But independently of this, his life was quadruply forfeited to the law. Long ago he should have died by the hand of justice; and now all his crimes are visited on him in his last act of rebellion.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:14. This list is from the same place, with #2 added in by me.

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Joab then grabbed 3 spears in his hand, went to the tree where Absalom was hanging and thrust them into Absalom. However, Absalom remained alive, still caught in the oak. This could lead to some interesting speculation—is Joab incapable of dispatching a helpless enemy or did he intentionally leave Absalom alive? The thrust of this verse, as it were, seems to suggest that Joab had intended to kill Absalom, but how does a veteran warrior not kill his enemy when his enemy is this helpless? It could very well be that Joab brought his armor bearers along with him, so that they would take up for him at this point and deliver the final death-blow to Absalom.

We have to bear in mind that Joab is a brilliant man, and he also knows that David commanded to deal gently with Absalom. Putting 3 spears into the Absalom's body is pretty much the exact opposite of treating Absalom gently. Could Joab have intentionally left Absalom alive? As a man skilled in the art of war, could Joab have pierced Absalom in such a way to not deliver a fatal blow? The more that I consider this thought, the more I am convinced that Joab did this on purpose.

Was Joab Unable to Kill Absalom?

1. This is a very strange passage. Joab has been a military man for almost all of his life. He kills his enemies for a living.
2. Even though Joab has been a general in David's army for some time, there is no reason to think that he has lost his touch or did not, from time to time, personally kill the enemy.
3. In war, Joab did not merely have to be able to kill men, but he needed to be able to dispatch them quickly and with ease. When Ahab the Ammonite charges Joab, Joab cannot spend the next 20 minutes killing Ahab, because, by that time, his military associates would have come on the scene.
4. Joab had to have the skills to, with nearly any weapon, kill a foe. Give Joab a spoon, and he could use it to kill a man in battle. There is no reason to assume that Joab lacks any skill in this department.
5. Therefore, it seems quite odd that, Joab faces Absalom while Absalom is hanging helplessly in a tree, and Joab strikes him with 3 spears, and yet, Absalom remains alive. How can that be?
6. Furthermore, to anyone who watched Joab do this, it appears as if his intent is to kill Absalom. My theory is that, Joab intended to do this. He expected that anyone who saw him, believed that he was intent on killing Absalom.
7. However, Joab's hidden intention was to leave Absalom alive, struggling in the tree.
8. It is reasonable to suppose that a man skilled in the art of killing other men, also knows how not to kill another man. If Joab knows from experience where to place a sword or a spear to inflict death, then he must know where to place such a weapon and yet allow a man to live.
9. Joab would know both the non-lethal places to place a spear, as well as where to stick a spear so that it might pierce the skin of an enemy, but leave him alive.
10. Joab knows that David has ordered him to treat Absalom gently, and Joab appears to be trying to kill Absalom. That clearly violates David's order.
11. However, Joab's armor bearers will step up—ten of them—and strike Absalom until he dies.
12. Now, Joab has not delivered the final blow, and we have ten brave men who have struck Absalom, and the final death blow is unknown.
13. This leaves David with a decision that he does not want to make—if he investigates Absalom's death and finds out that Joab and his armor bearers killed Absalom, is David willing to have these brave men executed? These are the same men who saved David in this revolution.
14. So Joab, possibly in a very intentional and devious move, spreads the blame around for Absalom's death.

The psychology of this study is, in itself, quite fascinating. Now, I am not presenting this doctrine as necessarily being favorable to Joab. This is simply to probe what likely happened. This is taking into consideration who and what Joab is, what he is capable of, and drawing some logical conclusions. The text of this chapter does not outright state the conclusion which I have come to, which is, Joab intentionally did not kill Absalom, so that he might share the blame with his loyal armor bearers, if such a thing became necessary.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And so surround the ten young men, bearers of weapons of Joab; and so they strike Absalom and so they kill him.

2Samuel
18:15

The ten young men who bore the Joab's armor surrounded and then struck Absalom, thus killing him.

Joab's armor bearers, ten young men, surrounded Absalom and struck him until he died.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Ten young men, armourbearers of Joab, <u>ran up</u> , and striking him slew him.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so surround the ten young men, bearers of weapons of Joab; and so they strike Absalom and so they kill him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And ten young men who bore Joabs armor circled about and smote Absalom and slew him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And ten young men that bore Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, and struck him, and killed him.

Significant differences: The Latin has these ten men *running up* rather than *surrounding* Absalom.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Ten of Joab's bodyguards came over and finished him off.
Easy English	The 10 young men who helped Joab stood round Absalom. And they killed him.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then ten of Joab's soldiers closed in on Absalom and finished killing him.
<i>The Message</i>	...by then Absalom was surrounded by ten of Joab's armor bearers; they hacked away at him and killed him.
New Berkeley Version	Then ten young aides, who carried Joab's armor, gathered around and struck Absalom to death.
New Century Version	Ten young men who carried Joab's armor also gathered around Absalom and struck him and killed him.
New Life Bible	And ten young men who carried Joab's battle clothes gathered around and hit Absalom and killed him.
The Voice	Ten young men, Joab's armor bearers, surrounded Absalom then and struck him until he was dead.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then, ten of his young men took JoAb's weapons and stabbed AbSalom [to make sure] he was dead.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Then ten of Joab's armorbearers surrounded Absalom, attacked him, and killed him.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So he took three javelins with him, and thrust Absalom right through with them; then, as he still hung there writhing on the oak, ten squires who attended on Joab ran up and dispatched him. A portion of v. 14 is included for context.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When ten of Joab's young armor-bearers closed in on Absalom, and killed him with further blows, ...
New Jerusalem Bible	Ten soldiers, Joab's armour-bearers, then came in close, struck Absalom and killed him.
Revised English Bible	Then ten young men who were Joab's armour-bearers closed in on Absalom, struck at him, and killed him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English The Expanded Bible	The ten lads that lifted Joab's articles surrounded and smote Absalom, and he died. And ten young men, servants of Joab, came round Absalom and put an end to him. Ten young men who carried Joab's armor also gathered around Absalom and struck him and killed him.
Ferar-Fenton Bible NET Bible®	Then two of J'oab's guards surrounded him and stabbed Absalom, and killed him. Then ten soldiers who were Joab's armor bearers struck Absalom and finished him off.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and ten lads bearing the instruments of Yah Ab surround Abi Shalom and smite and deathify him:...
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And ten ne'arim that bore the armor of Yoav surrounded Avshalom, struck and slaughtered him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And they go round--ten youths bearing weapons of Joab--and smite Absalom, and put him to death.
Context Group Version	And ten young men that bore Joab's armor encompassed about and struck Absalom, and killed him.
English Standard Version	And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him and killed him.
Green's Literal Translation	And they went around, ten young men bearing Joab's weapons, and struck Absalom, and killed him.
NASB	And ten young men who carried Joab's armor gathered around and struck Absalom and killed him.
Syndein/Thieme	And ten 'elect soldiers'/'young men' who bare Joab's armor {his body guards} circled about and 'hacked to pieces'/smote Absalom, and caused him to die. {Note: Joab must have cut Absalom's hair and he fell from the tree. Then the 10 men of Joab's body guard went in for the kill of Absalom. So Absalom died slowly . . . with 3 javelins in his chest and now the hacking up. They were willing to be court-martialed and killed by David, if necessary, to protect Joab.}
World English Bible	Ten young men who bore Joab's armor compassed about and struck Absalom, and killed him.
Young's Updated LT	And they go round—ten youths bearing weapons of Joab—and they strike Absalom, and put him to death.

The gist of this verse: Joab's 10 armor bearers strike Joab until he dies. In this way, they stand with Joab and show themselves willing to share his fate.

2Samuel 18:15a

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

2Samuel 18:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
çâbab (בָּבַב) [pronounced saw ^b -VAH ^b V]	<i>to turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encompass</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
‘asârâh (עָשָׂרָה) [pronounced gah-saw-RAW]	<i>ten</i>	feminine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
na‘ar (נָעַר) [pronounced NAH-gahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
nâsâ’ (נָשָׂא) [pronounced naw-SAW]	<i>those lifting up, bearers, those carrying; the ones exalting; those taking away</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; construct form	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
k ^e lîy (יָלֵךְ) [pronounced k ^e lee]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
Yôw’âb (יָאוֹב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b V]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: [The ten young men who bore the Joab's armor surrounded...](#) Joab's personal bodyguard, those who carried his cache of weapons with them, surrounded Absalom, who was still alive after having been speared three times by Joab.

The direct object of the verb which follows in v. 15b is also the reasonable direct object for this verb.

2Samuel 18:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
’Ăbîyshâlôwm (אֲבוֹיִשָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...and then struck Absalom,... It is unclear what these men used to strike Absalom with; but it is likely whatever weapons they happened to be carrying. These weapons are probably not named simply because they are varied.

These men are taking up Joab's cause, even though they heard the order of David. They will bear responsibility as well for Absalom's death. By doing this, they give Joab some cover.

2Samuel 18:15c

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, consequently; because	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: ...thus killing him. Joab's younger men strike Absalom until he dies. The Pulpit Commentary has Absalom as 27 years old at his death.⁶⁸

Continuing with the possible moral dilemma here, the Pulpit Commentary says: *On the face of it most men would have said that Joab was justified in setting aside conscientious scruples about the sacredness of the royal command. The rebel deserved death, the only place of restraint for him was the grave, the king's paternal feelings were a danger to the state, Providence had evidently put Absalom's life in the hands of Joab, and the king would be sure to condone the deed, all this might be said with force...Joab, by his deviation from the king's command, while seeming to secure an advantage to the state, was really sowing the seed of rebellion; for it set aside the supreme law, and its natural tendency was to weaken the royal authority throughout Israel.*⁶⁹

It is interesting to wonder, *what would have happened had Joab obeyed David?* As in some of the extended conversations back in v. 14, I would have sided both with Joab and with General Douglas MacArthur (regarding Korea). However, as a result of Truman having his way by imposing his authority over MacArthur, two Korea's emerged, one communist and one free. These Korea's stand as a witness to the godless communists throughout Asia. Now, I am sure that Truman did not intend for that to happen. I am sure that Truman simply backed down, not wanting to engage in a more expansive war (which may or may not have happened). But as a result of Truman's truce in Korea (as opposed to his unequivocal victory over Japan by using atomic weapons), we have two nations of two peoples rising up side-by-side, one free and one under the slavery of communism and an authoritarian godless government.

Comparing North and South Korea		
	North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of)	South Korea (Republic of)
Population	24,720,407	48,955,203

⁶⁸ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:14–18.

⁶⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:1–18.

Comparing North and South Korea		
	North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of)	South Korea (Republic of)
GDP (purchasing power parity), \$billion	40	1,622
GDP - real growth rate (%)	0.8	2.7
GDP - per capita (PPP), \$	1,800	32,400
Unemployment rate, %		3.8
Urban population (%)	60	83
Military expenditures 2008 (as a percentage of GDP)	22.3%	2.8%
Military expenditures 2008 (as a raw figure)	\$8.213 billion	\$26.1 billion
Median age	33	39
Infant mortality rate, per 1,000 live births	26.21	4.08
Life expectancy at birth (total population)	69.2	79.3
Area	122,762 sq km	99,313 sq km
Corruption Index ranking 2012	174	45
Press Freedom Index 2013	178	50
Total executed, 2007-2011	105	0
Total sentenced to death, 2007-2011	0	13
CO ₂ Emissions (metric tons per capita)	3.1	10.4
% of rural population with access to an improved water source	97	88
Internet users per 100 people	< 0.1	81.5
Intentional homicide, rate per 100,000 population	15.2	2.6
Intentional homicide, count per 100,000 population	3,658	1,251
Exports, \$ billion	4.71	552.6
Imports	4	514.2
Net official development assistance (ODA) and official aid (current US\$)	78,840,000	-69,070,000
Net ODA per capita (current US\$)	3	
Global Hunger Index score	19	N/A
Manpower fit for military service, males age 16-49	4,836,567	10,864,566

Comparing North and South Korea		
	North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of)	South Korea (Republic of)
Manpower fit for military service, females age 16-49	5,230,137	10,168,709
Active duty	1190000	655000
Reserve	600,000 (Armed Forces). Paramilitary 5,700,000	4,500,000. Paramilitary 3,000,000
Military expenditure as a percentage of GDP	22.3	2.8
Military spending, \$ billion	8.21	26.1

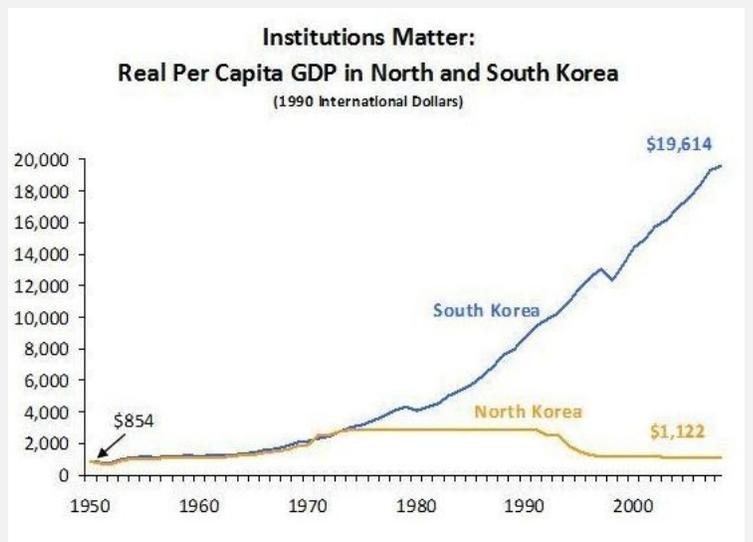
Chart from: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/datablog/2013/apr/08/south-korea-v-north-korea-compared>
 Additional material from:
<http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2013/4/8/1365409925375/North-Korea-v-South-Korea-001.jpg>

Institutions Matter: Real Per Capita GDP in North and South Korea.

This chart reveals just how dramatically different paths that these two nations have taken.

Chart is from: [Intellectual takeout](#), accessed August 2, 2013

Unfortunately, few of these comparisons take into consideration the spiritual aspect in all of this. However, South Korea regularly sends out Christian missionaries throughout Asia and elsewhere.



Again, I have no idea what would have happened, had Joab let Absalom live. However, sometimes doing that which is based upon the decision of the man in authority is right, even though it may not seem at all right at the time.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

The Two Monuments to Absalom

And so blows Joab in the trumpet and so return the people from pursuing after Israel, for restrained Joab the people.

2Samuel 18:16

Joab blew the trumpet so the people returned from pursuing after Israel, for Joab restrained the people.

Joab blew the trumpet to call the troops back from pursuing Israel. Joab called for restraint against the people who had followed Absalom.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Joab <u>sounded</u> the trumpet, and <u>kept back</u> the people from pursuing after Israel in their flight, <u>being willing to spare</u> the multitude.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so blows Joab in the trumpet and so return the people from pursuing after Israel, for restrained Joab the people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel; for Joab had held back the people.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab <u>spared</u> the people.

Significant differences: The verbs in the Latin appear to be different than the Hebrew. The final verb in the Greek appears to be different from the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Easy English	Then Joab blew a trumpet to signal his troops to stop chasing Israel's soldiers. Then Joab blew a *trumpet. David's soldiers stopped chasing the *Israelites because Joab had stopped them.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Joab had the trumpet blown to stop the fighting, and his troops came back from pursuing the Israelites.
New Living Translation	Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and his men returned from chasing the army of Israel.
The Voice	Then Joab sounded the trumpet and pulled back the soldiers from their pursuit of the army of Israel, because Joab knew no good would come of further fighting.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And JoAb blew his battle horn to call his people back from their pursuit of IsraEl, because he wanted to spare them.
Beck's American Translation	Joab blew the horn, and the troops returned from pursuing Israel, because Joab put a stop to the fighting.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	With that, Joab sounded the trumpet, and would not let his men go further in pursuit of Israel, to spare the lives of the common folk.
NIRV	Then Joab blew his trumpet. He ordered his troops to stop chasing Israel's army.
New Simplified Bible	Joab ordered the trumpet blown to stop the fighting. His troops came back from pursuing the Israelites.
Revised English Bible	Joab sounded the trumpet, and the army came back from the pursuit of Israel, because he had called on them to halt.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And Joab had the horn sounded, and the people came back from going after Israel, for Joab kept them back.
The Expanded Bible	Then Joab blew the trumpet, so the troops ·stopped [returned from] chasing the Israelites.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	J'oab afterwards sounded the trumpet, and the forces returned from pursuing Israel, for J'oab restrained the men.

HCSB	Afterwards, Joab blew the ram's horn, and the troops broke off their pursuit of Israel because Joab restrained them.
NET Bible®	Then Joab blew the trumpet [Heb "the shophar" (the ram's horn trumpet).] and the army turned back from chasing Israel, for Joab had called for the army to halt.
NIV – UK	Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yo'av sounded the shofar, and the people returned from pursuing Isra'el, because Yo'av held back the troops.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Then Joab sounded the horn, and the troops gave up their pursuit of the Israelites; for Joab held the troops in check.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then Yoav blew the shofar, and HaAm returned from pursuing after Yisroel; for Yoav held back HaAm.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	And Joab blew the shofar, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel; for Joab held back the people.
English Standard Version	Then Joab blew the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained them.
The Geneva Bible	And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. For he had pity on the people, who were seduced by Absalom's flattery.
Green's Literal Translation	And Joab blew the ram's horn, and the people returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab had held the people back.
New RSV	Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the troops.
Syndein/Thieme	And Joab 'sounded recall on the trumpet', and the army returned from pursuing after Israel . . . for Joab held back the army {from killing all the revolutionary army now in retreat}. {Note: Since Joab's army was victorious in this battle, when the trumpet was sounded, this would have been for recall. This demonstrates there was no personal vengeance in the killing of Absalom. He is going to permit the rest of the revolutionary army to escape death.}.
Young's Updated LT	And Joab blows with a trumpet, and the people turns back from pursuing after Israel, for Joab has kept back the people.

The gist of this verse: Joab calls back his attack against the people who followed Absalom.

2Samuel 18:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tâqa' (תָּקַע) [pronounced <i>taw-KAHG</i>]	<i>to fasten, to thrust; to drive, to clap [or strike] [hands], to give a blow, to give a blast</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8628 BDB #1075

2Samuel 18:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
This same verb has already been used in a much different way in this chapter in v. 14.			
Yôw'âb (יֹאבִי) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father</i> and is transliterated <i>Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shôwphâr (שׁוֹפָר) (also רֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced shoh-FAWR]	<i>horn, trumpet; transliterated shophar</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7782 BDB #1051

Translation: [Joab blew the trumpet](#)... There would have been a variety of trumpet sounds, and this one called for the people who supported David to return (2Sam. 2:28 20:22). They were in the midst of the battle, but Absalom had been killed. Apparently they had been winning and sending Absalom's troops into a retreat. However, this call from Joab called them back. His men were well-trained, they understood the call of the trumpet, and they obeyed.

2Samuel 18:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
râdaph (רָדַף) [pronounced raw-DAHf]	<i>to pursue, to follow after; to chase with hostile intent, to persecute</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7291 BDB #922
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29

2Samuel 18:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^e rā'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...so the people returned from pursuing after Israel,... Therefore, the troops of David—here called *the people*—returned to Joab and they no longer pursued those who had supported Absalom. As previously discussed, the place in which they battled favored the smaller force of David, which was broken down into smaller military groups which were, therefore, more mobile and could more easily adjust to a battlefield of foliage.

2Samuel 18:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
châsak ^e (חָשַׁק) [pronounced <i>khaw-SAHK^e</i>]	<i>to hold in, to restrain, to preserve, to keep safely from something, to withhold, to refrain</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2820 BDB #362
Yôw'âb (יֹאבִיב) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...for Joab restrained the people. Joab could have pushed this victory; he could have killed many of those who had risen up behind Absalom, but here, he shows some restraint. He understands the people being taken in by a charismatic leader and allows them to fall back. He assumes that they will realize, at some point, that their leader, Absalom, was killed.

Clarke: [Joab] knew that the rebellion was now extinguished by the death of Absalom; and was not willing that any farther slaughter should be made of the deluded people.⁷⁰ Gill: Joab held back the people: from shedding any more blood; the head of the conspiracy being removed, the thing would be crushed at once; and Joab neither chose to slay any more, nor take any prisoners, to be tried as traitors, being unawares, without thought, drawn into this rebellion.⁷¹ The Geneva Bible translation notes: For he had pity on the people, who were seduced by Absalom's flattery.⁷²

⁷⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:16.

⁷¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:16.

⁷² Geneva Bible Translation Notes; courtesy of e-sword; 1599; 2Sam. 18:16.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *[Joab knew] that by the death of the usurper Absalom there was no occasion for further bloodshed, he put an end to the pursuit and thereby evinced the temperate policy of his conduct. However harsh and unfeeling to the king Joab may appear, there can be no doubt that he acted the part of a wise statesman in regarding the peace and welfare of the kingdom more than his master's private inclinations, which were opposed to strict justice as well as his own interests.*⁷³

Some of these points came from or were inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0473 and #631_0474

Joab's Restraint

1. Joab was a profession soldier who loved his country.
2. He was not looking to exact revenge upon the soldiers who followed Absalom. There were times in Joab's past where he was not too thrilled with David's orders; we have two examples recorded in Scripture:
 - 1) David told Joab to place Bathsheba's husband, Uriah the Hittite, in the heat of the battle so that he would die.
 - 2) David ordered Joab to go easy on Absalom in this past battle.
3. Killing Absalom here was not a matter of revenge. We know this because Joab could have pursued the revolutionaries who followed Absalom and killed many of them. However, instead, Joab called his troops back, allowing them to escape.
4. It would be very easy for Joab to take things personally, but he does not. Therefore, he is able to deal with David's authority and he is able to deal with these revolutionary soldiers.
5. Vengeance reveals a lack of professionalism and subjectivity; and Joab was not vengeful.
6. This is one reason that both the death of Absalom and the pardoning of the revolutionary soldiers is recorded in Scripture—so that we may know and Joab was not acting out of personal revenge. He understood that the revolution would not end until Absalom was dead.
7. Joab had, in previous years, stood up for Absalom, and had gone out of his way to reconcile David and his son Absalom. However, since David was unwilling to treat Absalom in justice, Joab had to do that.
8. In this case, King David was thinking subjectively and emotionally; Joab was thinking objectively.
9. David must be able to put Israel back together again, and this cannot be done while he is treating his own son, a revolutionary, with subjective sentimentality.

Joab affects the future of Israel by doing these two things: killing Absalom and allowing the surviving revolutionaries to escape.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And so they take Absalom and so they throw him into the forest unto the pit the large. And so they erect over him a heap of stones great very. And all Israel fled a man to his tent. 2Samuel 18:17

Then they took Absalom and threw him into a large pit in the forest. They erected over him a very great heap of stones. Meanwhile, all Israel fled each one to his tent.

They took Absalom's body and threw it into a large pit in the forest, and then erected over him a great heap of stones. Meanwhile, his army fled, every man back to his own tent.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁷³ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 18:16 (slightly edited).

Latin Vulgate	And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the forest, and they laid an exceeding great heap of stones upon him: but all Israel fled to their own <u>dwelling</u> s.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they take Absalom and so they throw him into the forest unto the pit the large. And so they erect over him a heap of stones great very. And all Israel fled a man to his tent.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they took Absalom's <u>body</u> and cast it into a great pit, and raised over it a great heap of large stones; and all Israel fled every man to his tent.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he took Absalom, and cast him into a great <u>cavern</u> in the woods, into a deep pit, and set up over him a very great heap of stones: and all Israel fled, every man to his tent.
Significant differences:	The Syriac adds that this is Absalom's body. The Greek has <i>cavern</i> rather than <i>pit</i> . The Latin appears to have <i>dwelling</i> s rather than <i>tent</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Easy English	Then Joab's men took Absalom's body. They threw him into a large hole in the ground. So, they buried him in the forest. Then they put a large pile of rocks over him. Meanwhile the *Israelites ran away to their homes.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then Joab's men took Absalom's body and threw it into a large hole in the forest. They filled the large hole with many stones.
Good News Bible (TEV)	They took Absalom's body, threw it into a deep pit in the forest, and covered it with a huge pile of stones. All the Israelites fled to their own hometowns.
<i>The Message</i>	They took Absalom, dumped him into a huge pit in the forest, and piled an immense mound of rocks over him. Meanwhile the whole army of Israel was in flight, each man making his own way home.
New Life Bible	They took Absalom and threw him into a deep hole among the trees, and set many stones over him. And all Israel ran away, every one to his own home.
The Voice	They took Absalom's body and threw it in a deep hole in the forest, and then they stacked stones high over it. Meanwhile the remaining Israelites <i>loyal to Absalom</i> fled to their homes.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Thereafter, Joab took Absalom's body and threw it into a deep gully in the forest, and he formed a huge pile of rocks over it as a monument, while the whole army of Israel was retreating to their tents.
New American Bible	Absalom was taken up and cast into a deep pit in the forest, and a very large mound of stones was erected over him. And all the Israelites fled to their own tents.
NIRV	Joab's men threw Absalom's body into a big pit in the forest. They covered his body with a large pile of rocks. While all of that was going on, all of the Israelites ran back to their homes.
New Jerusalem Bible	They took Absalom, flung him into a deep pit in the forest and raised a huge cairn over him. All the Israelites had fled, dispersing to their homes.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	They took Absalom, and cast him into a great sinkhole in the forest, and stationed a very great heap of stones over him. All Israel fled, a man to his tent.
Bible in Basic English	And they took Absalom's body and put it into a great hole in the wood, and put a great mass of stones over it: and every man of Israel went in flight to his tent.
The Expanded Bible	Then Joab's men took Absalom's body and threw it into a ·large [deep] pit in the forest and ·filled the pit with [·piled over him] many stones. All the Israelites ·ran away [fled] to their homes.

Ferar-Fenton Bible But they took Absalom and flung him down in the forest into a great pit, and piled over him a very great heap of stones.
 Thus all Israel fled each to his home.

NET Bible® They took Absalom, threw him into a large pit in the forest, and stacked a huge pile of stones over him. In the meantime all the Israelite soldiers fled to their homes [Heb "and all Israel fled, each to his tent." In this context this refers to the supporters of Absalom (see vv. 6-7, 16).].

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible They took Avshalom and threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled a big heap of stones over him. All Isra'el fled, each one to his tent.

exeGeses companion Bible And they take *Abi Shalom* and cast him into a great pit in the forest and station a mighty great heap of stones on him: and all *Yisra El* flees every man to his tent.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) They took Absalom and flung him into a large pit in the forest and they piled up a very great heap of stones over it. Then all the Israelites fled to their homes.—

Orthodox Jewish Bible And they took Avshalom, and cast him into a great pit in the forest, and laid a very great heap of *avanim* upon him; and all *Yisroel* fled, every ish to his *ohel*.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version And they took Absalom and threw him into a great pit in the forest and raised over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled every one to his own home.

New King James Version And they took Absalom and cast him into a large pit in the woods, and laid a very large heap of stones over him. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his tent.

Syndein/Thieme {Criminal Burial of Absalom}
 And they took {the corpse of} Absalom, and chucked/cast him into a great pit in the forest {of Ephraim}, and laid a very great pile of rocks upon him. {Note: In Israel, a criminal was thrown in a pit and rocks stacked on them. We saw this also in Joshua 7:26 the burial for Achan. This way the grave site of Absalom was unmarked and could not be used by malcontents for further revolution.}
 And all Israel {the surviving revolutionary army} fled every one to his home. {Note: The important thing here is they did not try to reorganize. Instead they fled to their homes hoping their neighbors would not know they ever left - so they would not get the proper treatment for criminals - death.}.

Young's Literal Translation And they take Absalom and cast him in the forest unto the great pit, and set up over him a very great heap of stones, and all Israel have fled—each to his tent.

The gist of this verse: Absalom was tossed into a huge pit and covered with stones. While this was going on, the army that supported him retreated for their homes.

2Samuel 18:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 18:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: Then they took Absalom... This is Absalom's body. He was killed, and now his body will be disposed of.

The plan here is to erect some sort of a monument—not one to necessarily glorify Absalom, but one to indicate that the rebel of Israel was dead.

2Samuel 18:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlak ^e (שָׁלַק) [pronounced shaw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to throw, to cast, to fling, to throw off, to cast away [off]; to shed; to reject; to cast about; to cast down, to overthrow</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7993 BDB #1020
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>him</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to him, toward him</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ya'ar (יָעַר) [pronounced YAH-ġahr]	<i>wood, forest, thicket; a beehive; an excess of honey; a thicket of trees</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3293 and #3264 (plural form) BDB #420
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
pachath (פָּחַת) [pronounced PAHKH-ahth]	<i>pit, hole</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6354 BDB #809

2Samuel 18:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i>]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

Translation: ...and threw him into a large pit in the forest. The large pit here suggests that this is larger than a typical grave. Absalom is buried apparently immediately.

The Bible mentions burials from time to time, more by way of being informative rather than giving us a direction to follow. Some of the more prominent burials appear to occur in caves (Sarah's burial and the burial of our Lord fit that description). It appears that a burial in the ground was less noble, although that should not matter to the believer in Jesus Christ.

2Samuel 18:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâtsab (נָצַב) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAH^BV</i>]	<i>to station oneself, to take one's stand, to stand up, to set something upright, to erect; to fix, to establish</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5324 BDB #662
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
gal (גַּל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>a heap [of stones], a wave [used figuratively for chastisement of Jehovah], spring</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1530 BDB #164
ʿeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced <i>EH^B-ven</i>]	<i>a stone [large or small] [in its natural state, as a building material]; stone ore; used of tablets, marble, cut stone; used of a tool or weapon; a precious stone, gem; rock; a weight of the balance</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6

2Samuel 18:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gāḏōwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
m ^o ōd (מְּוֹד) [pronounced m ^e -ODE]	exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: They erected over him a very great heap of stones. Absalom's grave was marked with a huge pile of stones. This is interesting, and I wonder about the symbolism here. With all of these rocks piled up high over Absalom's body, did this hold him in place during the resurrection? Was it symbolically designed to keep him forever in the grave? I only speak of the symbolism here, because those who have exercised faith in the Revealed Lord will be raised up no matter where they are.

Clarke suggests that I am off-base in the symbolism here: *This was the method of burying heroes, and even traitors, the heap of stones being designed to perpetuate the memory of the event, whether good or bad. The ancient cairns or heaps of stones, in different parts of the world, are of this kind. The various tumuli or barrows in England are the same as the cairns in different parts of Ireland and Scotland. In the former, stones were not plenty; hence they heaped up great mounds of earth.*⁷⁴

The narrative of Absalom's death: Joab grabbed 3 spears in his hand, went to the tree where Absalom was hanging and thrust them into Absalom. However, Absalom remained alive, still caught in the oak. Joab's armor bearers, ten young men, surrounded Absalom and struck him until he died. Then they took Absalom's body and threw it into a large pit in the forest, and then erected over him a great heap of stones. Hanging a man to death is seen as proper for a criminal worthy of death (Deut. 21:22–23). Absalom himself appeared to put himself into this situation. Being buried under a pile of stones is also the sign of an ignominious death (Joshua 7:26 8:29).

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *The people of the East indicate their detestation of the memory of an infamous person by throwing stones at the place where he is buried. The heap is increased by the gradual accumulation of stones which passers-by add to it.*⁷⁵

Poole: *[Joab's soldiers] laid a very great heap of stones upon Absalom, as a lasting monument of his sin and shame, and of the righteous judgment of God upon him.*⁷⁶

Matthew Henry: *[David's soldiers] raised a great heap of stones upon him, to be a monument of his villany, and to signify that he ought to have been stoned as a rebellious son (Deut. 21:21). Travelers say that the place is taken note of to this day, and that it is common for passengers to throw a stone to this heap, with words to this purport: "Cursed be the memory of rebellious Absalom, and cursed for ever be all wicked children that rise up in rebellion against their parents." To aggravate the ignominy of Absalom's burial, the historian takes notice of a pillar he had erected in the valley of Kidron, near Jerusalem, to be a monument for himself, and keep his name in remembrance (2Sam. 18:18), at the foot of which, it is probable, he designed to be buried. What foolish insignificant projects do proud*

⁷⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:17.

⁷⁵ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 18:17.

⁷⁶ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:17 (edited).

*men fill their heads with! And what care do many people take about the disposal of their bodies, when they are dead, that have no care at all what shall become of their precious souls!*⁷⁷

Prov. 10:7 The memory of the righteous one is a blessing, Yet the name of the wicked shall rot away. (CLV)

Some of these points came from or were inspired by things said by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in his 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0474.

Legitimate Authority and the Potter's Wheel

1. Ahithophel, Absalom and Amasa, are all vessels of dishonor. They have made their own decisions. The potter's wheel represents their creation, their environment and authority in their lives.
 - 1) Absalom is David's son, the revolutionist, who has just been killed.
 - 2) Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather who hated David for what he did to Bathsheba, and allied himself with Absalom. He provided brilliant military advice to Absalom, which Absalom rejected in favor of the advice from Hushai (David's mole in his operation). When Absalom rejected his brilliant plan, Ahithophel went home and hanged himself.
 - 3) Amasa is related to David, but as a bastard; and he was selected by Absalom to command his army.
2. This is very difficult for some people to grasp, particularly when they do not want to take responsibility for their own decisions. They want to blame their environment or they want to blame how God made them for their bad decisions.
3. The fact is, all people, believers and unbelievers, have weaknesses, have a sin nature, and have committed personal sins. Irregardless of the various factors in the lives of these people, these decisions came from their own volition.
4. It is even difficult for the believer with doctrine to accept the justice of God when this hits close to home (a dear friend or a relative who has rejected Jesus Christ).
5. These who reject establishment authority create their own evil and cause their own destruction. Absalom made every decision which put him in a grave under this pile of rocks. David, his father, failed him; but that does not excuse his behavior and his rebellion. We are under the worst president in my lifetime (I write this in 2013), at a time when our government could remove (or has removed) many of the freedoms guaranteed us by the constitution. Even with this, we do not have a right to revolt against our government or to plot against it. Because we have an elected government, we can promote our own issues, beliefs and candidates; but we do not have recourse to revolution if they do not win.
6. We are all liable for our own failures just as Absalom was. When we reject legitimate authority—that of Jesus Christ or that of our government—we face discipline.
 - 1) As an aside, I have talked with many liberals, and most of them cannot be reasoned with.
 - 2) They support their liberal candidates, literally hate conservative candidates, and only rarely can articulate more than a few slogans why they believe in those liberal candidates. I questioned one person—a low information voter (not even a liberal) as to why she voted for Barack Obama, and she said that she supported, "Hope and change."
 - 3) A country which elects its leaders and can be so manipulated deserves the government that they get.
 - 4) In talking to others—even college-educated liberals—they are quick to blame Bush for having a surplus and turning it into debt; and yet support Obama, even though his deficit is thrice and four-times what Bush's was. There is a short-circuit, it seems, in their brain, where the candidate with the R next to their name does X, and it is wrong; but the candidate with the D next to their name does X to the n^{th} degree, and they are okay.
 - 5) I should point out, I am not trying to get you to change your vote, if you are a Democrat. I am using political leaders and their positions to make a point; I am using them as illustrations. I am certainly not saying that all Democrats are bad and all Republicans are good. In this day and time, nearly all Democrats are bad and a few Republicans are good. But that is not the point I am making.

⁷⁷ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:9–18.

Legitimate Authority and the Potter's Wheel

- 6) My point in all of this is, people are given enough opportunity to properly evaluate their candidates during an election and they choose candidates often for very superficial reasons.
 - 7) In the same way, they choose against God's standards and divine establishment standards consistently in their lives; and are therefore responsible for the results.
 - 8) A large number of people supported Absalom, even though he had not a tenth of David's wisdom or leadership ability. He was just the newest, more handsome model; and the revolutionaries simply chose him for these superficial reasons.
 - 9) Absalom himself knew how much he lacked by way of experience, and yet he just forced the issue, pitting himself against his father. He did not have the patience to wait for the throne, which would have been his.
7. In life, we face 3 categories of truth: divine establishment truth, the truth of the gospel and Bible doctrine. These things represent God's thinking. In order for you to think differently than God, you must reject truth and embrace the lie. God gives us the volition to reject Him; but this does not make Him responsible for rejecting Him. Believing in Jesus Christ only takes a moment; rejecting Him takes every second of every day. We are all responsible for making this decision.
 - 1) When enough people in a society reject divine establishment truth, that society retrogresses; most Muslim countries are hell holes because they reject divine establishment truth. Europe has gone from being a wonderful place and is falling into greater and greater degeneracy because they have rejected divine establishment truth.
 - 2) Our salvation is based upon faith in Jesus Christ. We must exercise faith in Jesus Christ for a few seconds in our lives in order to have an eternal relationship with God. We must reject Jesus Christ for every second of our lives in order to reject God.
 - 3) The believer then has to choose the direction of his life, whether that direction is based upon his environment or upon the truth of the Bible.
 8. Therefore, our lives are based upon our interaction with truth in all 3 categories. We are responsible for our reaction to the truth.
 9. What we must trust is, God's judgments are true; God righteousness and justice are perfect. Anything less than this, and God is not God.
 10. The society which rejects divine establishment truth is in a downward spiral (see the comparison between North and South Korea in this chapter).
 11. The person who rejects Jesus Christ often returns to making bad decisions or makes bad decisions regarding things which he correctly rejected in the past (a dog returning to his vomit).
 12. The believer who rejects the teaching of the Bible puts himself into a roller coaster of a life, with many ups and downs, and very little stability. Such people may be used to bushwhack other believers; or they may die the sin unto death.
 13. The believer needs to use his volition to be molded into a vessel of honor, like David, Jonathan, Abiathar, Zadok, Ittai the Gittite and Joab.
 14. On the other hand, Absalom, Ahithophel and Amasa exercised their negative volition to run out their options and to die the sin unto death.
 15. We are all exposed to the *Potter's Wheel* in this life; that is, we have parental authority (or some kind of adult authority). At some point, if we have an interest in God, we have exposure to the gospel of Jesus Christ. And then, if we believe in Him, we are given the opportunity to accept or reject the authority of the Word of God. In all of this, we have our volition intact, which can choose for or against truth.

It is not simply a matter of upbringing. I have two friends of mine who are both unbelievers, and one of them was wondering, how is it possible for her daughter to end up being a Christian, when they never taught her that at home. Their daughter chose to believe in Jesus Christ, despite having no encouragement at home to do so.

2Samuel 18:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
nûwç (נוּוַח) [pronounced <i>noose</i>]	<i>to flee, to flee from, to escape, to depart, to retreat, to hasten quickly [away]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5127 BDB #630
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced <i>OH-heh</i>]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #168 BDB #13

Translation: *Meanwhile, all Israel fled each one to his tent.* All of the previous verbs are imperfect tenses with wāw consecutives; however, this is a perfect tense, separating it in time from the rest of the progressive narrative.

Why are these soldiers of Israel fleeing for home? There are two possible reasons: (1) somehow, it became known that Absalom had been killed in battle. We do not know how this was known, except that perhaps some scouts found their way back and observed enough of what was going on to understand that it was Absalom who had been killed. However, most probably returned to their tents because (2) they had been beaten in battle, and if captured, they would be executed for treason (or so they assumed). Supporting Absalom seemed like the smart thing to do, until they got beaten badly on the battlefield. Then returning home quietly, as if they had never been at war seemed the far more prudent thing to do.

We are going to be dealing with 3 terms developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr., so let me introduce those terms here with examples.

Categories of Humility				
Category	Child	Adult	Christian	Christ
Organizational Humility	Home and family; school	The human soul; norms and standards learned in the home; the law of the land, military	The local church, the Word of God, and the pastor-teacher	Plan of God for the Incarnation

Categories of Humility				
Category	Child	Adult	Christian	Christ
Enforced Humility	Parental authority, principals, coach	Authorities in workplace, police, superior rank; social constraints	The pastor's authority	The sovereignty of God the Father
Genuine Humility	Positive response to parents and other forms of authority	Self-discipline	Positive volition to the teaching of the Word of God	Obedience to the Plan of God

I adapted this chart from [Joe Griffin](#) (accessed August 12, 2013); and he adapted it from R. B. Thieme, Jr.

The vessel of honor responds to organizational humility and to enforced humility and develops genuine humility. The vessel of dishonor uses his volition to rebel against organizational humility and enforced humility, resulting in no true humility. It is possible for a youth and then an adult to reject the constraints of society and law; but, after becoming a Christian, still develop genuine humility.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Some of these points came from or were inspired by things said by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in his 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0474.

Fleeing Back Home

1. These revolutionaries had soul kinks. David was not a tyrant by any means. He had shortcomings, and he caused some disruption in Bathsheba's family, which was horribly wrong. But God dealt with that.
2. So, there was no real reason for those revolutionaries to reject David as their leader. That was a rejection of divine establishment authority.
3. When people have rejected divine establishment authority, and suddenly, their rejection comes back to bite them on the back, they often return to a place where they received their first authority teaching.
4. R. B. Thieme, Jr. gives the example of many believers who left Berachah, run into problems, and then return for guidance. Most of the time, they have no idea what is being taught, as it is a day-by-day ministry.
5. Too often, arrogant types who have caused their own problems and have created their own misery are beyond help. They are not willing to take a day-by-day solution. Remember what we have been studying. David's road to recovery has taken 10 years. That is how far gone he was, being sucked into sexual arrogance and then still interlocking now with emotional arrogance.
6. For such people, the road back is so difficult, that they are unwilling to take it. Many people who have been gored by life want a one-shot, instant solution. They want someone to wave a magic wand to make it stop hurting. However, there is the one-shot, instant solution of faith in Christ for the unbeliever; but for the believer who has continued on the wrong path for several years, there is not an easy recovery.
7. Think about the drug addict. A drug addict does not kick his addiction overnight (although that can happen with an unbeliever who then believes in Jesus Christ, and kicks the habit virtually overnight). However, for the believer who begins to use drugs (or the unbeliever), coming back from that can take a lifetime.
8. Spiritual recovery begins with humility, which can only exist through rebound, the intake of Bible doctrine, and getting outside of interlocking systems of arrogance. The believer must exercise his volition to come back to Bible class on a daily basis. For the person in reversionism for a long time or in the interlocking systems of arrogance, there is no one-shot solution. It took a great many decisions to get you into a jam and you are going to get out of that mess with one decision; you cannot come forward and rededicate your life, and suddenly, everything is good (unless you use your volition again and again and again to come back to Bible class). An emotional rededication may last for a few hours at best.

Fleeing Back Home

9. The believer who has gotten way off in the wilderness needs the enforced humility of becoming a student of Bible doctrine under the authority of someone who is teaching the Word of God.
10. Absalom was arrogant and anti-establishment; those who followed Absalom were arrogance and anti-establishment. Even in that era, there was enough information for that people to recognize that David was God's man, and that Absalom was not. A grace oriented person who knew a little about the Word of God would not be supporting Absalom.
11. When facing a more determined and more disciplined army, many of Absalom's supporters flee. As discussed before, some of them may realize that Absalom has been killed.
12. However, now, the revolution is over; and Absalom is underneath a pile of stones, dead as can be. There is no one for the reversionist to follow now.

Recall that there were thousands of rebels who died in the forest of Ephraim. These were the ones who should have stayed home, but did not.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And Absalom had taken and so he sets up for himself in his life a pillar which [is] in a valley of the king, for he said, "[There is] not to me a son in order to remember my name." And so he calls to the pillar upon his name; and so is called to her a hand of Absalom as far as the day the this.

2Samuel
18:18

Absalom had taken and set up for himself (while he [was] alive) a pillar that [was] in the Valley of the King, for he had said, "I do not [have] a son so that my name is remembered." Therefore, he called the pillar by his [own] name; and he is proclaimed by it, [being known as] Absalom's monument even to this day.

Absalom took a pillar and set it up in the Valley of the King when he was still alive. He had observed, "I do not have a son to carry my name into the future." Therefore, he called the pillar by his own name, and it is therefore called Absalom's monument even to this day.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

Now Absalom had reared up for himself, in his lifetime, a pillar, which is in the king's valley: for he said: I have no son, and this shall be the monument of my name. And he called the pillar by his own name, and it is called the hand of Absalom, to this day.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And Absalom had taken and so he sets up for himself in his life a pillar which [is] in a valley of the king, for he said, "[There is] not to me a son in order to remember my name." And so he calls to the pillar upon his name; and so is called to her a hand of Absalom as far as the day the this.

Peshitta (Syriac)

Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a monument in the valley of the kings; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the monument by his own name; and it is called the work of Absalom to this day.

Septuagint (Greek)

Now Absalom, while he was yet alive, had taken and set up for himself the pillar near which he was taken, and set it up so as to have the pillar in the king's valley; for he said he had no son to keep his name in remembrance: and he called the pillar, Absalom's Hand, until this day.

Significant differences: The Hebrew begins with two verbs for Absalom, whereas the Latin only has one. The Greek adds an additional phrase in the middle. Then The Greek lacks a phrase found in the Hebrew. It is in this same place where the Hebrew is fairly difficult to translate.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. When Absalom was alive, he had set up a stone monument for himself in King's Valley. He explained, "I don't have any sons to keep my name alive." He called it Absalom's Monument, and that is the name it still has today.

Easy English While Absalom was alive, he had put up a large column in the King's valley. He had no sons. So, he thought that nobody would remember his name. Instead, he put his own name on the column. People still call it 'Absalom's column' today.

The Message While alive, Absalom had erected for himself a pillar in the Valley of the King, "because," he said, "I have no son to carry on my name." He inscribed the pillar with his own name. To this day it is called "The Absalom Memorial."

New Life Bible While Absalom was alive, he had set up stones in his honor in the King's Valley. For he said, "I have no son to let my name be remembered." So he called the stones after his own name. And they are there to have Absalom be remembered to this day.

The Voice Before his death, Absalom had erected a monument to himself in the King's Valley, since he had no son to keep his memory alive. He named the monument after himself, and Absalom's Monument still stands *in the King's Valley*.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Well, while AbSalom was still alive, he had built a monument for himself in the Valley of the Kings; for he said: 'I have no sons to remind people of my name.' So, he named the monument after himself, calling it 'The Hand of AbSalom,' which is still there today.

Beck's American Translation While he was still living, Absalom had taken a pillar and set it up for himself; it is in the king's valley. "I have no son," he said, "to keep the memory of my name alive." He called the pillar by his name, and it is still called Absalom's pillar today.

Christian Community Bible During his lifetime Absalom had a memorial created for himself in the king's Valley for he said, "I have no son by whom my name may be remembered." He called the pillar after his own name and, to this day, it is called Absalom's monument.

*God's Word*TM (While he was still living, Absalom had taken a rock and set it up for himself in the king's valley. He said, "I have no son to keep the memory of my name alive." He called the rock by his name, and it is still called Absalom's Monument today.)

New Advent (Knox) Bible (The monument which stands in the King's Vale is one which Absalom erected for himself in his own life-time, thinking thus to perpetuate his name, since he had no son to follow him. And as he gave this monument his own name, it has been called Absalom's Mark ever since.)

New American Bible During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it for himself in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to perpetuate my name." The pillar which he named for himself is called Yadabshalom to the present day.

New American Bible (R.E.) During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and set it up for himself in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to perpetuate my name." The pillar which he named for himself is called Absalom's Monument to the present day. 2 Sm 14:27.

NIRV Earlier in his life Absalom had set up a pillar in the King's Valley. He had put it up as a monument to himself. He thought, "I don't have a son to carry on the memory of my name." So he named the pillar after himself. It is still called Absalom's Monument to this very day.

New Jerusalem Bible Now, during his lifetime, Absalom had made and erected a pillar to himself, which is in the Valley of the King. 'I have no son', he said, 'to preserve the memory of my name.' He gave his own name to the pillar, and today it is still called Absalom's Monument.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Absalom in his life took and stationed for himself a memorial in the king's vale. He said, "I have no son for me to remember my name." He called the memorial by his name 'Absalom's Hand', as called unto this day.

The Expanded Bible When Absalom was alive, he had set up a pillar for [built a monument to] himself in the King's Valley. He said, "I have no son to keep my name alive." So he named the pillar [monument] after himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument even today.

Ferar-Fenton Bible Absalom, however, in his life time had erected the column which is in the King's plain, for he said, "I have no son to continue the memory of my name." So he named the column by his own name, and it is called "The finger of Absalom" to this day.

NET Bible® Prior to this [Heb "and." This disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) describes an occurrence that preceded the events just narrated.] Absalom had set up a monument [Heb "a pillar."] and dedicated it to himself in the King's Valley, reasoning "I have no son who will carry on my name." He named the monument after himself, and to this day it is known as Absalom's Memorial.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible And in his lifetime Abi Shalom takes and stations a monolith for himself in the Valley of the Sovereign: for he says, I have no son to memorialize my name: and he calls the monolith after his own name: and it is called to this day, The Hand of Abi Shalom.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) Now Absalom, in his lifetime, has taken the pillar which is in the Valley of the King and set it up for himself, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name alive." He had named the pillar after himself, and it has been called Absalom's Monument to this day.

Judaica Press Complete T. And Absalom had taken and established for himself in his lifetime, the monument which is in the king's valley for he said, "I have no son in order to cause (people) to remember my name;" and he called the monument after his own name, and they called it Yad Absalom until this day.

Orthodox Jewish Bible Now Avshalom in his lifetime had taken and erected for himself a matzevet (monument), which is in the Emek HaMelech; for he said, I have no ben to keep my shem in remembrance; and he called the matzevet after shmo; and it is called unto this day, Avshalom's Monument.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Darby Translation Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a monument, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the monument after his own name; and it is called unto this day, Absalom's memorial.

The Geneva Bible Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which [is] in the kings dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and

he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place. It seemed that God had punished him by taking away his children, (2 Samuel 14:27.

Green's Literal Translation

And during his lifetime Absalom had taken and set up for himself a standing-pillar, which is in the King's Valley. For he said, I have no son to cause my name to be remembered. And he called the standing pillar by his name and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

NASB

Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to preserve [Lit for the sake of remembering] my name." So he named the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

Syndein/Thieme

{Absalom's Monument to Arrogance (Retrospective Exposition)}
But Absalom, in his lifetime, had taken and erected a pillar/monument to himself in the king's valley. {Note: The historian Josephus wrote that the king's valley is the valley of Kidron which is east of Jerusalem.}

For he thought, "I have no son to perpetuate the memory of my name." {apparently the three sons of 2Samuel 14:27 had died in their youth - and per the law of posterity - his name would be blotted out (since he did not have a male heir)} {Note: Absalom attempted to continue his name by a heap of stones. He got his wish, but not as he expected. It was the heap of stones over a criminal's grave.}

Therefore, he named the monument after his own name and it is called unto this day, "Absalom's monument". {idiom: literally 'Absalom's hand'}.

Third Millennium Bible

Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Dale, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance." And he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called unto this day, Absalom's Place.

World English Bible

Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself the pillar, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in memory: and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called Absalom's monument, to this day.

Young's Updated LT

And Absalom has taken, and sets up for himself in his life, the standing-pillar that is in the king's valley, for he said, "I have no son to cause my name to be remembered;" and he calls the standing-pillar by his own name, and it is called "The monument of Absalom" unto this day.

The gist of this verse:

Previously, when Absalom was alive, he had erected a pillar to himself, since, apparently, at that time, he no longer had sons to keep his memory alive.

2Samuel 18:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: *Absalom had taken...* What Absalom took follows the next verb. Sometimes in the Hebrew, there are two successive verbs which have the same object. Here, what Absalom took was a pillar.

Recall that Absalom had an entourage early on in his life, so that if he needed something done, he had an entourage to help him do whatever.

2Samuel 18:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâtsab (נָצַב) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAH^βV</i>]	<i>to station oneself, to take one's stand, to stand up, to set something upright, to erect; to fix, to establish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5324 BDB #662
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced <i>khay-YEEM</i>]	<i>life, lives; a life of long duration, immortality; living, sustenance; refreshment; prosperity, welfare, happiness</i>	masculine plural adjective with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
matstsebeh (מַצֵּבֶה) [pronounced <i>matz-tzeh-VEH</i>]	<i>pillar, sculpted images</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4676 & #4678 BDB #663

Translation: *...and set up for himself (while he [was] alive) a pillar...* This portion of v. 18 lets us know that Absalom set up this pillar while he was still living. Absalom has two monuments to himself at this time—his large grave which is covered with a huge number of stones, and this one monument which he set up to proclaim himself.

2Samuel 18:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81

2Samuel 18:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
‘emeq (עמק) [pronounced ĠEH-mek]	<i>valley, vale, lowland, deepening, depth</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6010 BDB #770
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...that [was] in the Valley of the King,... This pillar was set up in the Valley of the King, which name is only found in one other place in Scripture: after Abraham had defeated the 4 eastern kings (Gen. 14), he met with the king of Sodom in the Valley of the King. What Abraham was involved in was a great victory; what Absalom had done was really kind of sad. Having a memorial to yourself is nice, if someone else does this on your behalf sometime after you have died. But to set up a pillar to memorialize yourself—that is just kind of sad.

I might be spending a little too much time on this; and point 6 can certainly be skipped over.

The Location of Absalom's Monument

1. We do not know where this Valley of the King is; logically, it seems like it would be one of the valleys near Jerusalem or near Sodom. Since Absalom began his revolt in Hebron, which is not far from Sodom, he may have set up his monument there.
2. Josephus seems to have known where Absalom's pillar was and said that it was made of marble. He places it about a quarter mile from Jerusalem.
3. *The author of Cippi Hebraici (p) places it at the bottom of the mount of Olives.*¹
4. At some point, *the memorial Absalom built, which has come to be known as the Tomb of Absalom, was not necessarily erected to function as a burial place. Rather, it was a memorial of remembrance to Absalom's name, and there is no claim in Scripture that he was buried there.*² In other words, what was called Absalom's tomb for many years was not necessarily Absalom's tomb.
5. It is my understanding that neither monument is known today, but they were known in the time of Josephus. Given that he has them both so close to Jerusalem, it is quite possible that their understanding of the location of Absalom's grave in Josephus' time was mistaken. Or, in the alternative, Absalom's bones could have been moved in another era, but that is not recorded anywhere in Scripture or in history.
6. Gill cites several people on the location of Absalom's monument (these quotes from Gill simply indicate that there is a great deal of disagreement as to where this monument is to be found; it is not necessary that you read them all):
 - 1) *Rauwolff (q) says, that as you go from the valley of Jehoshaphat (r) to the Mount of Olives, you see below, towards your left hand, near unto the bridge of the river Kidron, an old square building like unto a steeple; this, although it is believed to this day, not only by Christians, but also by Turks and Moors, to be the grave of Absalom, as you shall see them fling stones into it as they go by, to revenge his unfaithfulness to his father, yet was he not buried there. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown remark² on this location: In the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the east of Jerusalem, is a tomb or cenotaph, said to be this "pillar" or monument: it is twenty-four feet square, dome-topped, and reaches forty feet in height. This may occupy the spot, but cannot itself be the work of Absalom, as it evidently bears the style of a later architecture.*
 - 2) *Gill: Sandys (s) says, at the east end of the bridge (over Kidron), and a little on the north, stands the pillar of Absalom, being yet entire, and of a good fabric, rising in a lofty square, below adorned with half columns, wrought out of the sides and corners, of the Doric form; and then changing into*

The Location of Absalom's Monument

a round, a good height higher doth grow to a point in fashion of a bell, all framed of the growing stone; against this there lies a great heap of stones, which increases daily, by Jews and Mahometans throwing stones as they pass by; so that the frontispiece of it, which faces the road, as Le Bruyn (t) says, looks like a mountain of stones; but as to the fabric itself, he says, there is not a finer piece of workmanship to be met with in all those parts; it takes up a compass of ground of eighty two feet and an half square; the body, which is square, with its moulding, is one entire piece; and the coping, which is an ornament to it, and runs up into a point, taken with the rest of the work, is above thirty feet high; twenty columns, cut out of the same rock, add to the beauty of this pile; one sees through a broken window a great many pieces of antiquity that hang up in a chamber.

- 3) Gill: Adrichomius also relates (u), from travellers, that in the king's valley is now a tower, and a large heap of stones, which is increased every day more and more; for Heathens and strangers passing by there have a custom to cast everyone a stone at it, as it were revenging, according to the law, Absalom's rebellion against David his father, and curse him after this manner; let Absalom the parricide be cursed, and whoever unrighteously persecutes their parents are cursed for ever.
7. Keil and Delitzsch seem to be quite certain as to its location: *The king's valley, which received its name from the event narrated in Gen. 14:17, was two stadia from Jerusalem according to Josephus (Ant. vii. 10, 3), and therefore not "close to the Dead Sea," or in regione transjordanensi (Ges. Thes. pp. 1045, 1377), or "in the Jordan valley in Ephraim" (Tuch and Winer). It was on the eastern side of Jerusalem, in the Kidron valley; though Absalom's pillar, which ecclesiastical tradition has transferred thither, a monument about forty feet in height and pointed like a pyramid, is not of early Hebrew, but of Grecian origin.*³ This is equivalent to the first quote from Gill.
8. Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge seems to be equally adamant: *Josephus says there was in his time, about two furlongs from Jerusalem, a marble pillar called Absalom's hand, as it is in the Hebrew (see note on 1Sam. 15:12); and there is one shown to the present day, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which, though comparatively a modern structure, probably occupies the site of the original one set up by Absalom.*⁴

¹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:18.

² Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 18:18.

The quotes from Gill all come from Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:18. Gill's references are: (q) Travels, part 3. c. 21. p. 310, 311. Ed. Ray. (r) So Benjamin. Itinerar. p. 43. (s) Travels, l. 3. p. 147. Ed. 5. (t) Voyage to the Levant, c. 48. p. 188. (u) *Theatrum Terrae Sanctae*. p 174.

³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:18.

⁴ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 18:18.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Samuel 18:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 18:18d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ēyn (אֵין) [pronounced ān]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
bên (בן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ba'ăbûwr (בְּעַבְוּר) [pronounced bah-ġu ^b -VOOR]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bêyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bêyth preposition (<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i>) and 'ăbûwr (עַבְוּר) [pronounced ġaw ^v -BOOR] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
zâkar (זָכַר) [pronounced zaw-KAHR]	<i>to speak of; to remember, to cause to be remembered, to call to one's own mind, to bring to remembrance [before someone]; to make mention of [often with praise and/or celebration], to offer a memorial offering</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #2142 BDB #269
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: ...for he had said, "I do not [have] a son so that my name is remembered." It is interesting that Absalom, despite his clearly being able to be tender with his own sister, had some sort of problem. His sins of revenge, which took over his life and his thinking, along with his many schemes, seemed to take away from his ability to be tender and to cultivate a relationship with a woman. We do not know where his wife and children are at this time.

2Samuel 14:27 reads **There were born to Absalom three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman.** The time period for this would have been when he was living with his grandfather outside of Israel; and then he was allowed to return to Israel, but he never saw his father David for 2 years. This is the only time that this family is mentioned, and the timing suggests that he may have married there, as he lived in Geshur with his grandfather for 3 years (2Sam. 13:37). This is enough time to marry and have 3 children, with another child being born after he comes back to Jerusalem. However, we are told little else beyond this information about his family. We do not know what happened to his wife and family. Did they all remain in Geshur? Was she an heir to the throne of Geshur (or one of their sons an heir)? Did they come to Jerusalem with Absalom?

This leaves us with several options: Absalom became estranged from his wife and family, and they carried on their name in Geshur. Or Absalom's boys died when they were young. However, since his daughter Tamar is called a beautiful woman, that means that she reached adulthood.

Although some suggest that Absalom had this pillar built before he had children just does not fit any sort of reasonable timeline. That idea would suggest that Absalom built this monument when he was in his late teens. Absalom started out, as we have studied, as an okay young man, who was tender toward and concerned about his violated sister. However, the Absalom which came out of this was vengeful and without regard for the law or protocol (much of this was David's fault).

The logical time for Absalom to build this monument would have been when he had an entourage, with his eye on the throne of his father. It is even possible that he commissioned to have this built when he was in Hebron or after he marched into Jerusalem. However, that would have not given an artisan much time during which to work.

Given Absalom's explanation, that he is erecting this monument to his memory because he had no son to carry on his name, suggests that (1) he was recently estranged from his wife and sons or, more likely, (2) his sons had recently died. His great grief combined with his great ego would be the impetus for him to erect such a monument. I only say more likely, since his daughter is the only one spoken of as an adult person.

Given Absalom's zealotry to become king of Israel may have given his wife second thoughts, and this could account for her remaining in Geshur. After all, if he is willing to kill his own father to take Israel, what will he do about Geshur, which appears to be an ally to Israel? Although she produced 4 children for Absalom, we do not know where she is at this point in time—did she remain in Geshur, possibly even by mutual agreement? Did Absalom promise to send for her at a later time? None of this is known to us. All we have are bits and pieces of Absalom's personal life, and not enough to piece together a clear series of events. About the only thing that makes sense and can be fit into a reasonable time frame, is for Absalom to have gotten married quite soon in Geshur, when in a self-imposed absence from Israel. If that were the case, she would have very young children, one right after the other in Geshur—however, we cannot clearly determine what happened after this.

2Samuel 18:18e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced leh]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
matstsebeh (מַטְצֵבֵה) [pronounced matz-tzeh-VEH]	<i>pillar, sculpted images</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4676 & #4678 BDB #663

2Samuel 18:18e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>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</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: *Therefore, he called the pillar by his [own] name;...* Absalom names the pillar himself after himself. This was a man who desired to glorify himself. This may explain why he never appears to have an interest in the God of David—he was far too interested and obsessed with himself.

Gill: *[By] this is observed to show how vain are the devices and contrivances of men's hearts; Absalom intended to have been buried under or by this monumental pillar near Jerusalem, and, lo, he was buried in a pit, under an heap of stones, in a wood on the other side Jordan; whether his bones were ever removed hither it is not certain, though a notion has obtained that his grave was near this pillar.*⁷⁸

2Samuel 18:18f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to be named; to be called, to be proclaimed; to be called together [assembled, [summoned]; to be read aloud, to be recited</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

⁷⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:18.

2Samuel 18:18f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axletrees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced ġahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: ...and he is proclaimed by it, [being known as] Absalom's monument even to this day. This name is proclaimed on Absalom's monument even at the time of the writing of this chapter of 2Samuel.

Guzik: This is what we would expect from self-centered, self-promoting Absalom. Joab made sure that Absalom did not have a memorial in death, but Absalom made himself a memorial in life.⁷⁹

As previously discussed, we do not know with certainty just where Absalom's monument is (although Keil and Delitzsch seem to be quite sure of its location); and if it is located there, then the original monument is apparently long gone. But Absalom does live on even to today, because the Bible has recorded his name and some of his deeds.

Application: You know, one of the things which bothers me considerably is to drive through my little town and to see this or that building named after some politician. These politicians lived on the public dime for much of their lives; they collect a very handsome retirement, even if their service is limited; and then some of them use public funds (that is, money that we have worked hard for) in order to erect some building for them to put their name on. If a building needs to be erected, why not put the name of a fallen soldier on the front of that building? He worked for a pittance and gave his life before his time for our freedom. How much more is the value of this soldier to our lives than some phony politician?

How do you build up a lasting monument? You attach yourself to the plan of God, which is eternal. You learned Bible doctrine; you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As you experience spiritual growth, you will eventually find your spiritual niche in life (which may be public and may be very private or a combination

⁷⁹ David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 18:18.

of the two). As a part of the plan of God, your works are everlasting and valuable, and they glorify Jesus Christ. These works will result in temporal and eternal rewards. Participating in the plan of God will make the believer happy (politics is an interest of mine, and I have noticed, as liberals make greater and greater inroads, they appear to become more and more angry and more unhappy in their lives—any many, if they could snap their fingers and be rid of conservative talk radio or Fox News, they would—and yet, they would still be unhappy). In this way, a believer become associated with eternity.

In any case, as a believer, we have a clear road to follow, which is the Christian way of life. By doing this, we will inevitably create divine good, which will both glorify Jesus Christ and has eternal repercussions. By that life, you will be laying aside gold, silver and precious stones for yourself.

Some people sense a sort of contradiction here with vv. 17 and 18, but that is not true.

Where is Absalom Buried?

1. Geisler and Howe ask the question *Was Absalom buried in the forest of Ephraim or in the Kidron Valley?*¹
2. Although it appears as if Absalom is buried right there in the forest of Ephraim, the text does not demand this. That is, Absalom could have been transported elsewhere and buried.
3. However, a burial in the forest where he died seems most likely, as we have the same word for *forest* associated with his burial as we find in vv. 6 and 8.
4. A different monument is erected elsewhere by Absalom himself, as he no longer had children at that point, so this commemorated his memory while he was still alive. The particulars of this—why he no longer had male children—are unknown.
5. The fact that Absalom set up a memorial to his name in the next verse does not negate or contradict anything that we have studied so far. There are simply two different monuments.
6. The only possible contradiction—and that has already been discussed—is that Josephus identified a grave for Absalom much closer to Jerusalem than the text here would suggest.

¹ Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*; Victor Books; taken from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:17.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Therefore, we have two monuments to Absalom: one which he built himself, and a huge pile of stones signifying where his body lay. According to the Pulpit Commentary, Josephus claims that these two monuments were 2 furlongs from Jerusalem.⁸⁰ We are not completely certain where these monuments are today.

The Pulpit Commentary: *[There is a] monolith in the valley of the Kidron (probably of the Herodian age, but associated with Absalom's name) is "to this day" regarded with scorn by the passer by, as he casts another stone, and mutters a curse upon his memory. "Shame will be the promotion of fools." (Prov. 3:35 30:17) "Hear this, you glorious fools, that care not to perpetuate any memory of yourselves to the world, but of ill-deserving greatness. The best of this affectation is vanity; the worst infamy and dishonour; whereas the memory of the just will be blessed, and, if his humility will refuse an epitaph and choose to hide himself under the bare earth, God himself will engrave his name upon the pillar of eternity".*⁸¹

⁸⁰ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:14–18.

⁸¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:14–18 (slightly edited). This passage ends with (*Hall*). *D*. I would assume that is to whom this ought to be attributed.

Absalom took a pillar and set it up in the Valley of the King when he was still alive. He had observed, "I do not have a son to carry my name into the future." Therefore, he called the pillar by his own name, and it is therefore called Absalom's monument even to this day. And how do we remember Absalom to this day? As a failed revolutionary. As a man who had no patience. As a man who overestimated his own abilities. As a man whose potential which was never developed and never realized.

Enforced Humility

1. Humility and arrogance cannot coexist in one's life, except in the case of enforced humility.
2. Absalom arrogance showed in all that he did; and he at no time was under any system of humility.
3. When the believer uses his own volition so that he exercises both self-discipline, self-control, and poise, then he is involved in genuine humility (as long as he responds to the legitimate authority).
4. However, the arrogant person who manages to exercise self-control, self-discipline and even poise can be arrogant as well, if all of this control comes from his own soul while he is in rebellion to legitimate authorities. For instance, in order for Absalom to pull off this revolution, he had to use self-control, self-discipline and poise; but he is as arrogant as they come. A good example of this is President Barack Obama, who is very disciplined along with many of the spokes people in his regime. They are very careful as to how they phrase things, so that their actual desire for more and more power is not recognized. The President, as a candidate, had to be very disciplined as to exactly what he said. When he accidentally talked about "spreading the wealth around;" that was a mistake; and candidate Obama was careful not to repeat the mistake ever again, even though this is genuinely how he felt.
5. So self-discipline may reveal arrogance and it may be indicative of enforced humility. The key is what authority does one recognize. If the only authority a person recognizes is his own, then even self-discipline is arrogance. Again, President Obama is an excellent example, as he did not place himself under the authority of pre-existing law; if he wanted to obey a law, he did; and if he did not want to obey a law, then he did not. So his message and his campaigning involved a great deal of self-discipline and self-control; but he was arrogant in believing that whatever he believed to be right was right; and whatever he believed to be wrong was evil.
6. Any organization may possess many arrogant people; but the inculcation of discipline from the authority of those in the upper echelons of that organization can result in control, poise and efficiency in that organization. Discipline prepares for efficiency.
7. This is true of the military, law enforcement, an athletic team, a business, an academic organization; or even a social organization.
8. No organization is composed entirely of virtuous people. Some are humble and some are honorable and some are not. Quite obviously if there are x number of people in an organization, then there are x number of old sin natures in that organization as well.
9. If in the organization, there is inculcated discipline enforced humility and discipline, the organization is virtuous. If there is no clear command organization, and people do whatever, then that organization can be quite dishonorable. In fact, in organizations like this, it is not abnormal for those in the lower echelons to do that which is evil, but is also in keeping with the aim of the organization; and this gives the people at the top plausible deniability. "Well, I didn't know that Charley Brown was doing that!" And Charley Brown might be doing exactly what those at the top want. We had this occur recently in the IRS. No memo was sent out at the top, and then distributed on each level to go after those in the TEA party; this was done with verbal instructions from the very top, allowing those in the middle to implement policy in keeping with the aims of the organization without getting actual memos specifying this policy. Therefore, there is no smoking memo.
10. The same principle applies to the individual. Every believer with eternal life has an old sin nature and they use it. The individual who is self controlled imposed on himself self-discipline.
11. Joab is a good illustration of greatness through self-discipline. Even when Joab sinned and was out of fellowship, he could control and discipline himself to the point of poise. When he forced humility on himself as commander of the establishment army, then he was at his best.

Some of these points came from or were inspired by things said by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in his 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0475.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom took a pillar and set it up in the Valley of the King when he was still alive. He had observed, "I do not have a son to carry my name into the future." Therefore, he called the pillar by his own name, and it is therefore called Absalom's monument even to this day.

Monuments

1. Politicians love monuments, and they often go out of their way to erect buildings with their names on them.
2. Statesmen are honored by others with various monuments. A statesman with true humility would never erect a monument in his own honor.
3. Statesmen also recognize that, if their name is attached to something, that this is a much greater recognition, often not of them, but of what they represent.
4. When General MacArthur spoke at the dedication of MacArthur Park, he recognized that this was a tribute not just to him, but to the citizen soldier who risked his life for his country.
5. What is not perpetuated in humility is a monument to human arrogance.
6. So much of history is a monument to man's arrogance. In the small city that I live in, I can't tell you how it irritates me to drive by a building and see the name of some politician prominently displayed on that building. If it was up to me, only veterans would have their names on various buildings, so that their sacrifice is kept in the public eye.
7. A monument made for anyone is meaningless; life is meaningless apart from eternal salvation, and for the believer in Jesus Christ, life is meaningless without having Bible doctrine in the soul.
8. God's plan is the only thing which is eternal. Charley Brown might have his name on a building, and that name stands for the next 200 years; but if Charley Brown is burning in hell, what good is that building to him?
9. God is truth and God is the source of all truth. The only monument to be perpetuated is the monument of the salvation of Jesus Christ and Bible doctrine in the soul of the individual believer.

Some of these points came from or were inspired by things said by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in his 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0475.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The first is a speech that Douglas MacArthur made when he **dedicated MacArthur Park**, where he saw himself as a symbol, representing the citizen soldier. Unlike Absalom, who was looking to glorify himself with his own monument, MacArthur understood the true meaning of a park dedicated to him. The second speech contains many of the same sentiments found in the first.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur Dedication of MacArthur Park

"I have listened with deep emotion to these solemn proceedings and my heart is too full for my lips to express adequately my thanks and appreciation for the extraordinary honor which is done to me. Even so I understand full well that this memorial is intended to commemorate an epoch rather than an individual, an armed force rather than a commander, a nation rather than its servant, an ideal rather than its personality. This but increases my pride that my name has been the one chosen as the symbol of an epoch struggle and victory by millions of unnamed others. It is their heroism, their sacrifice, their success, that you have honored today in so an unforgettable manner. I and this statue and this park, are but the selected reminders of their grandeur. Most of them were citizen soldiers, sailors, airmen, men from the farm, from the city, from the school room, from the college campus. Men not dedicated to the profession of Arms, Men not primarily skilled in the arts of destruction, Men, amazingly like the men you see and meet and know each day of your lives, but men animated, inspired, ennobled, by a sublime cause, the defense of their country, of their native land, of their very hearth stones. The most Divine and wonderful of all human sentiments guided them, the spirit and the willingness to

sacrifice. He who dares to die, to lay his life on the altar of his nations need is beyond doubt the noblest development of mankind. In this he comes closest to the image of his creator the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who died on the cross that human souls might be saved.

These men were my comrades in arms, with me they knew the far call of the bugle at reveille, the distant roll of the drums at night fall, the endless tramp of marching feet, the incessant whine of the snipers bullets, the ceaseless rattle of sputtering machine guns, the ominous roar of threatening cannon, the sinister wail of air raid sirens, the deafening blast of crashing bombs, the stealthy stroke of hidden torpedoes, the amphibious lurch over perilous waves, the dark majesty of fighting ships, the mad din of battle lines and all the stench, and ghastly horror and savage destruction of a stricken area of War. They suffered hunger and thirst, the broiling suns of relentless heat, the torrential rains of tropical storms, the loneliness and utter desolation of jungle trails, the bitterness of separation from those whom they loved and cherished. They went on and on and on, when everything within them seemed to say stop and die, many of them did stop and die. They grew old in youth, they burned out in searing minutes all that life owed them of tranquil years.

When I think of their patience under adversity, of their courage under fire, of their modesty in victory, I am filled with an emotion of admiration I cannot express. Many of them trod the tragic path of unknown fame that led to a stark white cross above a lonely grave, and from their tortured dying lips with the dreadful gurgle of the death rattle in their throats, always came the same gasping prayer that those who were left would go on to victory.

I do not know the dignity of their birth but I do know the Glory of their Death, and I am sure that a merciful God is Aware. In these troublesome times of confused and bewildered international sophistication, let no one misunderstand what they did. They were patriots, pure and plain. These were men who fought and perchance died for one reason alone, for their country, for the United States of America. No complex philosophies of world intrigue and conspiracy dominated their thoughts. No elaboration or extravagance of Propaganda dimmed their sensibilities. Just the simple fact, their country called them. Just the devoted doctrine of Steven Decatur, when he said, "My country, may she always be right, but right or wrong, my country."

Be not deceived by strange voices heard across the land decrying this old and proven concept of patriotism. Although it has been from the beginning the main bulwark of our national strength and integrity, seductive murmurs are now arising, that it is now outmoded by some more comprehensive and all embracing philosophy. That we are provincial and immature, or reactionary and stupid when we idealize our own nation. That there is a higher destiny for us under another and more general flag [the U.N.]. We Idealize our own nation and there is a higher destiny for us than under that flag. What a tragedy that no longer when we send our sons or daughters to the battlefield should we see them all the way through to victory. That we can call upon them to fight and even die in some half hearted and indecisive effort. That we can plunge them into war and then suddenly decide that it is the wrong war or in the wrong place or at the wrong time. Or even that we can call it not a war at all but by some more euphonious or gentler name [a police action]. That we can treat them as expendables although they are our own flesh and blood. That even in times of peace for some romantic reason they must share, not as a gesture of generosity, but as a bound and duty, their national blessings and goods, built from nothing to a height never before reached by man, with others because whether through neglect or not, they have not fared so well. That we the most powerful nation in the world have suddenly become dependant on others for our security, and even our welfare.

Listen not to these voices, be they from one political party or the other. Be they from the High and the Mighty or the lowly and forgotten. Heed them not. Visit upon them the righteous scorn born from the past sacrifices of your sons and daughters. Repudiate them by word and deed in the marketplace, or the platform, from the Pulpit. Those who are our friends will understand. Those who are not, We can Pass them by. Be proud to be called a patriot or a nationalist or what you will if it means that you love your country above all else. That you will place your life, if need be at the service of your flag."

Gen. Douglas MacArthur describing the legions of uniformed American Patriots

"Their story is known to all of you. It is the story of the American man at arms. My estimate of him was formed on the battlefields many, many years ago and has never changed. I regarded him then, as I regard him now, as one of the world's noblest figures - not only as one of the finest military characters, but also as one of the most stainless.

His name and fame are the birthright of every American citizen. In his youth and strength, his love and loyalty, he gave all that mortality can give. He needs no eulogy from me, or from any other man. He has written his own history and written it in red on his enemy's breast.

But when I think of his patience under adversity, of his courage under fire, and of his modesty in victory, I am filled with an emotion of admiration I cannot put into words. He belongs to history as furnishing one of the greatest examples of successful patriotism. He belongs to posterity as the instructor of future generations in the principles of liberty and freedom. He belongs to the present, to us, by his virtues and by his achievements.

In twenty campaigns, on a hundred battlefields, around a thousand campfires, I have witnessed that enduring fortitude, that patriotic self-abnegation, and that invincible determination which have carved his statue in the hearts of his people.

From one end of the world to the other, he has drained deep the chalice of courage. As I listened to those songs of the glee club, in memory's eye I could see those staggering columns of the First World War, bending under soggy packs on many a weary march, from dripping dusk to drizzling dawn, slogging ankle deep through mire of shell-pocked roads; to form grimly for the attack, blue-lipped, covered with sludge and mud, chilled by the wind and rain, driving home to their objective, and for many, to the judgment seat of God.

I do not know the dignity of their birth, but I do know the glory of their death. They died unquestioning, uncomplaining, with faith in their hearts, and on their lips the hope that we would go on to victory. Always for them: Duty, Honor, Country. Always their blood, and sweat, and tears, as they saw the way and the light."

First speech is from: <http://www.westbankbiblechurch.com/10JunJul09AudioFiles/Memorial%20Day090524.pdf>
 Second speech from: <http://radiopatriot.wordpress.com/2012/05/26/memorial-day-2012-and-gen-douglas-macarthur/>
 both accessed August 11, 2013.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This section of 2Sam. 18 reads: Joab blew the trumpet to call the troops back from pursuing Israel. Joab called for restraint against the people who had followed Absalom. They took Absalom's body and threw it into a large pit in the forest, and then erected over him a great heap of stones. Meanwhile, his army fled, every man back to his own tent. Absalom took a pillar and set it up in the Valley of the King when he was still alive. He had observed, "I do not have a son to carry my name into the future." Therefore, he called the pillar by his own name, and it is therefore called Absalom's monument even to this day. Joab was not after revenge, so he pulled his troops back from pursuing Absalom's soldiers. Absalom was dead, and they had no one to fight for anymore.

There were two monuments erected to Absalom. Where he died, he was put into a great hole, and then stones were piled atop of him. Absalom himself had previously erected a monument, so that he might be remembered, because he had no children to carry on his name (we do not know what happened to his male children).

Some of these points came from or were inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0476.

Stages of Humility

1. We are born into varieties of organizational humility. The family is considered an organization, and all children are born into some kind of family.
2. We enter into a variety of organizations, some with good clear authorities, and others which are lacking.

Stages of Humility

- A pre-school or a school may have an authority system, but not one which helps to inculcate respect for authority.
3. For some young people, the first time they encounter any real organizational humility is in the military.
 4. Within these structures and in other situations, a person faces enforced humility. This might be the parents or teacher, principal or coach.
 5. In enforced humility, a person is made to tow the line, whatever the line happens to be.
 6. The problem with Absalom is, he did not begin in organizational humility. Although he had a mother, his father, David, was an absentee father. When his father came around, he was indulgent and required little of his son.
 7. Absalom did not appear to face any other sorts of organizational humility or enforced humility, so he grew up arrogant and believing that he deserved it all.
 8. Genuine humility requires enforced humility. No person is born being humble; no person develops this quality naturally.
 9. Genuine humility is not phony. It is not staring at your shoes and speaking in dulcet tones. It is not muttering phrases which sound humble.
 10. The parents train their children by restraining their volition. Once the parents apply discipline and training upon the children, they learn to govern themselves, and to restrain themselves. You may have to stand over a child for a year and watch him brush his teeth; but, at some point in time, he will get it, and since this is required of him, he will do it.
 11. Self-discipline or self-restraint indicates personal virtue.
 12. Once a person develops genuine humility, then this will include (with proper training) good manners, respect for others, respect for their property and privacy. Furthermore, this person will have a greater chance at capacity for life and for love.
 13. Organizational humility and enforced humility eventually morphs into compliance with the laws of divine establishment and eventually results in genuine humility. Genuine humility is learned, acquired, developed.
 14. Personal arrogance can be overcome by humility. However, there is no direct route from arrogance to humility. You go from arrogance to organizational humility to enforced humility to genuine humility. Then you learn to comply with the laws of divine establishment.
 15. What these systems of humility result in, is the believer and unbeliever side-by-side in a **client nation**, both obeying the laws of divine establishment. This brings both structure and blessing to the nation.
 16. The United States today lacks true humility. There are millions of people who think nothing of living on the public dole, even though they are capable of feeding themselves. Most of these people think that they deserve to be fed at taxpayer expense. This is arrogance and disorientation to the laws of divine establishment, which brings a nation down.
 17. Absalom, in his grand arrogance, saw himself as deserving. However, he did not think he should just be fed at public expense, but that he ought to be made king just because he is Absalom.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Some of these points came from or were inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0476.

The Key to Organizational Humility

1. The idea of an organization is to allow for a number of people, all with one sin nature each, to function and interact with one another without killing or harming one another. The idea is, live and let live.
2. People who push against society's boundaries are usually arrogant and rarely do they respect the rights of others. The gay marriage movement today is a perfect example of this. Once gay marriage has been established, then this is used as a legal foothold to go after those who do not believe that two men or two

The Key to Organizational Humility

women should get married.

3. The virtue of any organization is measured by its inculcation of discipline.
4. An organization may possess many arrogant people but they are capable of functioning efficiently in that organization because of organizational humility, which leaves to enforced humility.
5. The virtue of any organization is measured by its discipline which makes the organization function efficiently. All divine institutions are organizations.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom faced several problems in his life. Since his father David had many wives and was a king, David did not establish an organization with proper authority in the home. Absalom's mother was left to do this. David indulged Absalom rather than required him to meet any standards (which seemed to be true of most or all of David's first sons). As a result, Absalom never faced much by way of authority in his life; and the little authority which he encountered, he rejected. But rather than judge his son and place him under justice, David indulged him only, giving him love without justice and righteousness.

Even more importantly, David did not teach his son Absalom any spiritual truth. David did not neglect Solomon (and, presumably, his 3 full brothers); but he neglected his older children, and this is why they never amounted to anything. Absalom appeared to have the most potential, but we will never view him as anything other than a recalcitrant rebel, a man who had the ability to lead and inspire, but he had nothing of substance to give those who followed him.

If we fail to learn self-discipline because we have rejected the enforced and organizational humility put upon us, then the last place where we can learn this is in church. Unfortunately, few churches have true academic discipline, so even here, the learning of self-discipline may not occur. What that leaves is, learning things the hard way, which is how many people learn most things.

David is recovering from all of the evil that he has done and from the interlocking systems of arrogance. So, by the next chapter, Joab can come to David and brace him—to tell him exactly where he is wrong—and David will listen and understand and he will recognize that Joab is correct. David being able to recognize accurate correction like this without reacting tells us that David has completely recovered from the interlocking systems of arrogance.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Race of the Two Runners

This begins one of the oddest passages in Scripture, where there are two runners (messengers), and one wants to take the message of victory to David, but Joab chooses another man. Just as R. B. Thieme, Jr. observed, there has to be a reason why this is included in the Word of God. However, when it comes to the reasons and the explanation for this, I will be departing from what Bob taught.

And Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, "Let me run please and let me bear good tidings to the king—that Y^ehowah has delivered him from a hand of his enemies." 2Samuel 18:19

Then Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, "Let me run, if you will, and bring good news to the king—that Y^ehowah has delivered him from the power of his enemies."

Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, asked Joab, “Could I run and take this good news to the king? I want to tell him that Jehovah has delivered him from the power of his enemies.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Achimaas the son of Sadoc said: I will run and tell the king, that the Lord hath done judgment for him from the hand of his enemies.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, “Let me run please and let me bear good tidings to the king—that Y ^e howah has delivered him from a hand of his enemies.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run and bring the good tidings to the king, how the LORD has avenged him of his enemies.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, Let me run now and carry the good news to the king, for the Lord has delivered him from the hand of his enemies.

Significant differences: No serious differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Joab, let me run and tell King David that the LORD has rescued him from his enemies."
Easy-to-Read Version	Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said {to Joab}, “Let me now run and bring the news to King David. I’ll tell him the Lord has destroyed the enemy for him.”
New Berkeley Version	Ahimaaz the son of Zadok pleaded, “Let me run and bring the king the good news, that the LORD had executed judgement for him from the hands of his enemies!”
New Life Bible	Then Zadok's son Ahimaaz said, "Let me run and bring the king news that the Lord has saved him from those who hate him."
The Voice	<i>After Absalom's death, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, spoke to Joab.</i> Ahimaaz: Let me hurry to the king with the good news that the Eternal One has given him victory over his enemies.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then AhiMaAz (the son of ZaDok) said: 'Run and take the good news to the king that Jehovah has passed judgment on his enemies.'
Beck's American Translation	<i>David Hears of Absalom's Death</i> Then Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, said, “Let me run and bring the king the news that the LORD has freed him from his enemies.”
God's Word™	Then Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, said, "Let me run and bring the king the good news that the LORD has freed him from his enemies."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And now Achimaas, son of Sadoc, asked leave to run and tell the king how God had punished his enemies.
New American Bible	Then Ahimaaz, son of Zadok, said, "Let me run to take the good news to the king that the LORD has set him free from the grasp of his enemies."
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>David Told of Absalom's Death.</i> Then Ahimaaz, son of Zadok, said, "Let me run to take the good news to the king that the LORD has set him free from the power of his enemies."
NIRV	David Sobs Over Absalom Ahimaaz said to Joab, "Let me run and take the news to the king. Let me tell him that the Lord has saved him from the power of his enemies." Ahimaaz was the son of Zadok.
New Jerusalem Bible	Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, 'Let me run and tell the king the good news that Yahweh has vindicated his cause by ridding him of his enemies.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Please, I will run and bring-news to the king that Yahweh judged the hand of his enemies."
Bible in Basic English	Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, said, Let me go and give the king news of how the Lord has done right in his cause against those who took up arms against him.
The Expanded Bible	Ahimaaz son of Zadok said to Joab, "Let me run and take the news to King David. I'll tell him the Lord has saved [rescued; ^T delivered] him from his enemies."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then Akhimatz-ben-Zadok said, "I will run and announce to the king, that the EVER-LIVING has done him justice against the hand of his enemies."
NET Bible®	<i>David Learns of Absalom's Death</i> Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run and give the king the good news that the Lord has vindicated him before his enemies [Heb "that the Lord has vindicated him from the hand of his enemies."]."
NIV – UK	David mourns Now Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, 'Let me run and take the news to the king that the Lord has vindicated him by delivering him from the hand of his enemies.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Achima'atz the son of Tzadok said, "Let me run now and bring news to the king that ADONAI has judged in his favor by releasing him from his enemies."
exeGesés companion Bible	Then Achiy Maas the son of Sadoq says, Run me to bear the evangelism to the sovereign; for Yah Veh judged him by the hand of his enemies.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then said Achima'atz Ben Tzadok, Let me now run, and take news to HaMelech, how that Hashem hath in justice vindicated him of his oyevim.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Aḥima'ats son of Tsadoq said, "Please let me run and take the news to the sovereign, for יהוה has avenged him of his enemies."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, Let me now run, and deliver the king tidings, how that YHWH has avenged him of his enemies.
English Standard V. – UK	David Hears of Absalom's Death Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run and carry news to the king that the Lord has delivered him from the hand of his enemies."
NASB	David Is Grief-stricken Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Please let me run and bring the king news that the Lord has freed [Lit vindicated] him from the hand of his enemies."
New King James Version	David Hears of Absalom's Death Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run now and take the news to the king, how the Lord has avenged him of his enemies."
New RSV	Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, 'Let me run, and carry tidings to the king that the Lord has delivered him from the power of his enemies.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 19-33: Race to Headquarters} {Verses 19-20: Ahimaaz Denied Permission to Carry News to Headquarters} Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, said "Please sir, let me run, and announce the good news {basar} to the king . . . how that Jehovah/God has vindicated him from the hand of his enemies." {Note: Ahimaaz is a very mature believer and RBT says he will succeed his father Zadok as the High Priest under Solomon. He is only going to deliver the 'good news' - the victory in battle. He understands that the 'bad news' of his son's death can wait until David can be prepared for it coming.}

Webster's Bible Translation	Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and inform the king, how the LORD hath avenged himself of his enemies.
Young's Updated LT	And Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me run, I pray you, and I bear the king tidings, for Jehovah has delivered him out of the hand of his enemies;"

The gist of this verse: Ahimaaz ben Zadok asks to deliver this news to David.

This is a very odd insertion. On many occasions, we have someone receiving information about this or that, and little is given to us concerning the details. However, here, David will be given news of success against Absalom's army, and an entire back story is inserted here. My first question is, *of what spiritual benefit is this?* As I begin to dig into this passage, I think the key to the importance of this passage is God's understanding of your spiritual gift, and just how well you are designed for your spiritual niche.

2Samuel 18:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀchîymaʿats (אָחִימָאֵץ) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ghahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדוֹק or צִדְקָה) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
nâʾ (נָא) [pronounced <i>naw</i>]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609

Translation: Then Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, "Let me run, if you will,..." If you will recall, the two sons of the two priests were couriers for the spy network which David had set up in and around Jerusalem. Ahimaaz is making a request to take this news to David.

It would be reasonable to suppose that Ahimaaz was very much an admirer of David, and that delivering good news to him would be a good experience. It is reasonable to suppose that messengers were also paid to do this work.

Now, this is not something that Ahimaaz just says out of the blue. He has deliver messages before—so much so that he will be recognized by his running style while he is still afar off (2Sam. 18:27). So, this is not simply youthful enthusiasm by someone who wants a new position; this is apparently one of the things which he does.

We certainly, in the electronic age, take much of this for granted. If I want to find the news for today in any city or any geographical area, I can find it out in a moment. If I need to get a message to Charlie Brown, usually there are several options which allow me to reach Charlie Brown—email, texting, phone—so that we have an instantaneous contact. But, David and Joab, as the king and five-star general of Israel, have to deal with communications all of the time, which requires probably a number of men who run for a living (at least, as a side job). They have to be swift, they must possess a good memory (as some messages, David or Joab would not want to be intercepted), and they had to be able to avoid those David might not want to know a message is being sent. So, like most jobs, there was a particular skill set involved with this job.

Application: I have wondered myself about my own skill set—could I have survived had I been born 20 or more years earlier; particularly, had I been born before decent eyeglasses were available (for much of my life, I wore the thickest glasses available). For my abilities and interests and spiritual gift, it is as if God placed me here at exactly the right time in human history. I have no doubts that, upon discovering your own purpose and spiritual gift, that you will feel the same way.

2Samuel 18:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>to make one cheerful [with good news]; to announce [good news]; to bear glad tidings, to bring good news</i>	1 st person singular, Piel imperfect with the volutative hê	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
The hê at the end is called a volutative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...and bring good news to the king... Ahimaaz is a young man and excited that the conservative forces have beat down the revolutionary liberal forces of Absalom. So he wants to bring this news to the king.

In the Greek translation, the verb here is the future active indicative of the verb euaggelizô (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced *yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo*], which means, 1) *to bring good news, to announce glad tidings; 1a) used in the OT of any kind of good news; 1a1) of the joyful tidings of God's kindness, in particular, of the Messianic blessings; 1b) in the NT used especially of the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God, and of the salvation to be obtained in it through Christ, and of what relates to this salvation; 1c) glad tidings are brought to one, one has glad tidings proclaimed to him; 1d) to proclaim glad tidings; 1d1) instruct (men) concerning the things that pertain to Christian salvation*. Thayer definition only. Strong's #2097. We get the word *evangelize* from euaggelizô.

As we will find out, Ahimaaz is not willing to bring the bad news with him.

2Samuel 18:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâphaṭ (שפּט) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i>]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
min (מן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axletrees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'âyab (אֵיבָ) [pronounced <i>aw-YA^BV</i>]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33

Translation:...—that Y^ehowah has delivered him from the power of his enemies.” The news is, of course, that God has defeated the enemies of David.

There are several principle reasons for a person wanting to deliver such a message to the king. Some may actually enjoy that king of exercise of running in the cool air and giving the body a workout. This is also a relaxing break from the military action which had gone on before. Some men would love to bring the king good news—new for which he is grateful—and news which might help the king place the name and face of this messenger in his head. There also appears to be payment for taking such a message. There might even be a meal and fellowship with the king. However, for Ahimaaz, he was already known to the king. He clearly sided with the king in this revolution; so Ahimaaz wants to bring this news to David for personal and patriotic reasons.

I don't believe that Ahimaaz fully understood how devastating the news of Absalom's death. Many reading this narrative can see no other option but for Absalom to have been executed for treason.

And so says to him Joab, “Not a man of good tidings you [are] the day the this and you have carried good tidings in a day another. And the day the this, you will not carry good tidings for upon a son of the king has died.”

2Samuel
18:20

Joab said to him, “You [will] not [be] the man [bearing] good news today; but you will carry good news on another day. However [lit., *and*], today, you will not carry good news because the king’s son is dead.”

Joab, however, said to him, “You will not carry good news to the king today, although you may do that on another day. However, today, the king’s son is dead—and that will not be good news to the king.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Joab said to him: Thou shalt not be the messenger this day, but shalt bear tidings another day: this day I will not have thee bear tidings, because the king's son is dead.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to him Joab, “Not a man of good tidings you [are] the day the this and you have carried good tidings in a day another. And the day the this, you will not carry good tidings for upon a son of the king has died.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Joab said to him, It is not proper that you bear tidings this day, but you may bear tidings another day; this day you shall bear no tidings because the kings son is dead.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Joab said to him, You shall not be a messenger of good news this day; you shall bear them another day; but on this day you shall bear no news, because the king's son is dead.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Joab answered, "You're not the one to tell the king that his son is dead. You can take him a message some other time, but not today."
Easy English	But Joab said to Ahimaaz, `No. You cannot take that news to David today. You may take that news to David another day. You cannot do that today because the king's son is dead.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Joab answered Ahimaaz, “No, you will not bring the news {to David} today. You can bring the news another time, but not today. Why? Because the king’s son is dead.”
Good News Bible (TEV)	"No," Joab said, "today you will not take any good news. Some other day you may do so, but not today, for the king's son is dead."
<i>The Message</i>	But Joab said, "You're not the one to deliver the good news today; some other day, maybe, but it's not 'good news' today." (This was because the king's son was dead.)
New Life Bible	But Joab said to him, "You must not carry news today, but another time. Today you should carry no news, because the king's son is dead."
New Living Translation	"No," Joab told him, "it wouldn't be good news to the king that his son is dead. You can be my messenger another time, but not today."
The Voice	Joab: ²⁰ You're not going to carry news today. Maybe some other day, but not today, for today the news <i>that matters most</i> is that the king's son is dead.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But JoAb told him: 'Don't bring it as good news today, save that for another day; for, it isn't good news that a son of the king has died.'
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Christian Community Bible	But Joab said to him, "Today you would not be a bearer of good news; another day you will run, but today there is no good news because the king's son is dead."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	...but Joab told him, Better some other day than this for bearing the message; I would not have thee tell the news to-day; here is a king's son dead.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But Joab said to him: "You are not the man to bring the news today. On some other day you may take the good news, but today you would not be bringing good news, for in fact the king's son is dead."
NIRV	"I don't want you to take the news to the king today," Joab told him. "You can do it some other time. But you must not do it today, because the king's son is dead."
New Simplified Bible	Joab answered: »You are not the one to tell the king his son is dead. You can take him a message some other time, but not today.«
Revised English Bible	But Joab replied, 'This is not day for you to be the bearer of news. Another day you may have news to carry, but not today, because the king's son is dead.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Joab said to him, "You are no news man this day, but you will bring-news another day. This day you will never bring-news over the king's son dying so."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But J'oab replied to him, "No man shall announce this event to-day! You shall, however, announce it tomorrow, —but to-day, you shall not announce it, —because the son of the King has been killed."
NET Bible®	But Joab said to him, "You will not be a bearer of good news today. You will bear good news some other day, but not today [Heb "but this day you will not bear good news.~"], for the king's son is dead."
NIV, ©2011	"You are not the one to take the news today," Joab told him. "You may take the news another time, but you must not do so today, because the king's son is dead."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yo'av said to him, "You are not to be the one to bring the news today; you can convey news another day; but today you will not bring news, because the king's son is dead."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Yah Ab says to him, You are not a man to evangelize this day; but to evangelize another day; but this day you evangelize not because the son of the sovereign died.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Yoav said unto him, Thou shalt not be ish besorah (bearer of news) this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the ben HaMelech is dead.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The updated Geneva Bible	And Joab said unto him, You will not bear tidings this day, but you will bear tidings another day: but this day you will bear no tidings, because the kings son is dead. For Joab bore a good affection to Ahimaaz and doubted how David would take the report of Absaloms death.
New King James Version	And Joab said to him, "You shall not take the news this day, for you shall take the news another day. But today you shall take no news, because the king's son is dead."
Syndein/Thieme	And Joab replied to him {Ahimaaz}, "You shall not bear the good news this day, but you shall announce the good news 'on another occasion'/'another day'. But this day . . . you shall announce the good news, because the king's son is dead." {under

military procedure Joab repeats the command (and then adds a reason)} {Note: David has been known to take out bad news on the courier of the news. Joab is afraid the topic of Absalom will come up and David will kill this man whom Joab likes. So, he is trying to protect Ahimaaz in his refusal. But the truth is, Ahimaaz is the one best prepared to break the news to David gently and he will end up doing so.}.

World English Bible

Joab said to him, You shall not be the bearer of news this day, but you shall bear news another day; but this day you shall bear no news, because the king's son is dead.

Young's Updated LT

And Joab says to him, "You are not a man of tidings this day, but you have borne tidings on another day, and this day you will not bear tidings, because the king's son is dead."

The gist of this verse:

Joab upbraids Ahimaaz for his lack of sensitivity toward David.

2Samuel 18:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yôw'âb (יואב) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: Joab said to him,... There are two types of men under Joab who do not get the complete picture, which is why Joab is the commander over David's forces while these men are not. The private who would not kill Absalom understood that the king did not want Absalom killed. Joab knows this as well, but he also knows that Absalom must die.

On the other hand, Ahimaaz understand the defeat of David's enemies is a good thing, but he fails to properly evaluate the heartache that David would feel over the loss of his son Absalom. Both men understood a portion of what was going on, but they were individually unable to take in the complete picture.

This sets us up for how Joab will deal with this situation, as he will speak to David directly. In fact, when you see how Joab deals with David, you may develop a new-found respect for this man.

2Samuel 18:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʾiysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); construct form	Strong's #376 BDB #35
b ^e sôwrâh (בְּרוּשָׁב) [pronounced <i>b^es-oh-RAW</i>]	<i>good news, glad tidings; implication: a reward for good news</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1309 BDB #142
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article); possibly <i>immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: ...“You [will] not [be] the man [bearing] good news today;... Joab is going to explain to Ahimaaz that this is not the day to go to the king with “good news.”

2Samuel 18:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>to make one cheerful [with good news]; to announce [good news]; to bear glad tidings, to bring good news</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article); possibly <i>immediately</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
'achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29

Translation: ...but you will carry good news on another day. Joab makes it clear to Ahimaaz that he should not take this personally. On another day, Joab may call upon him to be a runner and to bring the good news to David. It will become clear in this context that this was not the message for Ahimaaz to carry, but this is for another to carry.

2Samuel 18:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
lô' (לוֹ' or לוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bâsar (בָּשָׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>to make one cheerful [with good news]; to announce [good news]; to bear glad tidings, to bring good news</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
Together, these two particles appear to mean <i>inasmuch (as), forasmuch as, since, because</i> . I did not find this combination listed in Gesenius.			
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect (this could also be a Qal active participle)	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: However [lit., *and*], today, you will not carry good news because the king's son is dead." The problem with this day is, the king's son was killed in battle. Joab or someone with this kind of situation has to deliver this news. Ahimaaz might want to try to get the king to enjoy a Snoopy victory dance whereas, the king will not feel at all like celebrating. Bear in mind, despite all that has happened, David still sees Absalom as his successor and as the son he favors and loves. The key to Joab's selection of runners here is the fact that David's son was killed, and it will become apparent that this is news that Ahimaaz is unable to deliver.

Ahimaaz understands the importance of this victory; but what he does not get is how David will react and how upset David will be about the death of his son. It will turn out that Joab is quite perceptive about Ahimaaz, that he was not the right man to deliver this news to David.

A comment in one translation suggests that Joab is worried that David will get mad and just kill the messenger, as he did back in 2Sam. 1. That is ridiculous. The messenger in 2Sam. 1 confessed to the crime of killing King Saul, and, based upon that confession, would be deserving of execution. If you know the narrative, the messenger did not think that David would hold him responsible as a criminal for killing Saul, but celebrate this instead. He was sadly mistaken.

Secondly, this would suggest that David is a man half-unhinged. Someone comes to him with bad news and he kills that man? Really? There is every indication that David, apart from some residual arrogance, is a man of great character.

The fact that Joab understands perfectly Ahimaaz being unable to deliver this news of the death of the king's son, is quite amazing. He knows who to send who will do exactly what the messenger needs to do—deliver all of the news good and bad. It is fascinating that Joab would know these two messengers that well. This leads us to recognize just how much insight Joab has to human character and just how observant he is of the men around him.

Earlier, I had suggested that Joab might have even manipulated his armor bearers into delivering the killing blow to Absalom. This short narrative on the runners suggests that Joab is really that good at reading people; and he really understands what men around him will and won't do.

Earlier, I had suggested that we are all suited for a very particular niche in life. The Pulpit Commentary spoke to this very thing: *As a rule, character finds work in affinity with itself, and Joab was right in the adaptation he sought for his purpose. As character is often a prophecy of work that will be done when occasion arises, so work done is often a revelation of character. Not any one can be a hangman. Not any one can be a consoler of the sick and dying. Even in the Christian Church there are kinds of work for which a peculiar firmness and almost severity of character is most suited.*⁸² In this passage, one man is suited for this responsibility and another is not. Joab is in the correct position because he can evaluate these men and determine which man will get the job done.

This also continues to reveal what an interesting man that Joab is. We picture him as a hardened and brilliant general, able to evaluate a battlefield, an enemy, and his own troops, and to devise again and again, the plan which would best result in victory. He has done this again and again on behalf of David. He is so brilliant and so observant, to be able to evaluate how these two messengers will do the job assigned to them.

Application: Are you in some position of authority? Do you have more than 2 people under you? Are you able to honestly evaluate the work of these men—can you anticipate what Charlie Brown can do, and what Lucy can do? Do you know their shortcomings as well? This is what Joab did. He knew those people under him, and he knew what they would do and what they would not do.

Application: This is how well God knows us; God can look at you and He knows all of your weaknesses, all your shortcomings, what you will and will not do. God the Holy Spirit is able to make the correct assignation of a spiritual gift to you because He knows you that well. God is not going to give you an assignment that is completely outside your comfort zone or completely outside of your area of expertise. You cannot be afraid of what God has in store for you, what spiritual gift He has given you, and what is in your future. If Joab can look at two messengers, taken out of the entire army that is under him, and figure out that one is right for the job and one is not, how much more God the Holy Spirit?

⁸² *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:19–33.

Let's look at these verses together, and then understand what is going on: Then Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, "Let me run, if you will, and bring good news to the king—that Y^ehowah has delivered him from the power of his enemies." Joab said to him, "You [will] not [be] the man [bearing] good news today; but you will carry good news on another day. However [lit., *and*], today, you will not carry good news because the king's son is dead." Ahimaaz, because he supported the king and was on the side of the establishment army, was happy that the chief revolutionist is dead, and that all of his supporters were on the run. Therefore, this was good news to Ahimaaz and he wanted to deliver this good news to the king. Joab explains that the king won't see it that way. His son is dead, so, right or wrong, this is not a good day for the king.

Why doesn't Joab deliver this news himself? Joab is not a runner. When this matter has been discharged, Joab then has responsibilities toward his troops. He cannot run off to deliver every bit of news that is important. Therefore, Joab will have to choose a runner who will not shirk from revealing all of the news to David.

It is also interesting that this part of the narrative receives as much coverage as does the actual battle.

And so says Joab to the Cushite, "Go, make known to the king what you have seen." And so bows himself the Cushite to Joab and so he runs.

2Samuel
18:21

Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go [and] make known to the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed himself before Joab and then he ran [to David].

Then Joab spoke to the Cushite, telling him, "Go and make this information known to the king." The Cushite therefore bowed before Joab and he ran to tell David the news.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Joab said to Chusai: Go, and tell the king what you have seen. Chusai bowed down to Joab, and ran.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Joab to the Cushite, "Go, make known to the king what you have seen." And so bows himself the Cushite to Joab and so he runs.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Joab said to Cush, Go tell the king what you have seen; and he ran.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Joab said to Hushai, Go, report to the king all that you have seen. And Hushai bowed down before Joab and went out.

Significant differences: The Syriac leaves out that the Cushite bowed before Joab.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed low before Joab, then ran off.
Contemporary English V.	Someone from Ethiopia was standing there, and Joab told him, "Go and tell the king what you have seen." The man knelt down in front of Joab and then got up and started running.
Easy English	Then Joab spoke to a foreign man from Cush. Joab said, 'Go! Tell the king what you have seen.' The man from Cush bent down to show honour to Joab. Then the man ran off.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then Joab said to a man from Ethiopia, "Go, tell the king about the things you have seen."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then he said to his Ethiopian slave, "Go and tell the king what you have seen." The slave bowed and ran off.

The Message	Then Joab ordered a Cushite, "You go. Tell the king what you've seen." "Yes sir," said the Cushite, and ran off.
New Berkeley Version	Then Joab turned to a man from Cush, "Go, tell the king what you have seen!" The Cushite prostrated himself before Joab and ran off.
The Voice	Joab: ²⁰ You're not going to carry news today. Maybe some other day, but not today, for today the news that matters most is that the king's son is dead. ²¹ (to the Cushite) Go and tell the king what you have seen. The Cushite bowed in obedience to Joab, then he began running to bring the news to David. Vv. 20–21 are included for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And JoAb said (to HushAi): 'Just go to the king and tell him what you've seen!' So, HushAi bowed before JoAb and left.
Beck's American Translation	Then Joab said to the Nubian [A <i>Cushite, a black man from Ehtiopia</i>], "Go, tell the king what you saw." The Nubian bowed before Joab and ran off.
God's Word™	Then Joab said to a man from Sudan, "Go, tell the king what you saw." The messenger bowed down with his face touching the ground in front of Joab and then ran off..
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Afterwards Joab bade Chusi go and tell the king what he had seen; so Chusi did reverence to him, and ran. It is not clear why Joab preferred to send Chusi as a messenger; it may be he wished to spare Achimaas the fate of the Amalecite in 2Sam. 1:15 above. Of Chusi (wrongly confused by the older English versions with Chusai the Arachite) nothing is known, and some think it is only a description of his race, 'the Cushite' (or Ethiopian). But verse 14 above suggests that it may be the soldier there mentioned.
New American Bible	Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed to Joab and sped away.
New Simplified Bible	Someone from Ethiopia was standing there. Joab told him: »Go tell the king what you have seen.« The man knelt down in front of Joab and then got up and started running.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Joab said to an Ethiopian, "Go tell the king what you saw." The Ethiopian bowed himself to Joab and ran.
Bible in Basic English	Then Joab said to the Cushite, Go and give the king word of what you have seen. And the Cushite, making a sign of respect to Joab, went off running.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	J'oab, however, afterwards said to Kusi, "Go! Inform the King what you have seen." And Kusi turned from J'oab and ran.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then Yo'av said to the Ethiopian, "Go, tell the king what you saw."The Ethiopian bowed to Yo'av, then ran off.
exeGesés companion Bible	Then Yah Ab says to Kushi, Go tell the sovereign what you saw. And Kushi prostrates himself to Yah Ab and runs:...
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Then said Yoav to Cushi, Go tell HaMelech what thou hast seen. And Cushi prostrated himself unto Yoav, and ran.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Then said Joab to the Cushite [an Ethiopian], Go tell the king what you have seen. And the Cushite bowed to Joab and ran.

Concordant Literal Version And Joab said to Cushi, `Go, declare to the king that which you have seen;' and Cushi bows himself to Joab, and runs.

English Standard Version Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed before Joab, and ran.

Syndein/Thieme Then said Joab spoke to the African/Cushite/Cushi {kuwshiy -word means 'their blackness'}, "Go report to the king what you have seen." And the African saluted/'bowed himself' {a sign showing submission and respect for authority} to Joab, and took off running. {Note: This is not a 'racial issue' here. This is an issue of the soul. Joab is not willing to risk the life of a mature believer who shows great promise. Instead, it is this Ethiopian's job to carry the news to the king. He must have been the Headquarter Runner. Probably was a great athlete.}.

Young's Updated LT And Joab says to Cushi, "Go, declare to the king that which you have seen;" and Cushi bows himself to Joab, and runs.

The gist of this verse: Joab sends a Cushite messenger to David instead.

2Samuel 18:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yôw'âb (יוב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	Yah is father and is transliterated Joab	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Kûwshîy (כושִׁי) [pronounced koo-SHEE]	blackness; and is transliterated Cushite	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469

This can refer to a man from Ethiopia (Cush) or to a particular man.

Translation: Then Joab said to the Cushite,... Israel was a multi-racial country. People came from all over to live with Israel's people, and often this was a response to their God. This is very much why the United States is the melting pot that it is. People come here for many reasons, but one of them is positive volition toward Jesus Christ (and many who come here do not even realize this).

Gill: *The Ethiopian, or blackamoor; who either was an Ethiopian by birth and proselyted, or he was an Israelite of a black complexion, and therefore so called.*⁸³

What appears to be the case is, this Cushite is loyal to David, but he is not intimately involved in David's personal life. Or, he is able to transcend it. Ahimaaz will be unable to do this.

⁸³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:21.

Theories have been developed, that the Cushite was the man who originally reported Absalom's situation to Joab. The problem with that theory is, Joab was noticeably irritated that this man did not act on the situation. Another theory is that this Cushite is one of the armor-bearers who killed Absalom. That seems even more unlikely because David would not have killed the messenger of this news; but he might have killed a messenger who participated in Absalom's death.

2Samuel 18:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	go, come, depart, walk; advance	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
nâgad (נדגד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	tell, make conspicuous, make known, expound, explain, declare, inform, confess, make it pitifully obvious that	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'âsher (אשר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
râ'âh (ראה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

Translation:...“Go [and] make known to the king what you have seen.” Joab, for reasons not given, believes that this Cushite would be the best man to go to King David with the news.

Again, this indicates to us that Joab knows the men who are under him. He is able to make the right choice for this responsibility.

Clarke has a different interpretation here: *At this time the death of Absalom was not publicly known; but Joab had given Cushite private information of it. This Ahimaaz had not, for he could not tell the king whether Absalom were dead. To this Joab seems to refer, 2Sam. 18:22 : “You have no tidings ready.”*⁸⁴ The problem with this interpretation is, Joab does not say to the Cushite, “Here is some information I have not yet made public.” He says, “Tell the king what you have seen.” Furthermore, that translation of v. 22 is suspect. It is not out of the question that the Cushite has seen all that happened and Ahimaaz has not, but in the very detailed writings we have in this section, that is not said.

⁸⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:21.

2Samuel 18:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
Kûwshîy (כּוּשִׁי) [pronounced koo-SHEE]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yôw'âb (יְאוֹב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222

Translation: *So the Cushite bowed himself before Joab...* The Cushite was quite respectful and bowed before Joab. This act suggests that the Cushite is able to, even after a successful battle, understand protocol, because this might be reasonably called for when giving this news to David.

Interestingly enough, if the Cushite bows before David, it is not recorded. On the other hand, Ahimaaz bows before David, but not before Joab. So, the key to Joab's decision could be the loyalties of these two men. It could be that Joab simply wants someone who will put him in a better light. But, that would assume some things which are not in the text. In the two slightly different messages that these men will deliver, that does not appear to be an issue.

2Samuel 18:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced roots]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930

Translation: *...and then he ran [to David].* This is an interesting aspect of that era. Men did not get on a horse and ride; they did not get on a mule or a camel; but to deliver news, they ran. I do not know the reason for this, other than, it would be easier for a runner-messenger, when coming close to adversaries of any kind, to quickly hide himself in a forested area if unencumbered by a large quadruped.

The gist of this verse will be generally easy to understand. There will be some phrases which are quite difficult to unravel into an easy translation.

And so adds Ahimaaz ben Zadok and so he says unto Joab, "And is what? Let me run, please, also me after the Cushite." And so says Joab, "To what this? You are running, my son, and to you, without tidings being found."

2Samuel
18:22

Ahimaaz ben Zadok added [again] and he said to Joab, "And why is [he the only man to bear this news]? Let me run, please, me as well, [following] after the Cushite." Joab then said, "Why? You [may] run, my son, even though no tidings are discovered [or, to you, no reward for good news will be found]."

Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, spoke up again, asking, "Is this the only option? May I also run, following after the Cushite?" Joab answered, "You may run, my son, even though you do not appear to have additional tidings to bring to the king."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Then Achimaas the son of Sadoc said to Joab again: Why might <u>not</u> I also run after Chusai? And Joab said to him: Why will you run, my son? You will not be the bearer of good tidings.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so adds Ahimaaz ben Zadok and so he says unto Joab, "And is what? Let me run, please, also me after the Cushite." And so says Joab, "To what this? You are running, my son, and to you, without tidings being found."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, Why should <u>not</u> I too run after Cushite? And Joab said to him, Why will you run, my son, seeing no one <u>will give you a reward</u> for the tidings?
Septuagint (Greek)	And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, <u>No</u> , let me also run after Hushai. And Joab said, Why would you thus run, my son? Attend, you have no news for <u>profit if you go</u> .
Significant differences:	There are no negatives used in the Hebrew when Ahimaaz speaks again to Joab. The Hebrew is quite difficult in what Joab says, so we would expect differences in the text there.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Ahimaaz spoke to Joab again, "No matter what happens, I still want to run. And besides, the Ethiopian has already left." Joab said, "Why should you run? You won't get a reward for the news you have!"
Easy English	Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, said to Joab again, 'Whatever happens, let me run behind the man from Cush.' But Joab replied, 'Young man, you should not want to run. You have no news. You will not get any reward.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	Ahimaaz insisted, "I don't care what happens; please let me take the news also." "Why do you want to do it, my son?" Joab asked. "You will get no reward for it."
The Message	Ahimaaz son of Zadok kept at it, begging Joab, "What does it matter? Let me run too, following the Cushite." Joab said, "Why all this 'Run, run'? You'll get no thanks for it, I can tell you."
New Life Bible	Zadok's son Ahimaaz said to Joab, "Whatever happens, let me run after the Cushite." Joab said, "Why would you run, my son? You would receive no pay for going."

New Living Translation	But Ahimaaz continued to plead with Joab, "Whatever happens, please let me go, too." "Why should you go, my son?" Joab replied. "There will be no reward for your news."
The Voice	Ahimaaz: Whatever happens, I want to run after the Cushite. Joab: Why would you want to follow, even though you have nothing to gain?.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then AhiMaAz (the son of ZaDok) said to JoAb: 'Let me run after HushAi!' And JoAb said: 'Why do you want to do this, my son? Come along, for there's no good news that will be of any benefit to you if you go there.'
Beck's American Translation	But Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, again spoke to Joab, "Whatever may happen, I also want to run after the Nubain." "Now why should you run, my son?" Joab asked. "There's no news you'll get a reward for."
God's Word™	Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, spoke to Joab again, "Whatever may happen, I also want to run after the Sudanese messenger." "Now, son, why should you deliver the message?" Joab asked. "You won't be rewarded for this news."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And thereupon Sadow's son Achimaas asked whether he might not run after Chusi. No need for that, my son, Joab answered; it is not good news thou wilt carry.
New American Bible	But Ahimaaz, son of Zadok, said to Joab again, "Come what may, permit me also to run after the Cushite." Joab replied: "Why do you want to run, my son? You will receive no reward."
NIRV	Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, spoke again to Joab. He said, "I don't care what happens to me. Please let me run behind the man from Cush." But Joab replied, "My son, why do you want to go? You don't have any news that will bring you a reward."
New Simplified Bible	Ahimaaz spoke to Joab again: »No matter what happens, I still want to run. The Ethiopian has already left.« Joab said: »Why should you run? You will not get a reward for the news you have!«
Today's NIV	Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joab, "Come what may, please let me run behind the Cushite." But Joab replied, "My son, why do you want to go? You don't have any news that will bring you a reward."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Ahimaaz the son of Zadok still added, saying to Joab, "Please, what is it for me also to run after the Ethiopian?" Joab said, "Why this run, my son? You found no news!"
Bible in Basic English	Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, said to Joab again, Whatever may come of it, let me go after the Cushite. And Joab said, Why have you a desire to go, my son, seeing that you will get no reward for your news?.
The Expanded Bible	But Ahimaaz son of Zadok begged Joab again, "No matter what happens, please let me ·go along [run] with the Cushite!" Joab said, "Son, why do you want to ·carry the news [run]? You won't get any reward."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Yet Akhimatz-ben-Zadok continued to importune, and said to J'oab, "May I not now also myself run after Kusi?" And J'oab replied, "What good for you to run, my boy? There is no runner in the country better than him!"
HCSB	However, Ahimaaz son of Zadok persisted and said to Joab, "No matter what, please let me run too behind the Cushite!" Joab replied, "My son, why do you want to run since you won't get a reward?"

NET Bible® Ahimaaz the son of Zadok again spoke to Joab, "Whatever happens, let me go after the Cushite." But Joab said, "Why is it that you want to go, my son? You have no good news that will bring you a reward."

NIV, ©2011 Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joab, "Come what may, please let me run behind the Cushite."
But Joab replied, "My son, why do you want to go? You don't have any news that will bring you a reward."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible But Achima'atz the son of Tzadok said again to Yo'av, "Come what may, please let me also run after the Ethiopian." Yo'av answered, "Why do you want to run, my son? You won't receive any reward for bringing the news."

exeGesés companion Bible ...and Achiy Maas the son of Sadoq adds to say to Yah Ab,
And whatever it be,
have me, I pray you, also run after Kushiy.
And Yah Ab says,
Why is this - that you run, my son,
seeing you have no evangelism to present?

JPS (Tanakh—1985) But Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joab, "No matter what, let me run, too, behind the Cushite." Joab asked, "Why should you run, my boy, when you have no news worth telling [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain]?"

Orthodox Jewish Bible Then said Achima'atz Ben Tzadok yet again to Yoav, But be what may, let me, now, also run after Cushi. And Yoav said, why wilt thou run, beni, seeing that thou hast no besorah to provide?

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Then said Ahimaaz son of Zadok again to Joab, But anyhow, let me, I pray you, also run after the Cushite. Joab said, Why should you run, my son, seeing you will have no reward, for you have not sufficient tidings?

Concordant Literal Version And Ahimaaz son of Zadok adds again, and said unto Joab, 'And whatever it be, let me run, I pray you, I also, after the Cushite.' And Joab said, 'Why [is] this--you are running, my son, and for you there are no tidings found?'

Darby Translation And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said yet again to Joab, Come what may, let me, I pray thee, also run after the Cushite. And Joab said, Why wilt thou run, my son, seeing that there is no news suited [to thee]?

Green's Literal Translation And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said yet again to Joab, Yet whatever may be, please let me run after the Cushite, I also. And Joab said, Why is this that you are running, my son? Also for you there are no tidings found.

New King James Version And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, "But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite."
So Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready?"

New RSV Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said again to Joab, 'Come what may, let me also run after the Cushite.' And Joab said, 'Why will you run, my son, seeing that you have no reward [Meaning of Heb uncertain] for the tidings?'

Syndein/Thieme {Future High Priest Asks Again}
Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok 'persisted yet again' and said to Joab, "Please sir, come what may . . . let me also run after the African." {Note: RBT says that Ahimaaz would have known the African and must have known he would not break the news gently to David. Ahimaaz is determined to make this as easy as possible on David.}

And Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, there will be no reward for your going?" {Idiom: 'why' here is two Hebrew words that literally mean 'On account of this'} {Note: Joab is implying that the African is a far faster runner and will get there first anyway. So, even if given permission, Ahimaaz would not get there in time anyway.}.

Updated Bible Version 2.11

Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said yet again to Joab, But come what may, let me, I pray you, also run after the Cushite. And Joab said, Why will you run, my son, seeing that you will have no good news to deliver?

World English Bible

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But come what may, Please let me also run after the Cushite. Joab said, Why will you run, my son, seeing that you will have no reward for the news?

Young's Updated LT

And Ahimaaz son of Zadok adds again, and says unto Joab, "And whatever it be, let me run, I pray you, I also, after the Cushite." And Joab says, "Why is this—you are running, my son, and for you there are no tidings found?"

The gist of this verse:

Ahimaaz asks again if he could also run to deliver this message. Joab does not see a reason why he should, but allows him to run anyway.

2Samuel 18:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced yaw-SAHPH]	to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again; to continue to	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
ʾĂchîymaʿats (אֲחִימָאֵץ) [pronounced uh-khee-MAH-gahtz]	my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדֹק or צָדִיק) [pronounced tzaw-DOHK]	just, righteous; transliterated Zadok	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843

Translation: Ahimaaz ben Zadok added [again]... The verb used here simply indicates that a previous action is repeated; that is, Ahimaaz will speak to Joab once again, to press his case. It acts more like an adverb, although it matches the subject of the verb.

2Samuel 18:22b

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

2Samuel 18:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Yôw'âb (יֹאבִיב) [pronounced YOH-aw ^b v]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong's #4100 BDB #552

Translation: ...and he said to Joab, “And why is [he the only man to bear this news]? What Joab asks here is somewhat difficult to understand, when a literal translation is taken: *And is what?* He appears to be questioning Joab’s decision, or he is saying he would like to say something else. He apparently feels comfortable questioning Joab.

Again, recall that Ahimaaz is said to bow before David, but not before Joab. So he may feel as if he has a different sort of relationship with Joab—one which is less formal. Joab does not appear to be upset over this.

2Samuel 18:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced roots]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced naw]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609

2Samuel 18:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, as well; even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
'ânîy (אני) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
'achărêy (אחרי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
Kûwshîy (כוש) [pronounced <i>koo-SHEE</i>]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469

Translation: Let me run, please, me as well, [following] after the Cushite.” Ahimaaz asks if he could run along after the Cushite.

Ahimaaz is clearly insistent in this matter, and there are two possible but divergent reasons for him wanting to run to David. Ahimaaz has a good relationship with David; he loves him and admires him. Winning this war is great news, and Ahimaaz would love to bring great news to him. Being able to call a family member and tell them good news—an upcoming marriage or a pregnancy or a successful birth—is a great joy to relay. So this is something that Ahimaaz would want to do. Secondly, simply as a matter of competition, Ahimaaz would like to show that he is the best, and he will take this opportunity to outrun the Cushite. However, Eccles. 9:11 reads: *I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn't always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn't always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skillful are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don't always lead successful lives. It is all decided by chance, by being in the right place at the right time.* (NLT) So there is no confusion, observing something *under the sun* in Ecclesiastes is making a human observation, or drawing a human viewpoint conclusion. The conclusion, that life appears to be by chance, is false. However, Ahimaaz will outrun this Cushite, but he will find himself unable to give David a complete report.

There are sometimes minor oddities which stand out in a chapter—sometimes short phrases which are repeated and catch a person's eye. Here we have the words *also me*; the same words which David used when he said he would be going out with the men to battle. The reason that they stand out is, they are hard to translate into a good English sentence. The words are easy enough to translate, but when one stands back and looks at the finished product, they just don't sound right. That requires extra thought to process, and so such a short phrase stuck in my mind as I translated this chapter.

I may be getting a little out into left field here, but this may even suggest, *what if*. That is, *what if David had gone out with his men to battle?* Ahimaaz wants to deliver this message, and we are going to find out that, he does a half-arsed job. That is, he is unable to be truthful and to tell the king what the king wanted to know. Perhaps this gives us a peak into what would have happened, had David gone out with his soldiers. At best, he would have been unnecessary. At worst, he would have failed as a leader.

In any case, there is a clear lesson to be taken from this. David was wise enough to listen to his men; and when good advice is offered, you need to be able to consider it and take it when it makes sense. Ahimaaz here cannot seem to take *no* for an answer; furthermore, Joab, his superior, reveals again that he can be harangued into a particular course of action (remember when Absalom burned down his field to get his attention?).

So, when all is said and done, by the time we get to the end of this chapter, it is clear that Ahimaaz is a third wheel; his news is not needed, and he will be unable to level with the king. Joab was completely right to send a

different messenger, and Joab should have stuck by this decision, instead of giving in to Ahimaaz. However, since he gave in to Ahimaaz's persistence, we find out that Joab was right to choose the Cushite.

2Samuel 18:22d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Yôw'âb (יואב) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father and is transliterated Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chron. 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
zeh (זה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

I suspect that all 3 particles above combine to mean something together. Gesenius suggests *why then*; various translators suggest *why [should]*; *why [is] this*; *why*. See *zeh* listings as well.

Translation: *Joab then said, "Why? My first impression is, this drawn-out way of saying, "Why?" suggests to me that Joab is going to say no—but he will allow Ahimaaz to run after the Cushite. Perhaps Joab is saying this in a drawn-out way, while he thinks of what he should answer.*

2Samuel 18:22e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'attâh (אתה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7323 BDB #930

2Samuel 18:22e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: *You [may] run, my son,...* Almost immediately, at least in the Biblical record, Joab give Ahimaaz the okay to go ahead and run. There are ways to say, “You may run” but it appears the Joab said, “You are running, my son.”

Since the Cushite was already making the run, which is what Joab wanted, he determined that there would be no problem in sending Ahimaaz as well.

2Samuel 18:22f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'êyn (אין) [pronounced <i>ān</i>]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34
b ^e sôwrâh (בשׂוּרָה) [pronounced <i>b^es-oh-RAW</i>]	<i>good news, glad tidings; implication: a reward for good news</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1309 BDB #142
mâtsâ' (מָצְאָה) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>finding [unexpectedly], happening upon, coming upon; detecting, discovering; meeting</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #4672 BDB #592

Translation: *...even though no tidings are discovered [or, to you, no reward for good news will be found].* Again, the exact meaning is difficult to understand here. It appears that Joab is relenting, but saying, “I don't believe there is any additional information that you can impart here.” The Cushite knows everything which is important for King David to know.

Some suggest that there is a reward involved here; something that one discovers. This is quite reasonable, given the meanings of these words in BDB. Reporting news would be an additional job that some soldiers would do, so it would make sense that they would be paid overtime to do this. Therefore, Joab would be saying, “We can't pay two men to do one job. The Ethiopian will be remunerated for this, but you will not.” If that is what is being said, it is not clearly stated. Some have interpreted this to mean that Ahimaaz was not fully aware of all the news to bring to David—that he had not discovered it. Literally, it does read, “*And to you no tidings are found.*” Again, a good translation from the text is difficult to determine. Either this is idiomatic or there are some textual problems. There appear to be textual problems at the beginning of the following verse.

“And he is what, I run.” And so he says to him, “Run.” And so runs Ahimaaz a way of the circular district and so he overtook the Cushite.

2Samuel
18:23

“Be that as it may [lit., *and what is*]—I would [like to] run,” [Ahimaaz said]. Then Joab [lit., *he*] said to him, “Run.” Therefore Ahimaaz ran [along] the way of the circular district and he overtook the Cushite.

“Come what may, I would like to run,” Ahimaaz said. So Joab ordered him, “Run, then.” Ahimaaz ran along the way of the plain and he outran the Cushite.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	<u>He answered</u> : But what if I run? And he said to him: Run. Then Achimaas running by a nearer way passed Chusai.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	“And he is what, I run.” And so he says to him, “Run.” And so runs Ahimaaz a way of the plain and so he overtook the Cushite.
Peshitta (Syriac)	<u>He said to him</u> , What is the difference? Let me run. And he said to him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and passed Cushi.
Septuagint (Greek)	<u>And he said</u> , Why should I not run? And Joab said to him, Run. And Ahimaaz ran along the way of Kechar, and <u>outran</u> Hushai.

Significant differences: It appears that *and he said* may have dropped out of the text. The first phrase appears to be idiomatic, so the other ancient translations do not match it word-for-word. The word *outran* in the Greek gives the gist but is not necessarily a perfect translation.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	"I don't care what happens, I want to go," Ahimaaz said [LXX; MT lacks Ahimaaz said.]. So Joab said to him, "Run off then!" Ahimaaz ran off, going by way of the plain, and passed the Cushite.
Contemporary English V.	"I'll run no matter what!" Ahimaaz insisted. "All right then, run!" Joab said. Ahimaaz took the road through the Jordan Valley and outran the Ethiopian.
Easy English	Ahimaaz said, 'Whatever happens, I want to go.' So Joab said to Ahimaaz, 'Run!' And Ahimaaz ran along the Jordan valley. He passed the man from Cush.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Whatever happens," Ahimaaz said again, "I want to go." "Then go," Joab said. So Ahimaaz ran off down the road through the Jordan Valley, and soon he passed the slave.
<i>The Message</i>	"I don't care; let me run." "Okay," said Joab, "run." So Ahimaaz ran, taking the lower valley road, and passed the Cushite.
New Berkeley Version	"Whatever be the case, only let me run!" "Run then," agreed Joab and away from Ahimaaz by the Jordan Valley road and passed the man from Cush.
New Living Translation	"Yes, but let me go anyway," he begged. Joab finally said, "All right, go ahead." So Ahimaaz took the less demanding route by way of the plain and ran to Mahanaim ahead of the Ethiopian.
The Voice	Ahimaaz: Regardless of what happens, I am going to run. Joab: OK, then. Run. Ahimaaz ran, and going by way of the plain, he outran the Cushite.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And AhiMaAz said, 'But, what if I run?' And JoAb said, 'Okay, then run!' So, AhiMaAz ran along the road to KeChar, and he passed HushAi.
Christian Community Bible	Ahimaaz insisted, "It does not matter, I will run." So Joab allowed him to go, and Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain, outrunning the Cushite.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	"Whatever happens, I'd like to run," replied Ahimaaz. "Run," Joab told him. So Ahimaaz ran along the valley road and got ahead of the Sudanese messenger.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	But may I run? asked he. Run if thou wilt, said Joab. And Achimaas took a shorter way, and passed Chusi by.
New American Bible	But he insisted, "Come what may, I want to run." Joab said to him, "Very well." Ahimaaz sped off by way of the Jordan plain and outran the Cushite.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But he insisted, "Come what may, I want to run." Joab said to him, "Run." Ahimaaz took the way of the Jordan plain and outran the Cushite.
NIRV	He said, "I don't care what happens. I want to run." So Joab said, "Run!" Then Ahimaaz ran across the flatlands of the Jordan River. As he ran, he passed the man from Cush.
New Jerusalem Bible	But he replied, 'Come what may, let me run!' and Joab said 'Run, then!' So Ahimaaz ran off along the road through the Plain, outrunning the Cushite.
Revised English Bible	'Come what may,' he said, 'let me run.' 'Go, then,' said Joab. So Ahimaaz ran by the road through the plain of the Jordan and outstripped the Cushite.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	"What is it for me to run?" He said to him, "Run." Ahimaaz ran by the way of the flats and passed the Ethiopian.
Bible in Basic English	Whatever may come of it, he said, I will go. Then he said to him, Go. So Ahimaaz went running by the lowland road and overtook the Cushite.
The Expanded Bible	Ahimaaz answered, "No matter what happens, I will run." So Joab said to Ahimaaz, "Run!" Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the ·Jordan Valley [plain] and ·passed [outran] the Cushite.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	"But yet, I wish to run!" Then he said to him, "Run!" So he ran. And Akhimatz ran by the road of the pastures and passed beyond Kusi.
NET Bible®	But he said [The words "but he said" are not in the Hebrew text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.], "Whatever happens, I want to go!" So Joab [Heb "he"; the referent (Joab) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] said to him, "Then go!" So Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Jordan plain, and he passed the Cushite.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"I don't care - whatever happens, I want to run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Achima'atz ran by the road through the desert flats and outran the Ethiopian
exeGesés companion Bible	And whatever it be, let me run. And he says to him, Run. And Achiy Maas runs by the way of the environs and passes Kushi:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	"I am going to run anyway." "The run," he said. So Ahimaaz ran by way of the Plain, and he passed the Cushite.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Rutz! (run!). Then Achima'atz ran by the derech of the plain, outran Cushi.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	`And, whatever it be, [said he,] let me run.' And he said to him, `Run;' and Ahimaaz runs the way of the circuit, and passes by the Cushite.
Darby Translation	-- But, come what may, let me run. And he said to him, Run. And Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and outstripped the Cushite.
Emphasized Bible	But, be what may, I will run. So he said to him—Run. Then ran Ahimaaz by the way of the plain, and got beyond the Cushite.
Green's Literal Translation	And he said, Yet whatever it may be, let me run. And he said to him, Run. And Ahimaaz ran the way of the circuit and passed by the Cushite.
Syndein/Thieme	But, come what may sir, said he {Ahimaaz}, "Please let me run." And he {Joab} 'thought about it and commanded' him, "Run." Consequently, Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and out ran the African. {Note: The African took the short route to David over the mountains. But Ahimaaz thought first. And, he ran on better ground for running - the plains. So the route was longer but faster and Ahimaaz got there first.}
World English Bible	But come what may, said he, I will run. He said to him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and outran the Cushite.
Young's Updated LT	"And, whatever it be, <i>said he</i> , let me run." And he says to him, "Run;" and Ahimaaz runs the way of the circuit, and passes by the Cushite.

The gist of this verse: Ahimaaz insists upon delivering this news, so Joab relents and sends him. Surprisingly enough, he outruns the Cushite.

2Samuel 18:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<i>And he said</i> is found in the Latin, Greek and Syriac.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Together, these words may mean <i>come what may, no matter what, whatever, nevertheless</i> .			
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930

Translation: "Be that as it may [lit., *and what is*]—I would [like to] run," [Ahimaaz said]. Again, this particular set of words certainly must mean something, but it is unclear what it means. Owen and several others suggest, "Come what may." Perhaps *nevertheless* is a reasonable translation.

For some reason, the words *Ahimaaz said* are left out of the Hebrew text but appear to be found in the Latin, Aramaic and Greek (based upon the English translations above of those languages).

2Samuel 18:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
rûts (רָוַץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7323 BDB #930

Translation: Then Joab [lit., *he*] said to him, "Run." Joab relents and gives the order for Ahimaaz to run.

2Samuel 18:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
rûts (רָוַץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
'Ăchîyma'ats (אָחִימָאָט) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-gahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek^e</i>]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
kikâr (כִּיכָר) [pronounced <i>kik-KAWR</i>]	<i>a circle, a globe; a circular tract of land, a round district; a round loaf, a cake; a round weight, a round talent; a talent [of gold, silver, bronze]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3603 BDB #503

Translation: *Therefore Ahimaaz ran [along] the way of the circular district...* Apparently, Ahimaaz took a different route than did the Cushite. In any case, he runs along a road of sorts going through a circular district (probably a set of encampments around a valley). It is very likely that this appears to be a longer route, but it might be an easier run.

Barnes: *The floor of the valley through which the Jordan runs. The Cushite did not run by that road, but took the road over the hills, which may well have been the shorter but also the more difficult road. The two roads would probably meet a short distance from Mahanaim. These words...are a clear proof that the battle took place east of the Jordan, because if the runners had had to cross the Jordan, they must both have come by the same road, which it is clear they did not.*⁸⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary: On approaching Mahanaim, Ahimaaz would strike inland, and the two routes would join one another; and one reason which made Ahimaaz go more to the west was that he did not wish the Cushite to know that he had a rival.*⁸⁶

2Samuel 18:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâbar (עָבַר) [pronounced ʿaw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
BDB gives a huge array of meanings: 1) <i>to pass over or by or through, alienate, bring, carry, do away, take, take away, transgress; 1a) (Qal); 1a1) to pass over, cross, cross over, pass over, march over, overflow, go over; 1a2) to pass beyond; 1a3) to pass through, traverse; 1a3a) passers-through (participle); 1a3b) to pass through (the parts of victim in covenant); 1a4) to pass along, pass by, overtake and pass, sweep by; 1a4a) passer-by (participle); 1a4b) to be past, be over; 1a5) to pass on, go on, pass on before, go in advance of, pass along, travel, advance; 1a6) to pass away; 1a6a) to emigrate, leave (one's territory); 1a6b) to vanish; 1a6c) to perish, cease to exist; 1a6d) to become invalid, become obsolete (of law, decree); 1a6e) to be alienated, pass into other hands.</i>			
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Kûwshîy (שׁוּחַ) [pronounced koo-SHEE]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469

Translation: *...and he overtook the Cushite.* Ahimaaz outruns the Chushite, arriving to where David is first.

God the Holy Spirit has a reason for including this narrative. We find out just how well Joab knows his men. He knows that the Cushite is the man for this job, and that Ahimaaz is not. When these men both arrive in front of David, that becomes apparent—Ahimaaz does not give David the whole story. There is also an interesting interaction which I have not fully understood yet: the Cushite bows before Joab, but not before David; Ahimaaz

⁸⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:23 (edited).

⁸⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:23.

does not bow before Joab, but he does before David. The bows are recorded; the non-bows are not recorded (meaning that it is possible that these men did bow, but it is not recorded).

We have the application from this verse that, one man is better suited for this job than another man is. That is, we all have various slots to fill. Joab did not say that Ahimaaz was an inferior messenger and that the Cushite always does a better job; he simply indicated that the Cushite was more suited for this particular message. Taking this application further, we all have a niche in life, and a portion of our happiness in this life is finding that niche.

And David is sitting between two of the gates. And so goes the watchman unto a roof of the gate unto the wall. And so he lifts up his eyes and so he looks and, behold, a man running to a his separation.

2Samuel
18:24

While David is sitting between the two gates, the watchman went to the roof of the gate toward the [outer] wall. He lifts up his eyes and looks, and he sees [lit., *behold*] a man running alone.

While David is sitting between the two gates, the watchman on duty goes up to the roof of the gate near the wall. He looks out to the horizon and he sees a man running alone.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman that was on the top of the gate upon the wall, lifting up his eyes, saw a man running alone.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And David is sitting between two of the gates. And so goes the watchman unto a roof of the gate unto the wall. And so he lifts up his eyes and so he looks and, behold, a man running to a his separation.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now David was sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate to the wall, and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and saw a man running alone.
Septuagint (Greek)	And David was sitting between the two gates. And the watchman went up on the top of the gate of the wall, and lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was running alone <u>before him</u> .
Significant differences:	There is a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix at the end of this verse which is difficult to translate, and so most do not.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Now David was sitting between the two gates. The watchman on duty went up on the roof of the gate by the wall. He looked out and saw a man running alone.
Contemporary English V.	Meanwhile, David was sitting between the inner and outer gates in the city wall. One of his soldiers was watching from the roof of the gate-tower. He saw a man running toward the town...
Easy English	David hears that Absalom is dead David was waiting in Mahanaim. He was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the city. The guard went up to the top of the city wall. He stood on the roof that was over the gates. The guard looked out. He saw a man who was running alone.
Good News Bible (TEV)	David was sitting in the space between the inner and outer gates of the city. The lookout went up to the top of the wall and stood on the roof of the gateway; he looked out and saw a man running alone.
<i>The Message</i>	David was sitting between the two gates. The sentry had gone up to the top of the gate on the wall and looked around. He saw a solitary runner.

New Berkeley Version	Now David was sitting between the two gates [The inner and outer gates of Mahanaim in Transjordan.], while the sentinel had gone up to the roof of the gateway by the wall. The latter lifted up his eyes, looked, and saw a runner coming alone.
New Life Bible	David was sitting between the two gates. The man who kept watch went up to the roof of the gate by the wall. He looked up and saw a man running by himself.
New Living Translation	While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the town, the watchman climbed to the roof of the gateway by the wall. As he looked, he saw a lone man running toward them.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, David was sitting between the two city gates, as the watchman was on the roof of the gate, next to the wall. And he looked out and saw a man running toward them.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	David was sitting between the two gates while the watchman walked along the roof of the gate by the wall. As he looked, he saw a man running alone.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	David was sitting between the two gates; and now the watchman that stood above the roof over the gate, high up on the wall, looked up and saw a man running, all alone,...
New American Bible (R.E.)	Now David was sitting between the two gates, and a lookout mounted to the roof of the gate above the city wall, where he looked out and saw a man running all alone.
NIRV	David was sitting in the area between the inner and outer gates of the city. The man on guard duty went up to the roof over the entrance of the gate by the wall. As he looked out, he saw someone running alone.
New Jerusalem Bible	David was sitting between the two gates. The sentry, having gone up to the roof of the gate, looked out from the ramparts and saw a man running alone.
New Simplified Bible	David was sitting between the two gates. The watchman walked along the roof of the gate by the wall. He looked at the man running alone.
Revised English Bible	David was sitting between the inner and outer gates and the watchman had gone up to the roof of the gatehouse by the wall of the town. Looking out and seeing a man running along, the watchman called to the king and told him. 'If he is alone,' said the king, 'then he is bringing news.' A portion of v. 25 is included for context.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Now David was seated between the two town doors; and the watchman went up to the roof of the doorways, on the wall, and, lifting up his eyes, saw a man running by himself.
The Expanded Bible	David was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the city. The watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the walls, and as he looked up, he saw a man running alone.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	David was at this time sitting between two gates, and a watchman was posted on the roof of the gateway, on the ramparts, who raised his eyes and saw a man running alone.
HCSB	David was sitting between the two gates when the watchman went up to the roof of the gate and over to the wall. The watchman looked out and saw a man running alone.
NET Bible®	Now David was sitting between the inner and outer gates [Heb "the two gates."], and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate at the wall. When he looked, he saw a man running by himself.
NIV – UK	While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates, the watchman went up to the roof of the gateway by the wall. As he looked out, he saw a man running alone.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and David settles between the two portals: and the watcher goes up to the roof over the portal to the wall and lifts his eyes and sees; and behold, a man running alone:...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	David was sitting between the two gates [i.e., the inner and outer gateways.]. The watchman on the roof of the gate walked over to the city wall. He looked up and saw a man running alone.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Dovid sat between the two she'arim (gates); and the tzofeh (watchman) went up to the gag (roof) over the sha'ar (gate) unto the chomah (wall), and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and hinei an ish running alone.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And David is sitting between the two gates, and the watchman goes unto the roof of the gate, unto the wall, and lifts up his eyes, and looks, and lo, a man running by himself.
English Standard Version	Now David was sitting between the two gates, and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a man running alone.
The Geneva Bible	And David sat between the two gates [He sat in the gate of the city of Mahanaim.]: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.
Syndein/Thieme	While David was sitting between the two gates/ 'inner and outer gates of the fortified city of Mahanaim' {double wall system - gates were defended by two walls with two guard rooms to give great security to the gate David was sitting up in the gate courtyard} and the watchman/'officer of the day' went up to the 'top of the tower on the wall/'observation tower', and stared intently and saw, behold . . . a man running alone.
World English Bible	Now David was sitting between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate to the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man running alone.
Young's Updated LT	And David is sitting between the two gates, and the watchman goes unto the roof of the gate, unto the wall, and lifts up his eyes, and looks, and lo, a man running by himself.

The gist of this verse: David is sitting between the inner and outer walls to the city, near the gate, and there is a sentry above who sees a man running by himself.

2Samuel 18:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

2Samuel 18:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yāshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^{EV}]	<i>are inhabiting, were staying, remaining, dwelling, sitting</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
bēyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced sh ^e n-Ā]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of; both of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
sha'ar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced SHAH-ġahr]	<i>gate [control of city can be implied]; area inside front gate; entrance</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044

Translation: *While David is sitting between the two gates,...* David knows the battle is going on. This time, his thoughts are with his men. If you recall, what got David to this place in his life originally is, his men would go out to battle, led by the very capable General Joab, and David would take this opportunity to chase skirt all over Jerusalem. So, he gave little thought to his men; and he gave a lot of thought to the women of Jerusalem, married or not.

David has no idea how the battle is going. If it is going poorly, he does not know if suddenly, Absalom and his army might appear on the horizon. But he is right there at the gate, waiting to hear a word, any word, about what has taken place. More than likely, there might even be a force within the city to respond, if necessary, to attack (however, that information is only implied in v. 3, which may refer to simple logistical support as well).

This indicates that the pressure which God has placed David under has made him a better man. He does not act like the scheming skirt-chasing leech here, but he is the king concerned about the welfare of his soldiers. His focus, hour after hour, is waiting at the gate, thinking about his men at war on his behalf.

When it says that David is sitting *between the two gates*, we may picture a gate on the left and the right, both opened up, and there is David, sitting in between them at the entrance; however, that is not what is going on. This is a double-walled city, so there is a gate through each wall, and David is sitting between these gates. David and the people realize at this city that, if the battle goes poorly, then Absalom would be leading his troops to where David is (assuming that he extracts this information from one of the soldiers). In other words, David is not out there on an easy chair catching some rays, but he, and a military contingent of this city are waiting, prepared to do battle to the death, if necessary. Again, this is assumed, but not found in the text.

Clarke: *Before the gate of the city it is supposed there was an enclosure, which had its gate also; David sat in the space between these two doors. Over the larger gate there appears to have been a turret, on which a sentinel or watchman stood continually, and gave information of what he saw in the country.*⁸⁷ Gill: *the gate to the outward wall, over which was a tower, and on that a flat roof; to which the watchman went to observe if he could see an express coming; no doubt by David's orders.*⁸⁸ Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *David sat...in the tower-house on the wall that overhung the gate of Mahanaim. Near it was a watchtower, on which a sentinel was posted, as in times of war, to notify*

⁸⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:24.

⁸⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:24.

every occurrence.⁸⁹ Keil and Delitzsch suggest⁹⁰ that it is a small court between the walls where David is sitting.

2Samuel 18:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
tsâphâh (הַפֶּצֵץ) [pronounced tsaw-FAW]	<i>the one keeping watch; the lookout, the spy, the watcher, the watchman</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6822 BDB #859
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
gâg (גג) [pronounced gawg]	<i>roof, top, housetop; top or surface [of the altar of incense]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1406 BDB #150
sha'ar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced SHAH-ğahr]	<i>gate [control of city can be implied]; area inside front gate; entrance</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
chôwmâh (חֹמַיִם) [pronounced khoh-MAW]	<i>a wall [around a city]; less often for simple a wall; metaphorically, a maiden, chaste and difficult to approach</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2346 BDB #327

Translation: ...the watchman went to the roof of the gate toward the [outer] wall. There is a man selected in this city to watch what is coming on the horizon. He probably has excellent vision and he may even be farsighted. He is suited for this job. David is not climbing up and down from the wall because his vision is not as strong. But this watchman is doing exactly what he should be doing; and he would relay this information to David immediately.

Again, just as with these two runners approaching, one is more suited for that job than the other, so this watchman and David—the watchman is suited for his job, and he will see the approach soldiers or messengers long before anyone else.

⁸⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 18:24.

⁹⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:24.

2Samuel 18:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i>]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
'êynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

I am uncertain whether this is a dual or a plural noun; this reads: וַיִּנְיַע. Owen simply lists this as a plural with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix.

Translation: [He lifts up his eyes...](#) The idea here is, the watchman looks out across the entire horizon. He probably walks around the city wall like this, carefully looking out to see any movement of any kind. No doubt, there are a team of men like this, each of which has, perhaps, a 12 hour shift.

In a team effort, every man needs to be placed in his particular job that is suited for him. David is an older man at this point, so he is not posted in a high place to look for movement off in the distance. A much younger man is there, a man who is possibly farsighted.

2Samuel 18:24d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243

When this is a part of the narrative, but not a part of what a person is saying, the intent of this word appears to be something which is observed by those in the narrative. Understood in this way, this might be reasonably translated *he sees*.

2Samuel 18:24d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾīysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced roots]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
lâmed (ל) [pronounced leʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בד) [pronounced bahd]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #905 BDB #94

Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בד) mean *in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart*.

Translation: ...and looks, and he sees [lit., behold] a man running alone. Off in the distance, this watchman spots a man running toward the city. Two men had set off from Joab to tell David; but only one can be seen at this point.

I should point out that, David has not organized a prayer vigil. They are not back in some quiet room praying at this point in time. Possibly they did a day or two previously, but now is a time for them to act (which meant, a sentry would be at the wall walking about and looking, while David was at the ready to make whatever decisions needed to be made).

And so calls out the watchman and so he makes known to the king and so says the king, "If to his separation, good news in his mouth." And so he comes coming.

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The watchman calls out and makes [this] known to the king. David [lit., the king] then said, "If he is alone, [then there is] good news in his mouth." And he continually comes drawing near [coming toward them].

The watchman calls out to David, telling him about the runner. David then says, "If he is alone, then he is bringing good news." And the watchman observed as the runner came closer and closer to the city.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And crying out he told the king: and the king said: If he be alone, there are good tidings in his mouth. And as he was coming apace, and drawing nearer,...
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so calls out the watchman and so he makes known to the king and so says the king, "If to his separation, good news in his mouth." And so he comes coming.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the watchman called out and told the king. And the king said, if he is alone, there are tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the watchman cried out, and reported to the king. And the king said, If he is alone, he has good news in his mouth. And the man came and drew near.

Significant differences: It is not clear in the Greek, Latin or Syriac that the final verb is repeated in the text; however, its general meaning is preserved in those translations.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The watchman called out and reported this to the king. The king said, "If he's alone, it's good news." The man got nearer and nearer, ²⁶ and the watchman saw another man running and called down to the gatekeeper, "There's another man running alone." V. 26 is included for context.
New Berkeley Version	The sentinel called out to inform the king and the king said, "If he is by himself, he must have news to tell!" He kept getting closer.
New Century Version	He shouted the news to the king. The king said, "If he is alone, he is bringing good news!"
New Living Translation	The man came nearer and nearer to the city. He shouted the news down to David, and the king replied, "If he is alone, he has news." As the messenger came closer, ²⁶ the watchman saw another man running toward them. A portion of v. 26 is included for context.
The Voice	He shouted to alert the king, and David responded. David: If he is alone, he comes with good news. As the messenger drew near, the guard saw a second man running. A portion of v. 26 is included for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, he yelled and reported it to the king. And the king asked, 'Is he is alone? Is he bringing good news?' Then, as he was approaching, the watchman saw another man running. A portion of v. 26 is included for context.
God's Word™	The watchman called and alerted the king. "If he's alone," the king said, "he has good news to tell." The runner continued to come closer.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	David was sitting between the two gates; and now the watchman that stood above the roof over the gate, high up on the wall, looked up and saw a man running, all alone, and cried out to let the king know of it. If he is alone, the king said, he has good news to tell. Then, as the runner came nearer, the watchman saw a second courier on his way, and cried out from the roof, I see a second man running all alone. All of v. 24 and a portion of v. 26 are included for context.
New American Bible (R.E.)	The lookout shouted to inform the king, who said, "If he is alone, he has good news to report." As he kept coming nearer, the lookout spied another runner. A portion of v. 26 was included for context.
Revised English Bible	...the watchman called to the king and told him. 'If he is alone,' said the king, 'then he is bringing news.' The man continued to approach, and then the watchman saw another man running. A portion of v. 26 is included for context.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The watchman called and told the king. The king said, "If he is alone, news is in his mouth." He went and neared.
Bible in Basic English	And the watchman gave news of it to the king. And the king said, If he is coming by himself, then he has news. And the man was travelling quickly, and came near.
The Expanded Bible	He shouted the news to the king. The king said, "If he is alone, he is bringing good news [has news to give/ in his mouth]!"

Ferar-Fenton Bible	The man came nearer and nearer to the city. The sentinel accordingly called and informed the King; and the King asked, "If alone is it towards the wall that he comes and approaches?"
HCSB	He called out and told the king. The king said, "If he's alone, he bears good news." As the first runner came closer,...
NET Bible®	So the watchman called out and informed the king. The king said, "If he is by himself, he brings good news [Heb "good news is in his mouth."]." The runner [Heb "he"; the referent (the runner) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] came ever closer.
NIV – UK	The watchman called out to the king and reported it. The king said, 'If he is alone, he must have good news.' And the runner came closer and closer.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The watchman cried out and told the king. The king said, "If he's alone, he has good news to tell."As he ran along and came close,...
exeGeses companion Bible	...and the watcher calls out and tells the sovereign. And the sovereign says, If he is alone, there is evangelism in his mouth: and in walking, he walks and approaches.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The watchman called down and told the king; and the king said, "If he is alone, he has news to report." As he was coming nearer, the watchman saw another man running,... A portion of v. 26 is included for context.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the tzofeh (watchman) cried, and told HaMelech. And HaMelech said, If he be alone, there is besorah (news) in his peh (mouth). And he came rapidly, and drew near.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the watchman calls, and declares to the king, and the king said, 'If by himself, tidings [are] in his mouth;' and he comes, coming on and drawing near.
English Standard Version	The watchman called out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And he drew nearer and nearer.
New King James Version	Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, <i>there is</i> news in his mouth." And he came rapidly and drew near.
New RSV	The sentinel shouted and told the king. The king said, 'If he is alone, there are tidings in his mouth.' He kept coming, and drew near.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 25-27: Report of Officer of the Day} Then the watchman/'officer of the day' called out and reported to the king {informing him of the runner coming}. And the king replied, "If he is alone, then there is good news in his mouth." {Note: David concluded that one man was good news. A number of men would probably be his army in retreat.}.
World English Bible	The watchman cried, and told the king. The king said, If he be alone, there is news in his mouth. He came apace, and drew near.
Young's Updated LT	And the watchman calls, and declares to the king, and the king says, "If by himself, tidings are in his mouth;" and he comes, coming on and drawing near.

The gist of this verse: The watchman sees a solitary man running toward them, and the king says that he has news to report.

2Samuel 18:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
tsâphâh (הַפֵּצ) [pronounced tsaw-FAW]	<i>the one keeping watch; the look-out, the spy, the watcher, the watchman</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6822 BDB #859

Translation: [The watchman calls out...](#) As soon as the watchman can make out clearly that there is a single man running toward the city, he calls out to David. At this point, this runner is far off.

2Samuel 18:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: [...and makes \[this\] known to the king.](#) The watchman gives all of the specifics to David. What information he can tell David, he passes along.

2Samuel 18:25c

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

2Samuel 18:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'îm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בַּד) [pronounced bahd]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #905 BDB #94
Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בַּד) mean <i>in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart.</i>			
b ^e sôwrâh (בְּרוּרָה) [pronounced b ^e s-oh-RAW]	<i>good news, glad tidings; implication: a reward for good news</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1309 BDB #142
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced peh]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6310 BDB #804

Translation: David [lit., *the king*] then said, “If he is alone, [then there is] good news in his mouth.” David is told that this man is alone (I would suppose), and David makes the observation that, if this man is alone, then he is bringing good news to him.

If there were a number of people running toward the city, that would mean that David's army is in retreat. If there is but one man, then Joab's army is not in retreat, but dealing with the situation on the ground.

2Samuel 18:25d

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

2Samuel 18:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
When a verb is doubled, this is the Hebrew mode of expressing intensity, repetition, or emphasis.			
The infinitive absolute has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form. ⁹¹			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qârêb (בָּרַק) [pronounced kaw-RAY ^B V]	<i>approaching, coming near, drawing near</i>	adjective	Strong's #7131 BDB #898

Translation: *And he continually comes drawing near [coming toward them].* We have the Qal infinitive absolute of a verb after that same verb. This suggests that it takes some time for the runner to get to them. The watchman continues to look out onto the horizon, to see if he can see anything else, and also watches this runner approach.

This verse reads: *The watchman calls out to David, telling him about the runner. David then says, "If he is alone, then he is bringing good news." And the watchman observed as the runner came closer and closer to the city. The watchman, with his excellent eyesight, tells David exactly what he sees. David, the brilliant military man that he is, interprets what the watchman sees. 3 men—David, the watchman and Ahimaaz—at this point, all have a part to play, each man exploiting the gifts given him by God. The watchman gives the complete story to David to be evaluated; Ahimaaz will not be this forthcoming. However, the Cushite, not yet seen, will give David a full intelligence report.*

And so sees the watchman a man another running and so calls out the watchman unto the gatekeeper [possibly, toward the gate]. And so he says "Behold, a man running by his separation." And so says the king, "Also this one bringing good news."

2Samuel
18:26

The watchman then saw another man running, and he called out to the gatekeeper [possibly, toward the gate], saying, "I see [lit., behold] [another] man running alone." And the king said, "This one is also bringing good news."

When the watchman observed another man running toward the city, he called out to the gate and told David of this second man. Then the king remarked, "This one is also bringing us good news."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁹¹ *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

Latin Vulgate	The watchman saw another man running, and crying aloud from above, he said: I see another man running alone. And the king said: He also is a good messenger.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sees the watchman a man another running and so calls out the watchman unto the gatekeeper. And so he says "Behold, a man running by his separation." And so says the king, "Also this one bringing good news."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the watchman <u>drew near toward the gate</u> , and said, Behold, another man is running alone;...
Septuagint (Greek)	And the watchman saw another man running. And the watchman cried at the gate, and said, Behold, another man is running alone. And the king said, He also brings good news.

Significant differences: The beginning of the Syriac is different from what is found in the other languages. The Hebrew appears to have two men on the walls besides David—the watchman and the gatekeeper; the Latin only has the watchman. The Syriac has the watchman approach the gate, which makes sense, as he comes around from the wall toward the front gate. In the Greek, the watchman calls from the gate. Keil and Delitzsch say⁹² that this is because the Hebrew is incorrectly pointed.

The Syriac lacks the final sentence of the other languages.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Meanwhile, David was sitting between the inner and outer gates in the city wall. One of his soldiers was watching from the roof of the gate-tower. He saw a man running toward the town and shouted down to tell David. David answered, "If he's alone, he must have some news." The runner was getting closer, when the soldier saw someone else running. He shouted down to the gate, "Look! There's another runner!" David said, "He must have some news too." Vv. 24–25 are included for context.
Easy English	Then the guard saw another man who was running. The guard called to the man who guarded the gate. The guard said, 'I can see another man who is running alone.'
<i>The Message</i>	The king said, 'He must be bringing good news too.'
New Berkeley Version	...the sentry saw another runner and called down to the gate, "Another runner all by himself." And the king said, "This also must be good news."
New Living Translation	But then the sentinel saw another runner coming and he called out to the gatekeeper, "Look, here too, comes a single runner!" "He also must be bringing news," the king said.
	As the messenger came closer, the watchman saw another man running toward them. He shouted down, "Here comes another one!"
	The king replied, "He also will have news." A portion of v. 25 is included for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then, as he was approaching, the watchman saw another man running. And he yelled out, 'Look, there's another man running by himself!' And the king said: 'Surely he's bringing good news!' A portion of v. 25 is included for context.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Then, as the runner came nearer, the watchman saw a second courier on his way, and cried out from the roof, I see a second man running all alone. He too, the king said, is a welcome messenger. A portion of v. 25 is included for context.

⁹² Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:25–26.

New American Bible (R.E.)	As he kept coming nearer, the lookout spied another runner. From his place atop the gate he cried out, "There is another man running by himself." And the king responded, "He, too, is bringing good news." A portion of v. 25 is included for context.
New Jerusalem Bible	As the man drew steadily nearer, the lookout man saw another man running, and the sentry above the gate shouted, 'Here comes another man, running alone!' David said, 'He too is a bearer of good news.'
Revised English Bible	The man continued to approach, and then the watchman saw another man running. He called down into the gate. 'Look, there is another man running alone.' The king said, 'He too brings news.' A portion of v. 25 is included for context.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The watchman saw another man running. The watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "Behold a man running alone!" The king said, "This also is news."
Bible in Basic English	Then the watchman saw another man running: and crying out in the direction of the door he said, Here is another man running by himself. And the king said, He, like the other, comes with news.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then the sentinel saw another man running, so he cried from the gate and said, "I see a man, running after!" When the king replied, "He also is a messenger of good news."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And the watcher sees another man running: and the watcher calls to the porter and says, Behold, a man running alone. And the sovereign says, He also evangelizes.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	As he was coming nearer, the watchman saw another man running; and he called out to the gatekeeper, "There is another man running alone." And the king said, "That one, too, brings news." A portion of v. 25 was included for context.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the tzofeh (watchman) saw another man running; and the tzofeh called unto the sho'er (gatekeeper), and said, Hinei, another man running alone. And HaMelech said, This is mevaser (one bringing good news, evangelist).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the watchman sees another man running, and the watchman calls unto the gatekeeper, and said, 'Lo, a man running by himself;' and the king said, 'Also this one is bearing tidings.
Context Group Version	And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called to the gatekeeper, and said, Look, [another] man running alone. And the king said, He also brings tidings.
Darby Translation	And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called to the porter and said, Behold a man running alone. And the king said, He also is a bearer of news.
New King James Version	Then the watchman saw <i>another</i> man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "There is <i>another</i> man, running alone!" And the king said, "He also brings news."
Syndein/Thieme	Then the watchman/'officer of the day' spotted another man running and the watchman/'officer of the day' called out unto the 'sentry of the gate', and said, "Behold another man running alone {spotting the African}." And the king commented, "He also brings good news."

World English Bible

The watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called to the porter, and said, Behold, *another* man running alone. The king said, He also brings news. And the watchman sees another man running, and the watchman calls unto the gatekeeper, and says, "Lo, a man running by himself;" and the king says, "Also this one is bearing tidings."

Young's Updated LT

The gist of this verse:

The watchman sees another man nearing the city, and tells the gatekeeper, and David says that this man also is bringing good news.

2Samuel 18:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
tsâphâh (צֹפֵה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-FAW</i>]	<i>the one keeping watch; the lookout, the spy, the watcher, the watchman</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6822 BDB #859
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7323 BDB #930

Translation: *The watchman then saw another man running,...* When anything unusual is seen along the horizon, the watchman is even more diligent in his duty. He did not see the first runner and then sat down for a coffee, because he had done his job. Now his job was even more important. He needs to see everything that is going on outside of the city.

At this point, the watchman sees another man running.

2Samuel 18:26b

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

2Samuel 18:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name</i> [when followed by a lâmed]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
tsâphâh (רִפָּצ) [pronounced tsaw-FAW]	<i>the one keeping watch; the lookout, the spy, the watcher, the watchman</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6822 BDB #859
'el (לָא) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
shô'êr (רַעֲשׂ) [pronounced shoh-ĠAIR]	<i>gatekeeper, doorkeeper, porter</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #7778 BDB #1045

Also spelled shôw'êr (רַעֲוֹשׁ) [pronounced shoh-ĠAIR].

Keil and Delitzsch say⁹³ that this word is improperly pointed in the Hebrew, and simply refers to the *gate*, which appears to be what we find in the Latin, Greek and Syriac. The words are apparently the same, but pointed differently (that is, the vowel points are different). Notice the alternate translation below.

Translation: ...and he called out to the gatekeeper [possibly, toward the gate],... There is a proper protocol that is followed in this city, although it is not mentioned before. The gatekeeper is another guard, and it is the watchman's duty to inform him first of anything which he sees on the horizon. So he calls out to him.

Just as likely, as this agrees with the other ancient translations, the watchman walks along the wall, sees another man, calls out toward the gate, where David is, and tells him of this additional man coming toward them. This does make more sense, as there is no differentiation given before between the watchman and the gatekeeper (in the alternate translation, there is no additional gatekeeper, but this refers to the gate). This is also the opinion of Keil and Delitzsch (see the Hebrew exegesis above).

2Samuel 18:26c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

⁹³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:25–26.

2Samuel 18:26c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
When this is a part of the narrative, but not a part of what a person is saying, the intent of this word appears to be something which is observed by those in the narrative. Understood in this way, this might be reasonably translated <i>I see, he sees</i> .			
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בד) [pronounced <i>bahd</i>]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #905 BDB #94

Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בד) mean *in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart*.

Translation: ...saying, "I see [lit., behold] [another] man running alone." The watcher does not have to say that this is *another man* because he is not going to announce seeing the same man twice. That is, he is not going to announce to David, "You know that guy I told you about 3 minutes ago? I still see him." So when he announces that there is a man running alone, David clearly understand this to be another man as distinguished from the first.

If there are two men, you may ask, *how are they running alone?* The idea is, they are not running together. There are two men approach the city, but running separate from one another.

2Samuel 18:26d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

2Samuel 18:26d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, as well; even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>bringing good news, bears news, announcing good news</i>	Piel participle	Strong's #1319 BDB #142

Translation: And the king said, “This one is also bringing good news.” David concludes again that this is good news that the man is bringing. At this time, if there was a retreat, there would be a number of men on the horizon. There would not be two separate men only.

We do not know what David thought about two men coming. He may have actually anticipated the situation that Joab faced, with two men wanting to deliver good news to David.

You will note that the watchman has seen two men, but he is unable to identify either man yet. That will come in the next verse.

And so says the watchman, “I am seeing a runner the foremost as running of Ahimaaz ben Zadok.” And so says the king, “A man good [is] this one; and to tidings good he comes.”

2Samuel
18:27

The watchman said, “I perceive [that] the first runner [is] like the running of Ahimaaz ben Zadok.” And the king said, “This one [is] a good man and he is coming with good news.”

The watchman then proclaimed, “I believe that the first runner looks like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok.” And the king remarked, “He is a good man and he is bringing us good news.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the watchman said: The running of the foremost seems to me like the running of Achimaas the son of Sadoc. And the king said: He is a good man: and comes with good news.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so says the watchman, “I am seeing a runner the foremost as running of Ahimaaz ben Zadok.” And so says the king, “A man good [is] this one; and to tidings good he comes.”

Peshitta (Syriac)

Moreover the watchman said, I see the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said. He is a good man and comes with good tidings.

Septuagint (Greek)

And the watchman said, I see the running of the first as the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and will come to report good news.

Significant differences:

No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Good News Bible (TEV)	The soldier on the roof shouted, "The first one runs just like Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." This time David said, "He's a good man. He must have some good news."
<i>The Message</i>	Then the sentry said, "I can see the first man now; he runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok." "He's a good man," said the king. "He's bringing good news for sure."
New Berkeley Version	The sentinel announced, "Now I can see the way the first man runs; it is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." "A good man, he," said the king. "He is coming with a good report."
New Century Version	The watchman said, "I think the first man runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok."
The Voice	The king said, "Ahimaaz is a good man. He must be bringing good news!" Guard (to the gatekeeper): Another man is running by himself. David: Then he also has good news. Guard: ²⁷ From the way he runs, I'd say the first one is Ahimaaz, Zadok's son. David: He is a good man, and he comes bearing good news. A portion of v. 26 is included for context.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the watchman said: 'I see that the man running ahead is AhiMaAz, the son of ZaDok; so, he must be coming with good news.'
Beck's American Translation	"I can see the first one is running like Ahimaaz, Zadok's son," the watchman said. "He's a good man," the king said, "and he really comes with good news."
Christian Community Bible	The watch man said, "The first man runs like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok." The king replied, "He is a good man, so he comes with good news."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And the watchman told him, I have marked how the first messenger runs; he runs like Achimaas, son of Sadoc. A good man, the king said; his will be good news.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then the lookout said, "I notice that the first one runs like Ahimaaz, son of Zadok." The king replied, "He is a good man; he comes with good news." 2 Kgs 9:20.
NIRV	The man on guard duty said, "I can see that the first one runs like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok." "He's a good man," the king said. "He's bringing good news."
New Jerusalem Bible	The sentry said, 'I recognise the way the first man runs; Ahimaaz son of Zadok runs like that.' 'He is a good man', said the king, 'and comes with good news.'
New Simplified Bible	The watchman said: »It appears the first one runs like Ahimaaz, Zadok's son. He's a good man,« the king said. »He must be coming with good news.«
Revised English Bible	The watchman said, 'I see by the way he runs that the first runner is Ahimaaz son of Zadok.' The king said, 'He is a good man and shall earn the reward for good news.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the watchman said, It seems to me that the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and his news will be good.
The Expanded Bible	The watchman said, "I think the first man runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok." The king said, "Ahimaaz is a good man. He must be bringing good news!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then the sentinel said, "I recognize the running of the first runner, as the running of Akhimatz-ben-Zadok!" And the King answered, "He is a good man; and he will bring good news!"
HCSB	The watchman said, "The way the first man runs looks to me like the way Ahimaaz son of Zadok runs." "This is a good man; he comes with good news," the king commented.

NET Bible®	The watchman said, "It appears to me that the first runner is Ahimaaz [Heb "I am seeing the running of the first one like the running of Ahimaaz."] son of Zadok." The king said, "He is a good man, and he comes with good news."
NIV, ©2011	The watchman said, "It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok." "He's a good man," the king said. "He comes with good news."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	And the watcher says, I see the racing of the first as the racing of Achiy Maas the son of Sadoq. And the sovereign says, He is a good man and comes with good evangelism.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The watchman said, "I can see that the first one runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok"; to which the king replied, "He is a good man, and he comes with good news."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the tzofeh (watchman) said, I see the running of the foremost is like the running of Achima'atz Ben Tzadok. And HaMelech said, He is an ish tov, and cometh with besorah tovah (good news) [see 2Sm 18:10].
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the watchman said, "I see the running of the first is like the running of Aḥima'ats son of Tsadoq." And the sovereign said, "This is a good man, and he comes with good news."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The watchman said, I think the man in front runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok. The king said, He is a good man and comes with good tidings.
Context Group Version	And the watchman said, I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and comes with joyful news.
The updated Geneva Bible	And the watchman said, Me thinks the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He [is] a good man [He had experienced his fidelity, (2 Samuel 17:21).], and comes with good tidings.
Green's Literal Translation	And the watchman said, I see the running of the first as the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, This is a good man and he comes with good news.
Syndein/Thieme	Then the watchman/'officer of the day' commented, "In my opinion, the running style of the first {messenger} is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." {idiom: literally 'I am the one seeing' - meaning 'in my opinion'} And the king replied, "That one is an honorable man {David has known Ahimaaz for a long time and has great respect for him} and he will come with the better good news." {Note: David knows Ahimaaz is filled with divine viewpoint from doctrine in his soul. David knows that Ahimaaz can handle any situation better than most. David knows that Ahimaaz has the honor of an aristocrat.}
World English Bible	The watchman said, I think the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. The king said, He is a good man, and comes with good news.
Young's Updated LT	And the watchman says, "I see the running of the first as the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok." And the king says, "This is a good man, and with good tidings he comes."

The gist of this verse: The watchman recognizes the first runner as being Ahimaaz, and David comments that his news will be good.

2Samuel 18:27a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
tsâphâh (צפח) [pronounced <i>tsaw-FAW</i>]	<i>the one keeping watch; the lookout, the spy, the watcher, the watchman</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6822 BDB #859
'ânîy (אני) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
râ'âh (ראה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>seeing; observing; understanding; a seer, perceiver</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'êth (אח) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
m ^e rûwtsâh (מרוצח) [pronounced <i>mer-oo-TSAW</i>]	<i>running, course of life; runner</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4794 BDB #930
rî'shôwn (רשון) [pronounced <i>ree-SHOWN</i>]	<i>first [in time, in degree, chief, former [in time], ancestors, former things; foremost; beginning; as an adverb: formerly, at first, first</i>	masculine singular adjective; also used as an adverb; with the definite article	Strong's #7223 BDB #911
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
m ^e rûwtsâh (מרוצח) [pronounced <i>mer-oo-TSAW</i>]	<i>running, course of life; runner</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4794 BDB #930
'Ăchîyma'ats (אחימאז) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ġahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צדק or צדק) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843

Translation: The watchman said, “I perceive [that] the first runner [is] like the running of Ahimaaz ben Zadok.” The watchman looks out into the horizon carefully examining what is going on, to see what happens besides there being two runners. He can now discern that the first runner appears to be the son of Zadok, Ahimaaz.

This gives us an idea how this city was set up, so that men off in the distance could be seen a long ways off, long before their features are discernable. The watchman was smart enough to actually recognize the running style of those who approached.

This suggests two things: somehow, the watchman on this tower knows the running style of Ahimaaz. Therefore, he has to have seen Ahimaaz run before. This would suggest that one of David’s men is on the wall rather than a soldier from Mahanaim. In the alternative, Ahimaaz may have brought messages to Mahanaim before, but the first suggestion makes the most sense.

2Samuel 18:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
’âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #4428 BDB #572
’îysh (איש) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong’s #376 BDB #35
’ôwb (טוב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong’s #2896 BDB #373
zeh (זה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong’s #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: And the king said, “This one [is] a good man... David set up the two sons of the two priests as his couriers for top secret information, and he believes strongly in this man. It was Ahimaaz and the other son of the other priest that came to David and warned him that he needed to cross over the Jordan River immediately. These were the correct recommendations.

He therefore remarks that Ahimaaz is a good man. The king has a high approval of Ahimaaz and Ahimaaz greatly respects the king.

2Samuel 18:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
b ^e sôwrâh (בְּרוּשָׁה) [pronounced <i>b^es-oh-RAW</i>]	<i>good news, glad tidings; implication: a reward for good news</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1309 BDB #142
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced <i>tohb^v</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	feminine singular adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
bôw' (בָּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

Translation: ...and he is coming with good news.” David reiterates that Ahimaaz is bringing good news to them. This is exactly the man that David would expect to come to him with news.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Two Reports

And so calls out Ahimaaz and so he says unto the king, “Peace.” And so he prostrates himself to the king to his nose earth-ward. And so he says, “Blessed is Y^ehowah your Elohim Who delivered the men who raised up their hand against my adonai the king.”

2Samuel
18:28

Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, “[We have secured the] peace.” Then he prostrated himself before the king, his face [lit., nose] toward the ground, and he said, “Praise to Y^ehowah your Elohim Who delivered over the men who raised up their hands against my adonai the king.”

As Ahimaaz came closer, he called out to the king, saying, “We have secured the peace.” Then he prostrated himself before the king, his face toward the ground. He said, “Praise to Jehovah your God, Who delivered over those men who rebelled against my lord the king.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And Achimaas crying out, said to the king: God save you, O king. And falling down before the king with his face to the ground, he said: Blessed be the Lord your God, who has shut up the men that have lifted up their hands against the lord my king.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so calls out Ahimaaz and so he says unto the king, “Peace.” And so he prostrates himself to the king to his nose earth-ward. And so he says, “Blessed is

Y^ehowah your Elohim Who delivered the men who raised up their hand against my adonai the king.”

Peshitta (Syriac) And the king called to Ahimaaz, and said to him, Have you come in peace? And he bowed before the king with his face to the earth, and said, Blessed be the LORD your God, who delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king. And Ahimaaz cried out and said to the king, Peace. And he bowed down to the king with his face to the ground, and said, Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delivered up the men that lifted up their hands against my lord the king.

Septuagint (Greek) And Ahimaaz cried out and said to the king, Peace. And he bowed down to the king with his face to the ground, and said, Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delivered up the men that lifted up their hands against my lord the king.

Significant differences: What the Latin has Ahimaaz saying is not *peace*. In the Syriac, it is the king speaking rather than Ahimaaz speaking. After bowing, what Ahimaaz says in the Latin has a different verb than what is found in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Ahimaaz called out, "We won! We won!" Then he bowed low to David and said, "Your Majesty, praise the LORD your God! He has given you victory over your enemies."

Easy English Ahimaaz called out to the king, 'I have good news.' He bent down in front of the king so that his face touched the ground. He said to the king, 'Praise the *Lord your God. He defeated those men who opposed my master the king.'

Easy-to-Read Version Ahimaaz called to the king, "All is fine!" Ahimaaz bowed with his face to the ground in front of the king. Ahimaaz said, "Praise the Lord your God! The Lord has defeated the men who were against you, my lord and king."

Good News Bible (TEV) Ahimaaz called out a greeting to the king, threw himself down to the ground before him, and said, "Praise the LORD your God, who has given you victory over the men who rebelled against Your Majesty!"

New Living Translation Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "Everything is all right!" He bowed before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Praise to the Lord your God, who has handed over the rebels who dared to stand against my lord the king."

The Voice And as Ahimaaz approached, he shouted to the king.
Ahimaaz: All is well!
 He dropped to honor the king, his face to the ground.
Ahimaaz: Praise the Eternal One, your True God, who has given us victory over those who raised their hands against you, my lord and king.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Then AhiMaAz yelled to the king: 'Peace!' as he bowed to the ground before the king. And he said: 'Praise your God Jehovah, for he has closed the mouths of those who have raised their hands against my lord the king.'

Christian Community Bible Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "All is well." Bowing before the king with his face to the ground, he said, "Blessed be Yahweh your God who has delivered up the men who rebelled against my lord the king!"

New Advent (Knox) Bible And now Achimaas cried out, Hail, my lord king! Then he bowed down with his face to the earth, to do the king reverence, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God; he has not suffered them to escape, the men who took up arms against the king's grace.

New American Bible (R.E.) Then Ahimaaz called out and greeted the king. With face to the ground he paid homage to the king and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who rebelled against my lord the king."

NIRV Then Ahimaaz called out to the king, "Everything's all right!" He bowed down in front of the king with his face toward the ground. He said, "You are my king and master.

Give praise to the Lord your God! He has handed over to you the men who lifted their hands to kill you."

New Jerusalem Bible Ahimaaz went up to the king. 'All hail!' he said, prostrating himself on the ground before the king. 'Blessed be Yahweh your God', he said, 'who has handed over the men who rebelled against my lord the king!'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Ahimaaz called and said to the king, "Peace!" He bowed with his nose to the ground and said to the king, "Bless Yahweh your God for enclosing the men that lifted their hand to my lord the king."

Bible in Basic English And Ahimaaz, crying out to the king, said, It is well. And falling down before the king, with his face to the earth, he said, May the Lord your God be praised, who has given up the men who took up arms against my lord the king!

The Expanded Bible Then Ahimaaz called a greeting to the king. He bowed facedown on the ground [prostrated himself] before the king and said, "Praise [Blessed be] the Lord your God! The Lord has defeated [handed over] those who were [raised their hand] against you, my [my lord the] king."

Ferar-Fenton Bible Then Akhimatz called out and said to the King, "Peace!" and bowed down to the King with his face to the earth, and said, "Thank your EVER-LIVING GOD, who has delivered the men who rose against you into the hand of your Majesty the King!"

NET Bible® Then Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "Greetings [Heb "Peace."]!" He bowed down before the king with his face toward the ground and said, "May the Lord your God be praised because he has defeated [Heb "delivered over.~] the men who opposed [Heb "lifted their hand against.~] my lord the king!"

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Achima'atz called to the king, "Shalom," prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Blessed be ADONAI your God, who has handed over the men who rebelled against my lord the king."

exeGesés companion Bible And Achiy Maas calls to the sovereign and says, Shalom.

And he prostrates to the earth on his nostrils at the face of the sovereign and says, Blessed - Yah Veh your Elohim who shut up the men who lifted their hand against my adoni the sovereign.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Achima'atz called, and said unto HaMelech, Shalom. And he fell down to ha'arets upon his face before HaMelech, and said, Baruch Hashem Eloheicha, which hath delivered up the anashim that lifted up their yad against adoni HaMelech.

The Scriptures 1998 And Ahima'ats called out and said to the sovereign, "Peace!" Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the sovereign, and said, "Blessed be הוהי your Elohim, who has surrendered the men who raised their hand against my master the sovereign!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version And Ahimaaz calls and said unto the king, 'Peace;' and he bows himself to the king, on his face, to the earth, and said, 'Blessed [is] Yahweh your Elohim who has shut up the men who lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

Context Group Version And Ahimaaz called, and said to the king, All is well. And he bowed himself before the king with his face to the land { or earth }, and said, Esteemed be YHWH your

God, who has delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

English Standard Version

Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "All is well." And he bowed before the king with his face to the earth and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king."

Syndein/Thieme

{Verses 28-30: Report of Ahimaaz to David}
 And Ahimaaz hailed/called out to the king and said, "Hail/Victory {shalom}." {Note: Shalom is a Jewish greeting. It means 'hello' or prosperity. It also can be used for military victory which certainly is in view here. And, it is used for 'peace' since all peace comes from military victory (but that is not the use of the word here). So, Ahimaaz is probably hailing the king here with the battle news all in one word.}
 {Ahimaaz Now Meets the King on the Steps as Ahimaaz Catches His Wind}
 And he kneeled fell down with his face toward the ground before the king, and said, "Praise belongs to Jehovah/God . . . your 'Elohim/Godhead, Who has shut down the men 'who revolted'/that lifted up their hand' against my Lord the king." {Note: Ahimaaz gave David the good news of victory and let that sink in before David would learn of the death of Absalom. This is very courteous and respectful of this man of doctrine/'divine viewpoint'.}

World English Bible

Ahimaaz called, and said to the king, All is well. He bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth, and said, Blessed be Yahweh your God, who has delivered up the men who lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

Young's Updated LT

And Ahimaaz calls and says unto the king, "Peace;" and he bows himself to the king, on his face, to the earth, and says, "Blessed is Jehovah your God who has shut up the men who lifted up their hand against my lord the king."

The gist of this verse:

Ahimaaz brings the good news to King David that his enemies were defeated. He says nothing about Absalom.

2Samuel 18:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
ʾĀchîymaʿats (אָחִימָאֵץ) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ghatz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27

Translation: Ahimaaz called out... Ahimaaz, not fully knowing the mind of the king, is excited to convey the victory that Joab has enjoyed. As he comes up, he calls out. As soon as his voice can be heard, he calls out loudly.

2Samuel 18:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
shâlôwm (שלווה) or shâlôm (שלום) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: ...and said to the king, “[We have secured the] peace.” Since Ahimaaz is shouting out, he calls out one word, which is shâlôwm (שלווה) or shâlôm (שלום) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*], often used today as a greeting between those who know a little of the Jewish language. This word means *completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated*. In this context, it means that Joab in war has secured the peace. Strong's #7965 BDB #1022. Although liberals have a very difficult time understanding this, peace is achieved through warfare. David's army has just been at war with Absalom's army, and, as a result, there is peace in the land.

Now, if every nation were like the United States, then it would be very likely that there would be few wars going on in the world. There is all kinds of propaganda against the United States, both within and without. We have been accused of being an imperialistic nation by people who do not have even the slightest clue as to what an imperialistic nation is or whether it is good or bad. Some people think that because McDonald's sets up shop in a foreign country, that is imperialism. Such idiocy! Of course, there are those who falsely accuse the United States of being imperialistic with the intention of misleading young minds. These same accusers, when given the chance, will actually act imperialistically toward other nations—not in some fake way, but in reality.

2Samuel 18:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שחך) [pronounced <i>shaw-KHAW</i>]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005

2Samuel 18:28c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾaph (אָפ) [pronounced <i>ahf</i>]	<i>nose, nostril, but is also translated face, brow, anger, wrath</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #639 BDB #60
Together, these probably mean <i>before the face of</i> ; however, I do not have any citations for this.			
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earthward (all or a portion thereof), on [toward, upon] the earth; on [upon, toward] the land [territory, country, continent; ground, soil]</i>	feminine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: Then he prostrated himself before the king, his face [lit., nose] toward the ground,... So far, Ahimaaz has shouted out just one word. When he comes before David, who is sitting by the gate, Ahimaaz prostrates himself before David, showing respect for his office of king. He does this before speaking another word.

Recall, Ahimaaz was not said to have prostrated himself before Joab, but he does before David. On the other hand, it will be just the opposite with the Cushite.

2Samuel 18:28d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>]	<i>blessed, blessed be [is], blessings to; happiness to [for], happiness [is]; praised is, celebrated is</i>	Qal passive participle	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

2Samuel 18:28d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...and he said, “Praise to Y^ehowah your Elohim... The first thing that Ahimaaz, son of a priest, says is, “Blessed is Y^ehowah your Elohim.” The verb bound here is the Qal passive participle *bârak*^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK^e*], which means, *blessed, blessed be [is], blessings to; happiness to [for], happiness [is]; praised is, celebrated is*. Strong's #1288 BDB #138 That is the flip side of the meaning of this word. When directed toward God, then we do not bless God, but we praise, celebrate and glorify Him.

2Samuel 18:28e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿçâgar (אָגַר) [pronounced <i>saw-GAHR</i>]	<i>to deliver over</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #5462 BDB #688

Some may point out that this word means *to shut up, to imprison*; therefore, you may wonder, how do we get *to deliver over from this*? The idea is first, in the Qal, *to shut up, to close up, to imprison*. However, it is also a reference to *delivering someone over to be imprisoned*; finally, it has the extended meaning (in the Piel) *to deliver over*. This word is found in the Piel only 4 times, all in the book of Samuel, and in each case, it means simply *to deliver over, to deliver up*.

ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾănâshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>uh-NAW-sheem</i>]; also spelled ʾîyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>ee-SHEEM</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural nounwda	Strong's #376 BDB #35

Translation: ...Who delivered over the men... Ahimaaz calls for God to be praised and celebrated because He delivered over the men who had rebelled against David. He is careful not to include Absalom's name in any of this. Ahimaaz does not say, “Blessed be our God, Who has deliver Absalom and his army over into the hand of Joab.” Ahimaaz, if given the chance, would not even utter Absalom's name before David, given what has happened.

2Samuel 18:28f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced naw-SAW]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axle-trees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
bê (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced uh-doh-NEE].			
This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יִם) [pronounced eem], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1 st person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i>).			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...who raised up their hands against my adonai the king.” This is the way rebellion is described. Again, Ahimaaz continues with what God has done on behalf of David, but without saying a word about Absalom.

You will note that Ahimaaz did not tell David about the thing that David was most interested in. David fully understands that Joab was at war with Absalom. David wants to know what happened to his son Absalom. My guess is that, Ahimaaz just could not do it. He was unable to give David to complete truth about his son being killed in this war.

And so says the king, "Peace to the young man, to Absalom?" And so says Ahimaaz, "I saw the tumult the great in a sending of a servant of the king Joab and your servant and I did not know what."

2Samuel
18:29

The king said, "[Is there] peace to the young man? To Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "I saw a great tumult when [Joab] the servant of the king was sent out along with your servant, but I did not know what [happened to Absalom]."

The king asked if his son Absalom survived the battle. Ahimaaz hemmed and hawed, answering, "When we went out into the battle—Joab and his army (myself included)—all I could see is a great tumult; I have no idea what happened to Absalom."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said: Is the young man Absalom safe? And Achimaas said: I saw a great tumult, <u>O king</u> , when thy servant Joab sent me thy servant: I know nothing else.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king, "Peace to the young man, to Absalom?" And so says Ahimaaz, "I saw the tumult the great in a sending of a servant of the king Joab and your servant and I did not know what."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, I saw a great army arrayed against Joab the servant of my lord the king, but I your servant knew not what was the outcome.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz said, I saw a great multitude at the time of Joab's sending the king's servant and your servant, and I knew not what was there.
Significant differences:	The Latin appears to have Ahimaaz address David as <i>O king</i> , but this is not found in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king said, "Is my boy Absalom okay?" Ahimaaz said, "I saw a large crowd right when Joab, the king's servant, sent your servant off, but I don't know what it was about."
Contemporary English V.	"Is my son Absalom all right?" David asked. Ahimaaz said, "When Joab sent your personal servant and me, I saw a noisy crowd. But I don't know what it was all about."
Easy English	The king said, 'Is the young man Absalom safe?' Ahimaaz answered, 'Everything was confused when Joab sent me, your servant. I did not know what was happening.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Is the young man Absalom all right?" the king asked. Ahimaaz answered, "Sir, when your officer Joab sent me, I saw a great commotion, but I couldn't tell what it was."
<i>The Message</i>	The king asked, "But is the young man Absalom all right?" Ahimaaz said, "I saw a huge ruckus just as Joab was sending me off, but I don't know what it was about."

New Berkeley Version	David queried, "But is there safety for the young man, for Absalom?" To this Ahimaaz replied, "When Joab, the king's servant, dispatched me, your servant, I saw a great tumult but I did not know what it was about [Not an acceptable messenger]."
New Century Version	The king asked, "Is young Absalom all right?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent me, I saw some great excitement, but I don't know what it was."
New Life Bible	The king said, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, your servant, I heard noise and saw much fighting. But I did not know what it was."
The Voice	David: But how is my son Absalom? Ahimaaz: When Joab sent me, your servant, there was still an uproar; but I don't know what was happening.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king asked: 'Do we now have peace with the young man AbSalom?' And AhiMaAz said: 'I saw a large happy crowd standing around the king's servant JoAb, so I came here. But I'm not sure exactly what happened there.'
Christian Community Bible	The king asked him, "How is the young Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent your servant, I saw a great tumult but did not know what it was all about."
God's Word™	"Is the young man Absalom alright?" the king asked. Ahimaaz answered, "I saw a lot of confusion when Joab sent me away, but I didn't know what it meant."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Is all well, the king asked, with my son Absalom? And Achimaas answered, There was a great stir round about Joab when he sent me, thy servant, on my errand; I can tell thee no more.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But the king asked, "Is young Absalom safe?" And Ahimaaz replied, "I saw a great disturbance when the king's servant Joab sent your servant on, but I do not know what it was."
NIRV	The king asked, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz answered, "I saw total disorder. I saw it just as Joab was about to send the king's servant and me to you. But I don't know what it was all about."
New Jerusalem Bible	'Is all well with young Absalom?' the king asked. Ahimaaz replied, 'I saw a great commotion when Joab, the king's servant, sent your servant off, but I do not know what it was.'
Revised English Bible	The king asked, "Is all well with the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, 'Sir, when your servant Joab sent me, I saw a great commotion, but I did not know what had happened.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said, "Peace for the lad Absalom?" Ahimaaz said, "Joab sent the king's servant, and me, your servant. I saw a great multitude, but never knew why."
Bible in Basic English	And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Ahimaaz said in answer, When Joab sent me, your servant, I saw a great outcry going on, but I had no knowledge of what it was.
The Expanded Bible	The king asked, "Is young Absalom ·all right [well]?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent me, I saw some great ·excitement [commotion; confusion], but I don't know what it was."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	When the King asked, "Is the lad Absalom safe?" And Akhimatz replied, "I saw a great crowd about the King's general J'oab, and your officers, but I knew not why!"
HCSB	The king asked, "Is the young man Absalom all right?" Ahimaaz replied, "When Joab sent the king's servant and your servant, I saw a big disturbance, but I don't know what it was."

NET Bible®	The king replied, "How is the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz replied, "I saw a great deal of confusion when Joab was sending the king's servant and me, your servant, but I don't know what it was all about."
NIV, ©2011	The king asked, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz answered, "I saw great confusion just as Joab was about to send the king's servant and me, your servant, but I don't know what it was."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The king asked, "Is everything all right with young Avshalom?" Achima'atz answered, "When Yo'av sent the king's servant and me your servant, I saw a big commotion; but I didn't know what it was."
exeGeses companion Bible	And the sovereign says, Is the lad Abi Shalom at shalom? And Achiy Maas says, When Yah Ab sent the servant of the sovereign and your servant, I saw a great multitude, but I knew not what it is.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The king asked, "Is my boy Absalom safe?" And Ahimaaz answered, "I saw a large crowd when Your Majesty's servant Joab was sending your servant off [Meaning of the Hebrew of this phrase uncertain], but I don't know what it was all about."
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And HaMelech said, Is the na'ar Avshalom shalom? And Achima'atz answered, When Yoav sent eved HaMelech, avdecha, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the sovereign said, "Peace to the young man, to Abshalom?" And Ahima'atz answered, "When Yo'ab? sent the sovereign's servant and me your servant, I saw a great crowd, but I did not know why."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the king said, 'Peace to the youth--to Absalom?' And Ahimaaz said, 'I saw the great multitude, at the sending away of the servant of the king, even your servant [by] Joab, and I have not known what [it is].'
English Standard Version	And the king said, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, your servant, I saw a great commotion, but I do not know what it was."
The Geneva Bible	And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant [That is, Cushy, who was an Ethiopian.], and [me] thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what [it was].
Green's Literal Translation	And the king said, Peace to the young man, to Absalom? And Ahimaaz said, I saw the great tumult, at the sending away of the servant of the king, even your servant sent by Joab, but I do not know what..
New RSV	The king said, 'Is it well with the young man Absalom?' Ahimaaz answered, 'When Joab sent your servant [Heb the king's servant, your servant], I saw a great tumult, but I do not know what it was.'
Syndein/Thieme	Then the king inquired, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" And Ahimaaz replied, "I saw a great confusion when Joab sent the king's servant {the African}, and me, your servant, but I knew not what was happening." {Note: From this and the next verses, apparently Joab told the African and Ahimaaz NOT to mention 'Absalom'. So Ahimaaz respects the command of Joab AND its intent. The African will only technically respect the command and probably try to obtain reward from David for being the first to tell him of Absalom's death.}.

Updated Bible Version 2.11	And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's slave and your slave, I saw a great tumult, but I didn't know what it was.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and [me] thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what [it was].
World English Bible	The king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, even me your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I don't know what it was.
Young's Updated LT	And the king says, "Peace to the youth—to Absalom?" And Ahimaaz says, "I saw the great multitude, at the sending away of the servant of the king, even your servant by Joab, and I have not known what it is."

The gist of this verse: The king asks about his son Absalom. Ahimaaz says that he did not know what was going on.

2Samuel 18:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
shâlôwm (שׁוֹלֵם) or shâlôm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced <i>NAH-gahr</i>]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular construct with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ābîyshâlôwm (אָבוֹשׁוֹלֵם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: The king said, “[Is there] peace to the young man? To Absalom?” We now have two men here, both of whom cannot deal with reality. David cannot deal with the reality that his son, Absalom, would have killed David in a heartbeat. Absalom had no compassion and no natural affection for his own father; only a desire for power. Yet, David could not help himself. In this chapter, we have observed that David has grown spiritually, but he is

still weak in this area. He has a lousy son and David should face that problem head on; but he refused to, and that is why he is in the midst of a civil war.

As has been discussed in previous chapters, David needed to treat Absalom in justice. Absalom needed from the very beginning to be brought into court and to face a rendering of a sentence for his deeds. David had been an indulgent and absentee father for Absalom for very early on. When Absalom needed guidance and justice, David was not there to provide it. He was like the absentee father of a welfare family today. The state paid for the children to be brought up, but there is no father in the home. Because David never applied justice to Absalom, Absalom's actions became more and more criminal to the point where he turned against his own father in a revolution.

Unfortunately, David is far more concerned about the welfare of his wayward son than he is about the army which supported and defended David's kingship.

2Samuel 18:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăchîyma'ats (אחימאצ) [pronounced uh-khee-MAH-gahtz]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
râ'âh (ראה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
hâmôwn (המון) [pronounced haw-MOHN]	<i>multitude, crowd, throng; murmur, roar, abundance, tumult, sound, murmur, rush; confusion; great number; abundance, wealth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1995 BDB #242
gâdôwl (גדול) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152
lâmed (ל) [pronounced L']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlach (שלח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018

2Samuel 18:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ⁹⁴ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall or must</i> . ⁹⁵			
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
‘ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Yôw’âb (יֹאבָב) [pronounced <i>YOH-aw^bv</i>]	<i>Yah is father</i> and is transliterated <i>Joab</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3097 BDB #222
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
‘ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: Ahimaaz answered, “I saw a great tumult when [Joab] the servant of the king was sent out along with your servant,... Ahimaaz was excited about the victory and wanted to be the man to tell David directly; but he cannot deal with this part of the news. What happened to Absalom? Absalom got caught in a tree and he was hacked to death by several soldiers, and then thrown into a hole. But Ahimaaz, knowing all of this, does not have the guts to tell David.

So he tells David that he saw the war occurring—and Joab was sent out there and he was sent out there. However, he has nothing to tell David here. He knows the truth, but he cannot say it. Joab was right to suggest that someone else go to speak to David.

This story is a bit off. This is because the great tumult would likely be the fighting that is going on. However, if he is reporting that David’s army has won, then what would the great tumult be? How could there be something so tumultuous around one single man, Absalom? At best, this indicates that there are a lot of people—a multitude—who are around Absalom. At worst, this means that Ahimaaz knew exactly what happened, but he was simply unwilling to tell David, knowing how hard David would take this news.

⁹⁴ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

⁹⁵ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

2Samuel 18:29c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô ³ (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâda ⁴ (יָדָע) [pronounced yaw-DAHG]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn; to recognize [admit, acknowledge, confess]</i>	1 st person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why; what [thing]; anything, something, whatever</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle; indefinite pronoun; relative pronoun	Strong's #4100 BDB #552

Translation: ...but I did not know what [happened to Absalom].” Ahimaaz, after dancing around this question, says, “I just don’t know.” But he does.

This is a problem. Bringing information to the king is extremely important. The king has to have accurate information upon which to act, whether good or bad. Ahimaaz was all jazzed up about bringing the good news to David, but he could not answer honestly when asked about David’s son, Absalom. The other courier will be bluntly honest when asked this same question.

Keil and Delitzsch: *In answer to the king's inquiry, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” Ahimaaz replied, “I saw the great tumult (that arose) when Joab sent off the king's servant, and thy servant, and know not what” (sc., had occurred). Ahimaaz spoke as if he had been sent off before Absalom's fate had been decided or could be known.*⁹⁶

There is one theory proposed that Ahimaaz does not know what happened to Absalom. That is also what he tells David here.

Is Ahimaaz Lying to David?

1. I don’t really know Ahimaaz, but I would like to give him the benefit of the doubt, based upon what I have studied about him in the Bible.
2. At least one commentator, Clarke, says of this information: *At this time the death of Absalom was not publicly known; but Joab had given Cushy private information of it. This Ahimaaz had not, for he could not tell the king whether Absalom were dead.*¹ In v. 21, Absalom does not tell the Cushite to tell David was he told him; Absalom said, “Go tell the king what you have seen.” Given that Joab first put 3 spears into Absalom and then his armor bearers finished the job, the Cushite has probably seen Absalom’s dead body.
3. Having the enemy on the run does not mean victory; that means that victory is near. Joab had the enemy on the run, and for a time was pursuing him; but that would not signal the end of a war. Great armies

⁹⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 18:29.

Is Ahimaaz Lying to David?

- sometimes must fall back, treat their wounded, become refreshed and then come back again.
4. Ahimaaz, if he did not see Absalom slain, has to know that winning a single battle, even decisively, does not end the war. He has nothing to report beyond winning a battle if he did not see Absalom dead.
 5. David's last order to his 3 generals was to preserve the life of Absalom. An enlisted man knew this and would not harm Absalom when he had the chance. So Ahimaaz knew this order, and one would expect he knew a great deal about David and Absalom. Remember, he was a trusted courier for David in this revolutionary war. So Ahimaaz knew that David would want to know about Absalom.
 6. We already know that Ahimaaz is smart enough to be a courier and smart enough to be a runner-messenger, so the details of this war did not escape him.
 7. There is a simple fact: the revolution lives or dies with Absalom. If Ahimaaz is going to report victory to David, how can he go there without knowing the disposition of Absalom?
 8. There is a reasonable possibility that Absalom's death was even known to some of his own. His supporters ran back every man to his own home. Although it is possible that every single man ran back home for his life, but is that likely? Wouldn't some of Absalom's most dedicated men possibly stop, regroup, gather and discuss? It is certainly possible that some did, and there were not enough there to oppose David, so they continued to retreat. But it is also possible that some gathered and sent back scouts to determine what happened. None of this is stated in Scripture. My only point is, a full and complete retreat of Absalom's army makes sense if Absalom is dead; an incomplete retreat with many deserters is likely based upon being beaten on the battlefield. But, at some point, there was a complete and total withdrawal. Absalom's disposition had to be an issue, because this is the man that they followed.
 9. My point in all of that is, Ahimaaz had to recognize the importance of the fate of Absalom. He knows that is important to the war, to the revolution, and to David. So why would he merely carry news of a very successful battle and yet not know or inquire after Absalom?
 10. Furthermore, Ahimaaz said he saw something, but he did not know what it was. Why would he have let it go at that? If this was the truth, why would he not have found out more information?
 11. Ahimaaz being willfully ignorant of Absalom's fate makes little sense. Ahimaaz would be well aware of the importance of the disposition of Absalom, and therefore would have known of this detail, but when face to face with David, telling him that his son is dead would be difficult to do. In fact, Ahimaaz appears to choke here and is unable to do it.
 12. The Cushite, who obviously has all of the information, left first to run to David. It would make little sense for Ahimaaz to leave second, and yet to have less information than the Cushite.
 13. The logical conclusion is, Ahimaaz knows that Absalom is dead and he is unable to tell David.
 14. In the alternative, Ahimaaz left for Mahanaim, intentionally not knowing what happened to Absalom, so that he would not have to tell David.

¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:21.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

v. 29 reads: *The king asked if his son Absalom survived the battle. Ahimaaz hemmed and hawed, answering, "When we went out into the battle—Joab and his army (myself included)—all I could see is a great tumult; I have no idea what happened to Absalom."* So King David has still not gotten to the point where he can view his son Absalom objectively. People have risked their lives and have died because of Absalom, and yet David is overly concerned about him. On the other hand, Ahimaaz knew or should have known what happened to Absalom, as he certainly knew David well enough that this would be one of the questions asked. However, he could not bring himself to tell the king what really happened.

And so says the king, "Turn around; take a stand." And so he turns around and so he takes a stand.

2Samuel
18:30

The king then said, "Step back [lit., *turn around*]; stand [at attention]." So he stepped back [lit., *turned around*] and stood [at attention].

The king ordered Ahimaaz to step back and stand at attention. He did what he was told to do.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to him: Pass, and stand here.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king, "Turn around; take a stand." And so he turns around and so he takes a stand.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king said to him, Turn aside and stand here. And he turned aside and stood still.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said, Turn aside, stand still here. And he turned aside, and stood.
Significant differences:	The missing sentence in the Latin is found in the following verse.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	"Step aside and stand right here," the king said. So Ahimaaz stepped aside and waited.
Contemporary English V. New Berkeley Version	David told him, "Stand over there and wait." Ahimaaz went over and stood there. "Turn aside then and take your post here," the king indicated. So he faced about and stood still.
New Living Translation The Voice	"Wait here," the king told him. So Ahimaaz stepped aside. David: Make way for <i>this next messenger</i> . Move over here. Ahimaaz turned aside, keeping still <i>and quiet</i> .

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king said: 'Step aside and stand over there!' So, he stepped aside and stood nearby.
Christian Community Bible <i>God's Word</i> TM	So the king said, "Move away and stand here." He moved aside and stayed there.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	"Step aside, and stand here," the king said. He stepped aside and stood there.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Stand aside here, the king said; and as he did so, Chusi came up after him;... A portion of v. 31 is included for context.
NIRV	The king said, "Step aside and remain in attendance here." So he stepped aside and remained there.
Revised English Bible	The king said, "Stand over there and wait." So he stepped over to one side and stood there.
	The king told him to stand-on one side; so he turned aside and waited there.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said, "Turn-around and abide thus." He turned and stood to behold the Ethiopian coming. A portion of v. 31 is included for context.
Bible in Basic English	And the king said, Get back and take your place here. So turning to one side, he took his place there.
Ferar-Fenton Bible HCSB	The King therefore said, "Turn and station yourself there!" So he turned and stood. The king said, "Move aside and stand here." So he stood to one side.

NET Bible®	The king said, "Turn aside and take your place here." So he turned aside and waited.
NIV – UK	The king said, 'Stand aside and wait here.' So he stepped aside and stood there.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The king said, "Go, and stand over there." So he went and stood there.
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign says, Turn around and stand. - and he turns around and stands.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And HaMelech said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the king said, 'Turn round, station yourself here;' and he turns round and stands still.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i> Syndein/Thieme	And the king said, Aside! stand, here. So he turned aside, and stood. Then the king said unto him, "Turn around, and stand aside here." So he turned aside, and stood 'at attention'/still.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the king said [to him], Turn aside, [and] stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.
World English Bible	The king said, Turn aside, and stand here. He turned aside, and stood still.
Young's Updated LT	And the king says, "Turn round, station thyself here;" and he turns around and stands still.

The gist of this verse: King David tells Ahimaaz to stand aside and wait, and he does so.

2Samuel 18:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
çâbab (סָבַב) [pronounced <i>saw^b-VAH^{BV}</i>]	<i>turn yourself around, turn back, approach; be brought to; go [march, walk] around; go over [a place], go around; circle about; surround, encompass</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
yâtsab (צָבַע) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAHB^V</i>]	<i>to set oneself [in a place], to take a stand</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperative	Strong's #3320 BDB #426

2Samuel 18:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The Hithpael imperative is translated variously as <i>station yourselves, stand still, take your stand, stand up, stand here</i> .			

Translation: The king then said, “Step back [lit., turn around]; stand [at attention].” The king is slightly peeved. He asked a direct question and he got an obfuscated answer. He had intentionally ordered his generals not to harm Absalom; and he said it so that the rest of the troops could hear him.

The king must be reasoning in his mind, “If Absalom had been taken prisoner, sure Ahimaaz would have told me this.” But David realizes that he is not going to get a straight answer from Absalom. David does not want to go to the conclusion which should seem obvious—that Absalom is dead.

The king sends Ahimaaz a few yards away and tells him to stand at attention. David does not say, dismissed; David does not tell him that he can go wash up and get a drink of water. Ahimaaz is to just stand there.

2Samuel 18:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çâbab (סָבַב) [pronounced saw ^b -VAH ^{BV}]	<i>to turn oneself, to turn back, to turn around; to approach; to be brought to; to bestow upon; to go [march, walk] around; to go over [a place], to go around; to circle about; to surround, to encompass; to recline; to be turned, to be changed; to be the cause of</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘âmad (עָמַד) [pronounced çaw-MAHD]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand; to stop</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763

Translation: So he stepped back [lit., turned around] and stood [at attention]. Ahimaaz does exactly as the king has ordered him to do. He does not complain; he does not ask for water; he does not ask to sit down. Recall that Ahimaaz is probably very tired and very thirsty from this run.

And behold the Cushite has come. And so says the Cushite, "Receives good news my adonai the king, for has delivered you Y^ehowah the day from a hand of all of those rising up against you."

2Samuel
18:31

Then they saw that [*lit.*, *behold*] the Cushite had come [to them]. And the Cushite said, "My adonai the king receives good news today for Y^ehowah has delivered you from the power of those who have risen up against you."

Then the Cushite came up, and he said to them, "There is good news today for my lord the king, for Jehovah has delivered you from the power of those who have risen up against you."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And when he had passed, and stood still, Chusai <u>appeared and</u> coming up he said: I bring good tidings, my lord, the king, for the Lord has judged for you this day from the hand of all that have risen up against you.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And behold the Cushite has come. And so says the Cushite, "Receives good news my adonai the king, for has delivered you Y ^e howah the day from a hand of all of those rising up against you."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And, behold, Cushite came; and he said, Tidings, my lord the king! for the LORD has avenged you this day from the hand of all those who rose up against you.
Septuagint (Greek)	And, behold, Hushai came up, and said <u>to the king</u> , Let my lord the king hear the good news, for the Lord has avenged you this day upon all them that rose up against you.

Significant differences: The first sentence of the Latin is found in v. 30 with the Hebrew. There are two verbs applied to the Cushite in the Latin; one in the Hebrew. The Greek adds that the Cushite says these things *to the king*.

What the Cushite says to the king is not duplicated exactly in the Latin, Syriac or Greek; but they are close.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then the Cushite arrived and said, "My master the king: Listen to this good news! The Lord has vindicated you this day against the power of all who rose up against you."
Contemporary English V.	The Ethiopian came and said, "Your Majesty, today I have good news! The LORD has rescued you from all your enemies!"
Easy English	Then the man from Cush arrived. He said, "My master and king, hear the good news. Today the *Lord has defeated the men who opposed you."
Easy-to-Read Version	The Ethiopian arrived. He said, "News for my lord and king. Today the Lord has punished the people who were against you!"
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then the Ethiopian slave arrived and said to the king, "I have good news for Your Majesty! Today the LORD has given you victory over all who rebelled against you!"
<i>The Message</i>	Then the Cushite arrived and said, "Good news, my master and king! GOD has given victory today over all those who rebelled against you!"
New Berkeley Version	Just then, in came the man of Cush, with the message, "Here the good news, O my master the king! For the LORD has executed judgment for you today from the hands of all those that rose up against you."
New Century Version	Then the Cushite arrived. He said, "Master and king, hear the good news! Today the LORD has punished those who were against you!"

New Living Translation	Then the man from Ethiopia arrived and said, "I have good news for my lord the king. Today the LORD has rescued you from all those who rebelled against you."
The Voice	So the Cushite arrived <i>and greeted the king</i> . Cushite: I have good news, my lord and king! The Eternal has today <i>taken your side and</i> delivered you from all those who rose up against you!.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then HushAi came and said to the king: 'I have good news to announce to my lord the king. For today Jehovah has passed judgment upon all those who opposed you!'
Christian Community Bible	The Cushite arrived and said, "Good news for my lord the king! Yahweh has done you justice today and saved you from all those who rebelled against you."
God's Word™	Then the Sudanese messenger came. "Good news for Your Majesty!" he said. "Today the LORD has freed you from all who turned against you."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	...Chusi came up after him; Good news, said he, for my lord the king! The Lord has maintained thy cause against the rebels.
NIRV	Then the man from Cush arrived. He said, "You are my king and master. I'm bringing you some good news. The Lord has saved you today from all those who were trying to kill you."
New Jerusalem Bible	Then the Cushite arrived. 'Good news for my lord the king!' the Cushite shouted. 'Today Yahweh has vindicated your cause, by ridding you of all who had risen up against you.'
New Simplified Bible	Then the Sudanese messenger came. Good news for Your Majesty! He said. Today Jehovah freed you from all who turned against you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	He turned and stood to behold the Ethiopian coming. The Ethiopian said, "I bring-news, my lord and king! Yahweh judged this day the hand of all rising toward you." A portion of v. 30 is included for context.
Bible in Basic English	And then the Cushite came and said, I have news for my lord the king: today the Lord has done right in your cause against all those who took up arms against you.
The Expanded Bible	Then the Cushite arrived. He said, "·Master and [My Lord the] king, hear the good news! Today the Lord has ·punished [rescued/ ^T delivered you from] those who ·were [rebelled; ^L rose up] against you!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then Kusi came. And Kusi said, "There is good news for your Majesty the King. For the EVER-LIVING has granted you justice to-day from the hands of your enemies; —all who rose against you!"
NET Bible®	Then the Cushite arrived and said [Heb "And look, the Cushite came and the Cushite said."], "May my lord the king now receive the good news! The Lord has vindicated you today and delivered you from the hand of all who have rebelled against you [Heb "for the Lord has vindicated you today from the hand of all those rising against you."]"
NIV, ©2011	Then the Cushite arrived and said, "My lord the king, hear the good news! The Lord has vindicated you today by delivering you from the hand of all who rose up against you."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Then up came the Ethiopian, and the Ethiopian said, "There's good news for my lord the king, for ADONAI has judged in your favor and rid you of all those who rebelled against you."
exeGesés companion Bible	And behold, Kushiy comes; and Kushiy says, Evangelism, my adoni the sovereign:

	for Yah Veh judges you this day from the hand of all who rise against you.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Just then the Cushite came up; and the Cushite said, "Let my lord the king be informed that the LORD has vindicated you today against all who rebelled against you!"
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And, hinei, Cushi came; and Cushi said, Yitbaser (be informed of news), adoni HaMelech; for Hashem hath in justice vindicated thee this day from the yad of all them that rose up against thee.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And behold, the Cushite (Ethiopian) came, and he said, News, my lord the king! For the Lord has delivered you this day from all who rose up against you.
Concordant Literal Version	And lo, the Cushite has come, and the Cushite said, `Let tidings be proclaimed, my lord, O king; for Yahweh has delivered you to-day out of the hand of all those rising up against you.
Darby Translation	And behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, Let my lord the king receive good tidings, for Jehovah has avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.
English Standard V. – UK	David's Grief And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "Good news for my lord the king! For the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you."
Green's Literal Translation	And, behold, the Cushite had come. And the Cushite said, News is borne, my lord, O king! For Jehovah has vindicated you today out of the hand of those rising up against you.
NASB	Behold, the Cushite arrived, and the Cushite said, "Let my lord the king receive good news, for the Lord has freed [Lit vindicated] you this day from the hand of all those who rose up against you."
New RSV	Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, `Good tidings for my lord the king! For the Lord has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Verse 31-32: Report of the African} {Official Report Straight from Joab} And, behold, the African came. And the African spoke, "Let, my Lord the king receive the Good news." {Note: The African bowed to Joab when he started the run. But no bow to the king is mentioned here. Apparently, personality is the issue to the African and he respects Joab but not David at this point. And, that is arrogant. He should have respect for his position and bow to the king. He either does not have the doctrine to cover this situation or he is not applying it to this experience - authority arrogance - rejecting the authority of the king here. So he is following protocol and asking permission first to give the message, and David apparently gives permission.} "For Jehovah/God has vindicated you this day of all those who revolted/'rose up' against you." {Note: This is very similar to what Ahimaaz reported. Joab gave appropriate credit to Jesus Christ Who controls history. Apparently, this is ALL Joab wanted said to David. He killed Absalom and it was his duty to tell David directly what he had done and why.}
World English Bible	Behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, News for my lord the king; for Yahweh has avenged you this day of all those who rose up against you.
Young's Updated LT	And lo, the Cushite has come, and the Cushite says, "Let tidings be proclaimed, my lord, O king; for Jehovah has delivered you today out of the hand of all those rising up against you."

The gist of this verse: The Cushite arrives and tells King David that God delivered his enemies into his hand.

2Samuel 18:31a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
Kûwshîy (יִשׁוּכַי) [pronounced <i>koo-SHEE</i>]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

Translation: Then they saw that [lit., *behold*] the Cushite had come [to them]. David knew that another messenger was coming. He was displeased that Ahimaaz was not completely straight with him. He knew that something was not quite right. Therefore, David placed Ahimaaz to the side, to interview the Cushite that Joab sent.

Apart from David's concern over his son, the fact that two messengers are sent, apparently both knowing the same information, is interesting, to say the least. This is not usually done.

2Samuel 18:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Kûwshîy (יִשׁוּכַי) [pronounced <i>koo-SHEE</i>]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469
bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>to receive good news</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10

2Samuel 18:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]; ʾădōnay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]; and ʾădōnîy (אֲדֹנִי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NEE</i>].			
This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יָיִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1 st person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i>).			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

I have taken the word *today* from the next section and placed it here instead.

Translation: *And the Cushite said, "My adonai the king receives good news today..."* It does not appear that the Cushite bowed before David. We cut right to the chase. He tells the king that there is good news for him this day.

If you read through the Hebrew exegesis, you can tell that there is no word for *today* here. However, that word shows up in the next portion of v. 31. Therefore, I have placed it here; it just sounds better in the English. That is slightly creative translating.

You will notice that the Cushite bowed before Joab, but not before David; and that Ahimaaz bowed before David, but not before Joab. This reveals a different attitude and perspective in both men. The Cushite knew Joab well and respected him. Because he respected Joab, he bowed before him. On the other hand, the Cushite did not bow before David, suggested that a man had to win over his respect and allegiance first (which is an arrogant position to take). Ahimaaz always had great respect for David, but did not appear to understand the importance of protocol in the military. So, both of these men were defective; but Joab knew which man to choose so that David received all of the information.

Some of these points came from or were inspired by R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0478.

Authority Orientation in Life

1. One of our weaknesses as a nation is a lack of authority orientation. If we think that we are smarter than the person over us or that we could do their job, many times we do not give them the proper respect.
2. In the ancient world, respect was much more formal and demonstrative than it is today. At that time, it was common to bow before those who have a higher office than you.
3. Authority arrogance is rejecting the legitimate authority established by God.
4. When legitimate authority is rejected, that person is then disorientated to life.
5. The laws of divine establishment define legitimate authorities delegated by God to human beings. It is these established authorities which allows society to function. This allows various people with sin natures to operate in relationship to one another.
6. The person in authority is not perfect; the persons under him are not perfect. They all have sin natures. However, a system of authority, and the proper authority orientation allows for them to function and interact.
7. The simple example is the school. Unless there is authority orientation among the students, which they learn at home, no learning can take place. A teacher cannot spend an hour every day trying to convince the students that he is their legitimate authority in the classroom.

Authority Orientation in Life

- a. The school itself is a system of authorities. That is organizational humility.
 - b. When a kid is out of line and dealt with by the teacher or by a principal, that is enforced humility.
 - c. When the kid responds and shows some authority orientation, that is genuine humility. Not all kids get to this point; but the organizational and enforced humility by authorities over him allow for the classroom to run as a well-functioning unit.
8. Because all people possess sin natures, humility orients them to the principle of authority. If they respond to the organizational humility or to the enforced humility, the organization they are in can function.
 9. If they demand that respect be earned by every person over them, then that organization will grind to a halt.
 10. Arrogance rejects authority by emphasizing the person or the personality. Arrogance determines that they must have rapport in order to obey authority. The person in charge must earn their respect.
 11. The Cushite developed genuine respect for Joab, so he exercised genuine humility before him. However, he did not have this respect for David, even though he is on David's team. Joab apparently understood this and sent the Cushite because, his weakness—lack of authority orientation toward David—would allow him to be absolutely frank with David.
 12. This orientation to authority begins with human life at birth. We are born into a family, which provides the organizational humility. When your parents say, "No" and then back this up now and again with discipline or a spanking, that is enforced humility.
 13. The authority of the parents is key to life and orientation to authority in life. It is not who your parents are or anything else; it is just their authority. In fact, we learn a great deal, even when they are being unreasonable. Then, the young teen in particular, faces the true issues of life at this point. Upon this response to parental discipline hangs the whole life of the young person.

Application: Happiness in life often depends upon authority orientation. Happiness is not prosperity, or wealth, but orientation to life, which depends upon authority orientation. Therefore, the real issue is the response to the authority of the parents. Similarly, when you are born again, then it is the authority of your pastor. We are born with both human life and an old sin nature. This is kept in check by the authority of your parents.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Samuel 18:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâphaṭ (שֹׁפֵט) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i>]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
yôwm (יומ) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

2Samuel 18:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axle-trees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
qûwm (קוּמ) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>those standing, the ones rising up, the ones getting up; the ones establishing [themselves]</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>‘ahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: ...for Y^ehowah has delivered you from the power of those who have risen up against you.” Just as Ahimaaz had done, this Cushite uses the explanatory conjunction to tell why David is receiving good news. There were men who rose up against David (notice how he leaves out the name of David’s son); and God delivered David from these men.

Given how the Cushite will answer David’s question about Absalom suggests that he had given the answer some thought.

And so says the king unto the Cushite, “Is [it] well to the young man, to Absalom?” And so says the Cushite, “Are as the young man enemies of my adonai the king; and all who have risen against you for evil.”

2Samuel
18:32

The king then asked the Cushite, “Is [it] well for the young man; for Absalom?” And the Cushite answered, “[May] the enemies of my adonai the king be like [that] young man; [and the same goes for] all who rise against you to [do] evil [against you].”

The king then asked the Cushite “What about the young man, Absalom—is he okay?” And the Cushite clearly answered him, “I wish that all of your enemies would be like that young man. I wish the same for every man who rises up against you to do evil to you.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to Chusai: Is the young man Absalom <u>safe</u> ? And Chusai answering him, said: Let the enemies of my lord, the king, and all that rise against him unto evil, be as the young man is.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king unto the Cushite, "Is [it] well to the young man, to Absalom?" And so says the Cushite, "Are as the young man enemies of my adonai the king; and all who have risen against you for evil."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king said to Cushi, Is the young man Absalom <u>safe</u> ? And Cushi answered, Let your enemies, my lord the king, and all who rise up against you for evil be as that young man is.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said to Hushai, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Hushai said, Let the enemies of my lord the king, and all whosoever have risen up against him for evil, be as that young man.
Significant differences:	The word <i>safe</i> above is a legitimate translation of the Hebrew word used. The translations do not appear to be different from the Hebrew in any other respect.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king said to the Cushite, "Is my boy Absalom okay?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my master the king and all who rise up against you to hurt you end up like that young man."
Contemporary English V.	"Is my son Absalom all right?" David asked. The Ethiopian replied, "I wish that all Your Majesty's enemies and everyone who tries to harm you would end up like him!"
Easy English	The king said, 'Is the young man Absalom safe?' The man from Cush replied, 'I want your enemies, and everyone who comes to hurt you, to be like that young man.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Is the young man Absalom all right?" the king asked. The slave answered, "I wish that what has happened to him would happen to all your enemies, sir, and to all who rebel against you."
<i>The Message</i>	"But," said the king, "is the young man Absalom all right?" And the Cushite replied, "Would that all of the enemies of my master the king and all who maliciously rose against you end up like that young man."
New Century Version	The king asked the Cushite, "Is young Absalom all right?" The Cushite answered, "May your enemies and all who come to hurt you be like that young man!"
New Life Bible	The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered, "May those who hate my lord the king, all those who come to do bad things against you, be as that young man!"
New Living Translation	"What about young Absalom?" the king demanded. "Is he all right?" And the Ethiopian replied, "May all of your enemies, my lord the king, both now and in the future, share the fate of that young man!"
The Voice	David: But what about young Absalom? Cushite: May all your enemies and all those who wish the king harm be as that young man is now!.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king asked Hushai: 'And how is the young man Absalom?' Then he replied: 'The young man has fared the same as all the enemies of my lord the king, and as all who have done evil things against him.'
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Christian Community Bible	The king asked the Cushite, "How is the young Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rebel against you end up like that young man."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Then the king asked Chusi, Is all well with my son Absalom? My lord king, Chusi answered, may all thy enemies, and all that conspire to thy hurt, fare as the prince has fared!
New American Bible (R.E.)	But the king asked the Cushite, "Is young Absalom all right?" The Cushite replied, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rebel against you with evil intent be as that young man!"
New Jerusalem Bible	'Is all well with young Absalom?' the king asked the Cushite. 'May the enemies of my lord the king', the Cushite answered, 'and all who rise up to harm you, share the fate of that young man!'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said to the Ethiopian, "Peace for the lad Absalom?" The Ethiopian said, "The lad was an enemy of my lord the king with all that rose toward you for evil!"
Bible in Basic English	And the king said to the Cushite, Is the young man Absalom safe? And the Cushite said in answer, May all the king's haters and those who do evil against the king, be as that young man is!
The Expanded Bible	The king asked the Cushite, "Is young Absalom ·all right [well]?" The Cushite answered, "May your enemies and all who ·come to hurt you [^L rise up to do you harm] ·be like [share the fate of] that young man!"
HCSB	The king asked the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom all right?" The Cushite replied, "May what has become of the young man happen to the enemies of my lord the king and to all who rise up against you with evil intent."
NET Bible®	The king asked the Cushite, "How is the young man Absalom?" The Cushite replied, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who have plotted against you [^{Heb} "and all those rising against you for evil."] be like that young man!"

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The king asked the Ethiopian, "Is everything all right with young Avshalom?"The Ethiopian answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rebel against you in order to harm you be as that young man is."
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign says to Kushi, Is the lad Abi Shalom at shalom? And Kushi says, may the enemies of my adoni the sovereign and all who rise against you to vilify you become as that lad.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The king asked the Cushite, "Is my boy Absalom safe?" And the Cushite replied, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rose against you to do you harm fare like that young man!"
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And HaMelech said unto Cushi, Is the na'ar Avshalom shalom? And Cushi answered, The enemies of adoni HaMelech, and all that rise against thee to do thee harm, be as that na'ar is.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the king said unto the Cushite, `Peace to the youth--to Absalom?' And the Cushite said, `Let them be--as the youth--the enemies of my lord the king, and all who have risen up against you for evil.
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Context Group Version	And the king said to the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against you to do you hurt, be as that young man is.
English Standard Version	The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man."
Green's Literal Translation	And the king said to the Cushite, Peace to the young man, to Absalom? And the Cushite said, Let them be as the young man, the enemies of my lord the king, and all who have risen up against you for evil.
New RSV	The king said to the Cushite, 'Is it well with the young man Absalom?' The Cushite answered, 'May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man.'
Syndein/Thieme	{African's Addendum to Joab's Official Statement} And the king said unto the African, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" And the African answered, "May the enemies of my Lord the king, and all who revolt/'rise up' against you for evil . . . 'let become'/be as that young man is." {Note: The African used flattery and did NOT name Absalom by name - probably as Joab ordered him not to do. But, he shrewdly was the first to let the king know his condition - thinking he would be rewarded!}.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And the king said to the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up against you to do you hurt, be as that young man is.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the king said to Cushi, [Is] the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, May the enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do [thee] hurt, be as [that] young man [is].
Young's Updated LT	And the king says unto the Cushite, "Peace to the youth—to Absalom?" And the Cushite says, "Let them be—as the youth—the enemies of my lord the king, and all who have risen up against you for evil."
The gist of this verse:	David asks about his son Absalom, and the Cushite tells him that, he wishes all of David's enemies would end up like this young man.

2Samuel 18:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'āmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to, against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Kûwshîy (ישׁוּכִי) [pronounced <i>koo-SHEE</i>]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469

Translation: [The king then asked the Cushite,...](#) The king is speaking slow and clearly; and he affords this Cushite respect; indicating that he expects an honest and forthright answer. Obviously, he is concerned, not getting a clear answer from Ahimaaz.

2Samuel 18:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i>]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied. This can be used in an indirect interrogation and translated <i>whether</i> .		Strong's #none BDB #209
shâlôwm (שׁוֹלֵם) or shâlôm (שְׁלֵם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
na'ar (נַעַר) [pronounced <i>NAH-ğahr</i>]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular construct with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אֲבוֹיֵשׁוֹלֵם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation:...["Is \[it\] well for the young man; for Absalom?"](#) He asks as to the health of his son. Again, David is unrealistic about the outcome of this war. Not only did he need to hang back so that he is protected, but he cannot be involved in a war against his son. He would allow his own soldiers to die before he allowed his son to die. This is clear by David's concern here, and subsequent events.

Spurgeon writes: *Our children may plunge into the worst of sins, but they are our children still. They may scoff at our God; they may tear our heart to pieces with their wickedness; we cannot take complacency in them, but at the same time we cannot unchild them, nor erase their image from our hearts.*⁹⁷

2Samuel 18:32c

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

⁹⁷ David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 18:28–32.

2Samuel 18:32c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Kūwshîy (יָשׁוּךְ) [pronounced koo-SHEE]	<i>blackness; and is transliterated Cushite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3569 & #3571 BDB #469
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
naʾar (נָעַר) [pronounced NAH-ǰahr]	<i>boy, youth, young man; personal attendant; slave-boy</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
ʾâyab (אֵיבָב) [pronounced aw-YA ^B V]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle construct form	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced uh-doh-NEE].			
This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יָיִם) [pronounced eem], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1 st person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i>).			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: And the Cushite answered, “[May] the enemies of my adonai the king be like [that] young man;... Here is why Joab sent the Cushite. He gives a clear answer, although he spices it up a bit. He asks that all of David's enemies be like this young man. It sounds as if the Cushite had rehearsed this answer. He did not want to say, “Listen, my lord, your son is dead.” The way he phrases it indicates that the son is dead, and he sort of identifies David's son as an enemy, although he does not quite say that.

This answer tells David that Absalom is dead. Quite obviously, a patriot does not wish for all of David's enemies to be healthy and running about.

2Samuel 18:32d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
qûwm (קָוַם) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
râʾâh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #949

Translation:... [and the same goes for] all who rise against you to [do] evil [against you].” The Cushite continues his answer. I have inserted a few words to smooth this translation out. The Cushite applies his desire to anyone who would rise up against David. Again, the implication is, Absalom is dead, and the Cushite wishes that for all of David's enemies.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

As mentioned earlier, this narrative is quite unusual. Ahimaaz, a son of one of the high priests, was excited to deliver the message of victory to David; Joab, however, picked another man to deliver the message. Then Joab allows Ahimaaz to run to deliver the message anyway. So, why is this in the Word of God?

What We Get from the Competing Runners' Narrative

1. We learn that Joab is very clear-headed and thinking rationally. Furthermore, he is insightful here.
 - a. Joab chooses the Cushite instead of Ahimaaz to deliver the message of victory to David.
 - b. It just so turns out that the Cushite delivers the entire message to David and is able to honestly answer David's questions.
 - c. Ahimaaz was unable to do this.
 - d. Therefore, Joab was thinking clearly enough to know that Ahimaaz would not be able to perform the task which he desired to do.
 - e. This is important to know about Joab, as he had just made the mistake of chewing out a low-ranking noncom for following David's orders. However, Joab's accurate call here tells us that Joab suffered a temporary lapse of judgment, but now he is on top of things.

What We Get from the Competing Runners' Narrative

- f. Making this call revealed great insight on the part of Joab.
- g. The fact that he is so perceptive and clear-headed about this, will tell us that, when he braces David in the next chapter, he will be completely right and David will be completely wrong. We understand that Job is an excellent observer of human character, which is why he correctly evaluates the situation with David. However, David will recognize the truth and take it from Joab without rejecting what he says out of arrogance.
2. This tells us that Joab is unemotional, objective and insightful. Therefore, we must reasonably assume that the decisions that he makes are unemotional, objective and insightful.
3. Therefore, Joab's decision to execute Absalom must be understood in the same light. Joab did not go from being crazy vengeful one instant, to objective and insightful the next.
4. This indicates to us that Joab made several very good decisions right in a row:
 - a. He began the execution of Absalom, but allowed his bodyguard to finish the job. This suggests that he did not want to be on the hook for killing Absalom alone.
 - b. Joab allowed the revolutionary soldiers to run without pursuing and killing them. Many soldiers had been killed already that day on the battlefield. Joab was willing to show restraint here.
 - c. Then Joab knew which runner to send to David and which runner would not deliver the entire message.
5. Although this narrative provides us with some insights concerning the weaknesses of Ahimaaz's abilities; this more importantly tells us about Joab and his personal brilliance with regards to reading and understanding people.
6. There is also the concept of the right man for the right job. Joab had a knack for this; but this is also important for any person in authority. If you have authority, then you have to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of those under you, and be able to know who should be assigned to project A and who should be assigned to project B. Part of great leadership is properly delegating authority and responsibilities. We see this with choose the Cushite rather than Ahimaaz; but this is also true on the Mahanaim wall. David is not standing on the wall, looking out into the distance determining who is coming. That responsibility was given to a different man, because he had better eyesight.
7. We also learn about Joab's humility from this. Joab is the #2 man under David. Many of his men, like this Cushite, are more loyal to him than they are to David. If Joab saw that both David and Absalom died, then he would be very possibly the next in line to be king. Joab does not appear to every entertain such a thought.
8. Finally, we learn about David that, despite the fact that he is making spiritual progress, he has not yet fully recovered from the interlocking systems of arrogance, and he is not yet ready to deal with reality. It is a reality that the only end for Absalom is death, whether his life is preserved in this battle or not; and David is not yet ready to deal with that.

Although this is an unusual narrative for the Bible, it is reasonable to suppose that a portion of this narrative gives us a window into David's soul as well. What he should have been interested in—the casualty list of his own men—he was not; and what should not have concerned him—the disposition of Absalom—that was at the top of his list of concerns.

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[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

David's Great Sorrow for Absalom

And so is agitated the king and so he goes up upon the roof-chamber of the gate and so he weeps. And thus he said in going, “My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Who gives my dying, me, instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son.”

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(19:1 in
Hebrew)

The king is [clearly] agitated as he goes up to the roof-chamber over the gate, and he is weeping. While going up, he said, “My son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!”

The king was clearly agitated as he went up to the roof-chamber situated over the gate, and he began to weep when he could not be seen. As he went up, he kept saying, “Absalom, my son, my son—O that I might have died in your place, my son Absalom.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	The king therefore being much moved, went up to the high chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went he spoke in this manner: My son Absalom, Absalom my son: would to God that I might die for thee, Absalom my son, my son Absalom.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is agitated the king and so he goes up upon the roof-chamber of the gate and so he weeps. And thus he said in going, “My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Who gives my dying, me, instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king was overcome, and went up to his bedchamber and wept; and as he <u>wept</u> , he said, O my son Absalom. my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son!
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king was troubled, and went to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And thus he said as he went, My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! I pray God I had died for you, even I had died for you, Absalom, my son, my son!
Significant differences:	The Syriac leaves out the word <i>gate</i> in the first sentence. The Syriac also has <i>wept</i> twice rather than <i>going</i> in the second instance. The Latin leaves out the third <i>my son</i> . In the phrase after David says, <i>my son, my son Absalom</i> , I may have been too literal. What is found in the other translations seems to be fine. The Latin and Syriac differ on the number of times the word <i>Absalom</i> or <i>my son</i> is used at the end.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king trembled. He went up to the room over the gate and cried. As he went, he said, "Oh, my son Absalom! Oh, my son! My son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! Oh, Absalom, my son! My son!"
Contemporary English V.	David started trembling. Then he went up to the room above the city gate to cry. As he went, he kept saying, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish I could have died instead of you! Absalom, my son, my son!"
Easy English	The king shook. He went to the room that was over the gate. He cried. As he went there, he said, `My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish that I had died instead of you. Absalom, my son, my son!"
Easy-to-Read Version	{Then the king knew Absalom was dead}. The king was very upset. He went up to the room over the gate and cried. He kept crying again and again as he walked to that room. He was saying, "O my son Absalom, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you. O Absalom, my son, my son!"
Good News Bible (TEV)	The king was overcome with grief. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he cried, "O my son! My son Absalom! Absalom, my son! If only I had died in your place, my son! Absalom, my son!"

<i>The Message</i>	The king was stunned. Heartbroken, he went up to the room over the gate and wept. As he wept he cried out, O my son Absalom, my dear, dear son Absalom! Why not me rather than you, my death and not yours, O Absalom, my dear, dear son!
New Berkeley Version	The king was deeply moved. He went up to the open room on the roof of the gateway and wept, lamenting as he went, "O my son, Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I myself had died instead of you! O Absalom! My son, my son!" David knew that his sin had started this train of calamities.
New Century Version	Then the king was very upset, and he went to the room over the city gate and cried. As he went, he cried out, "My son Absalom, my son Absalom! I wish I had died and not you. Absalom, my son, my son!"
New Living Translation	The king was overcome with emotion. He went up to the room over the gateway and burst into tears. And as he went, he cried, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son." Verse 18:33 is numbered 19:1 in Hebrew text.
The Voice	Then the king was stricken with grief. He went to a chamber over the gateway and wept <i>as he went</i> . David: O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, the king was very upset, so he went up into the room above the gate and wept. He cried, 'O my son AbSalom! O my son! O my son AbSalom! Why couldn't I have died instead of you, AbSalom? O my son! O my son!'
Christian Community Bible	The king was greatly disturbed and, going up to the room over the gate, he wept and said, "O, my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" This is 2Sam. 19:1 in the CCB.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	The king was shaken by the news. He went to the room above the gate and cried. "My son Absalom!" he said as he went. "My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died in your place! Absalom, my son, my son!"
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And with that, the king went up to the room over the gate in bitter sorrow, and wept there. O, my son Absalom, he said as he went, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God I had died instead of thee, Absalom, my son, my son!
New American Bible (R.E.)	The king was shaken, and went up to the room over the city gate and wept. He said as he wept, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!" In the NAB (revised edition), this is 2Sam. 19:1.
NIRV	The king was very upset. He went up to the room over the entrance of the gate and sobbed. As he went, he said, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you. Absalom! My son, my son!"
New Jerusalem Bible	The king shuddered. He went up to the room over the gate and burst into tears; and, as he wept, he kept saying, 'Oh, my son Absalom! My son! My son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! Oh, Absalom my son, my son!' This is 2Sam. 19:1 in the NJB.
New Simplified Bible	The king was shaken by the news. He went to the room above the gate and cried. »My son Absalom!« He said. »My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died in your place! Absalom, my son, my son!«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king was agitated, and ascended to the upper-room over the gate weeping. As he went, he said thus, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Who would give me to die instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son?"
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Bible in Basic English	Then the king was much moved, and went up into the room over the door, weeping, and saying, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! if only my life might have been given for yours, O Absalom, my son, my son!
The Expanded Bible	Then the king was very upset [overcome with emotion], and he went to the room over the city gate and cried. As he went, he cried out, "My son Absalom, my son Absalom! I wish [Would that] I had died and not you. Absalom, my son, my son!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then the King trembled and went up the stairs of the gate, and wept, and exclaimed, "You have gone, my son, Absalom! I wish I myself had died instead of you! Absalom! My son! My son!"
NET Bible®	The king then became very upset. He went up to the upper room over the gate and wept. As he went he said, "My son, Absalom! My son, my son [One medieval Hebrew ms, some mss of the LXX, and the Vulgate lack this repeated occurrence of "my son" due to haplography.], Absalom! If only I could have died in your place! Absalom, my son, my son [The Lucianic Greek recension and Syriac Peshitta lack this repeated occurrence of "my son" due to haplography.]" This marks the beginning of ch. 19 in the Hebrew text. Beginning with 18:33, the verse numbers through 19:43 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 18:33 ET = 19:1 HT, 19:1 ET = 19:2 HT, 19:2 ET = 19:3 HT, etc., through 19:43 ET = 19:44 HT. From 20:1 the versification in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible is again the same.
New Heart English Bible	The king was much moved, and went up to the room over the gate, and wept. As he went, he said, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died for you, Absalom, my son, my son!"
NIV – UK	The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: `O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you - O Absalom, my son, my son!' In Hebrew texts this verse (18:33) is numbered 19:1.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Trembling, the king went up to the room over the gate, weeping and crying, "Oh, my son Avshalom! My son! My son Avshalom! If only I had died instead of you! Oh, Avshalom, my son, my son!"
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign quivers and ascends to the upper room over the portal and weeps: and as he goes, he says thus, O my son Abi Shalom! My son - my son Abi Shalom! O that I had died in your stead! O Abi Shalom! My son - my son!
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The king was shaken. He went up to the upper chamber of the gateway and wept, moaning these words as he went, "My son Absalom! O my son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son!" This is 2Sam. 19:1 in the Hebrew Bible. JPS footnote: Counted as 2Sam. 18:33 in some versions.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it was told Yoav, Hinei, HaMelech weepeth and mourneth for Avshalom. This is 2Sam. 19:1 in the Hebrew Bible.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God I had died for you, O Absalom, my son, my son!
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Darby Translation	And the king was much moved, and went up to the upper chamber of the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said thus: O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died in thy stead, O Absalom, my son, my son!
English Standard Version	And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"
The Geneva Bible	And the king was much moved [Because he considers both the judgment of God against his sin, and could not otherwise hide his fatherly affection for his son.], and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!
Green's Literal Translation	And the king trembled. And he went up to the upper room of the gate and wept. And he said this as he went, My son! My son Absalom! My son Absalom! Oh that I had died instead of you, my son Absalom, my son!
New King James Version	David's Mourning for Absalom Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son Absalom-my son, my son Absalom-if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!"
Syndein/Thieme	{King's Emotional Arrogance} Then the king was 'emotionally disturbed' and went up to the guard room above the gate, and wept. And as he went, he cried, "O my son Absalom . . . my son, my son . . . Absalom! {David Divorced from Reality} If only I had died for you, O Absalom . . . my son, my son!" {Note: If the country is to be saved, David must be alive and make great difficult decisions. Here, in 'abnormal grief' he is in emotional arrogance. The country is in great danger if David does not recover quickly.}
World English Bible	The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would I had died for you, Absalom, my son, my son!
Young's Updated LT	And the king trembles, and goes up on the upper chamber of the gate, and he weeps, and thus he has said in his going, "My son! Absalom my son; my son Absalom; oh that I had died for you, Absalom, my son, my son."
The gist of this verse:	The king, clearly upset over the death of his son, goes to a private chamber and weeps for his son.

2Samuel 18:33a (= 2Samuel 19:1a in the Hebrew)

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râgaz (רָגַז) [pronounced rawg-GAHZ]	<i>to be agitated, to quiver, to quake, to become excited, perturbed, disquieted</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7264 BDB #919
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: The king is [clearly] agitated... David is unable to hide his emotions; he is devastated by the death of his son. We know little about his other sons, but Absalom had royal blood on both sides, and he showed

initiative and leadership. David could not seem to recognize Absalom's lack of interest in God or his cold desire for power.

Contrast this to Ahimaaz, who was so excited, he could hardly wait to run to David and to inform him that the revolution had been put down. David cannot seem to think about that at this moment.

2Samuel 18:33b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ʿălîyâh (עֲלֵיָהּ) [pronounced <i>guh-lee-YAW</i>]	<i>roof-chamber, upper room; cool and secluded roof chamber; a ladder, a way of ascent</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5944 BDB #751
shaʿar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced <i>SHAH-gahr</i>]	<i>gate [control of city can be implied]; area inside front gate; entrance</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced <i>baw-KAW</i>]	<i>to weep [for] (in grief, humiliation, or joy), to weep [bitterly], to weep upon [i.e., to embrace and weep], to cry [for], to bewail</i>	3 rd person masculine singular Qal imperfect	Strong's #1058 BDB #113

Translation: ...as he goes up to the roof-chamber over the gate, and he is weeping. David gets out of the public eye as quickly as possible. There would be a great deal of celebration and screaming and shouting among those in the city (worried that they might have been invaded by Absalom and his army), while David feels nothing but grief.

David had been station between the two walls, waiting to hear any news from the front, a genuine concern (far different than when he was skirt chasing in Jerusalem). There is a guard room above the gate, and that is where David goes to be out of sight.

Matthew Henry: *David...forgets all the joy of his deliverance, and is quite overwhelmed with the sorrowful tidings of Absalom's death. As soon as he perceived by Cush's reply that Absalom was dead, he asked no more questions, but fell into a passion of weeping, retired from company, and abandoned himself to sorrow.*⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:19–33.

Even though the king quickly retires from the people, it is apparent that the people can hear him. He cannot control himself even to the point holding back his tears until he is in private.

Had Absalom been the victor, this is no indication that Absalom would have felt badly had his father been killed. He has no easy claim to the throne as long as his father is alive. That automatically splits Israel in half (just as Absalom being alive splits Israel in half). One of these men must die or be exiled, or the civil war would not end.

It is interesting to observe this civil war from such a distance as we are. This civil war is more typical of civil wars which occur throughout the world; or of power grabs which occur. The dissension based upon having different principles occurs far less often, although that is very much where the United States is at this point in time. We have sets up people divided along ideological lines, although each side is often dishonest about the views of the other side (liberals are particularly dishonest about the views of conservatives, as well as of their own views). But still, although the ideas are warped, the disagreements in our country are based upon philosophy.

With David and Absalom, there was less about philosophy and political ideas, and more about, who is the best man to rule over the people. Who is the best man to represent the people? Who is the best man to guide the people forward and to protect them (which is the chief reason for having a government).

What does have direct application to us today is the differences between David and Absalom regarding what is needed in a king—the maintenance and function of the military. This is David's area of expertise, and taking over a military unit and guiding it is almost second nature to David. Furthermore, and this is most important, he knows how to delegate authority. Joab is as great of a military man as David, and is perfectly suited to heading up the military. In fact, Joab's killing of Absalom is the only thing that would end this civil war. Whether or not he should have bucked the authority of King David is another matter (we had similar interactions between civilian commanders in the presidency and the top generals in the field in WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War—particularly between President Truman and General Douglas MacArthur).

Absalom, as we have studied, is a younger version of David, the latest model, the leader for the next generation. Or, that is how he is perceived. He is seen more as a man of the people, more assessable, and more down-to-earth. However, the problem is, that is all for show. Absalom is far more removed from the people than David is, and he will say or do anything to gain power. Absalom is very much like our current president Barack Obama. He is young, he is cool, he is good looking, he is thoughtful, he is a man of the people. However, President Obama has not run even a lemonade stand before, so he lacks the competence to be a leader. He is much more of the sneaky type, who uses his power to crush his opposition. His targeted stealth campaign of 2012 was a marvel to behold, taking **what Karl Rove did** for President George W. Bush, and **bringing his approach** into the 21st century.

Application: So much of politics and leadership can turn on impressions rather than on reality. People followed Absalom because he was the newer, younger and more handsome version of David. They believed that he cared for them but that David did not (recall Absalom commiserating with people after their court cases). In reality, Absalom did not give a flip about these people; he wanted power. Our 2012 election had much in common with David and Absalom, but with the opposite result. President Obama was seen as having the empathy and the **compassion**; and Mitt Romney was defined as just the opposite (although that was not true).⁹⁹

Unlike his father David, Absalom has no military experience. It does not appear that he has ever killed a man or been in the military (he has had men killed, but he has not done the killing). He has possibly made a mess of his personal life, as his wife is never spoken of, even though she bore him at least 4 children. His climb to power seems to be done completely apart from her (which is not unusual for that time period; however, there is the strong possibility that they were even separated at this time, given his almost irrational behavior when returning to Jerusalem).

⁹⁹ In a FoxNews **poll**, about a fifth of the people were concerned about how the candidates cared about them, and 81% believed that Obama cared more for them than Romney. This appears to stand out, as in the other 3 categories given, Romney was seen as ahead.

I have wondered, what his wife thought of Absalom raping David's 10 mistresses. This was a very public display. If she was with Absalom at this time, how did she feel about him doing this?

Absalom was underhanded in his bid for power, which we saw with the 200 men that he lured to follow him to Hebron—men who were not his allies, but men who he managed to make appear as if they supported him, thus unnerving his father enough to leave Jerusalem. Today, the comparative example would be if, 200 of Mitt Romney's top fundraisers and donation bundlers suddenly jumped ship and supported Barack Obama in the 2012 election (or apply this to whatever election cycle you are in). Absalom did not actually gain their support, nor did he convince them of anything concerning his leadership, but he underhandedly made it appear as if they supported him. This parallels the sort of dirty tactics we have today in politics.

In the time of David and Absalom, there is no vote. Whoever prevails militarily, which included killing the other man, is the man who prevailed.

2Samuel 18:33c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced <i>koh</i>]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

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.

Translation: *While going up, he said,...* David quickly gets out of the public view to mourn the death of his son. Rom. 12:15 urges us to *Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.* (ESV) What David is doing now is quite the opposite. While he should be rejoicing and ready to celebrate his army's return to Mahanaim, David is feeling bad over the death of his son.

2Samuel 18:33d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

2Samuel 18:33d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation:...“My son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! He calls Absalom’s name out, again and again. David is in great soul-pain over his son.

2Samuel 18:33e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
Under some circumstances, the mîy pronominal interrogative can express a wish or a desire, as in 2Sam. 15:4 or 23:15. ¹⁰⁰			
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
Literally, these words mean <i>who will give</i> ; together, however, according to BDB, ¹⁰¹ they express a wish (Ex. 16:3) or desire, and should be translated, <i>O that, would that some one would, would that there were, would that, would it.</i>			
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
ʾānîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58

¹⁰⁰ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 566.

¹⁰¹ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 566.

2Samuel 18:33e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
ʾĀbīyshālōwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: *Would that I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!* David says, "Would I have died instead of you, Absalom my son." He is in deep mourning for his son.

This is how irrational David is. David was forced out of Jerusalem since Absalom was coming in. Now, had he thought this through, he would have realized that it was Absalom or him; there was no middle ground. David thought that somehow he could get his crown back and still have his son, but that would not happen. In other words, David could have died instead of his son—all he had to do was take himself to Absalom's army and say, "Here I am; do with me as you will." And Absalom would have had his father killed. That would have ended the revolution.

David never thought this through. He never looked at this from the long view; he knew what to do tactically, he knew he should lead his army out of Jerusalem to protect his people there, and he brilliantly knew to set up a system of spies. But, he never was able to view this in terms of its logical conclusion, which is the only conclusion, that either he or his son must die or be exiled—there is no other end to this than that.

David is right here in his life after a series of many lousy decisions. He has a stable of wives and mistresses and he is allowing the state and his wives to raise his children. As a result, even those children with great potential, like Absalom, cannot cut it—because Absalom never got David's strong hand, David's firm guidance, David's spiritual knowledge, nor did he receive any sort of concept of righteousness and justice from David. Without the proper training in his youth, Absalom became a horrid adult.

In the time that God gave David alone in this city to think things through, David did not properly use that time. He did not chase skirt, but he did not think his situation or life through. God still has to deal with David; God still has to guide David, and He will do so through Joab.

David's inability to see the necessity of Absalom's death, based upon all that has happened, still indicates to us that the pressure from God over the past decade has still not been enough to reach into David's soul and to turn him around. David, in life, the great man and great king that he was, had dug himself into a very deep hole—R. B. Thieme, Jr. calls this interlocking systems of arrogance—and he is not yet free of this persistent arrogance.

It will take Joab to speak frankly to King David and to snap him out of his arrogant blindness. 2Sam. 19:4–7 *The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, "You have today covered with shame the faces of all your*

servants [you have humiliated all of your troops], who have this day saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your mistresses, because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you [a perfect description of reverse process reversionism]. For you have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you, for today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased. Now therefore arise, go out and speak graciously and thankfully to your servants, for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night [all of the army will desert you by sundown], and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now." David would no longer have the popular support of the people. The end result could be a power grab by a half-dozen different men.

Italics are comments I have added.

Matthew Henry on David's 5 Mistakes

David is to be blamed for the following:

1. For showing so great a fondness for a graceless son only because he was handsome and witty, while he was justly abandoned both of God and man. *This reason may be overdone; David may see his own hand in all of this, as he will improve his parenting skills with Solomon.*
2. For quarrelling, not only with divine providence, in the disposals of which he ought silently to have acquiesced, but with divine justice, the judgments of which he ought to have adored and subscribed to. See how Bildad argues (Job. 8:3–4): *If your children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away in their transgression, you should submit, for does God pervert judgment?* See also Lev. 10:3.
3. For opposing the justice of the nation, which, as king, he was entrusted with the administration of, and which, with other public interests, he ought to have preferred before nay natural affection. *God has entrusted David with this responsibility.*
4. For despising the mercy of his deliverance, and the deliverance of his family and kingdom, from Absalom's wicked designs, as if this were no mercy, nor worth giving thanks for, because it cost the life of Absalom. *David does not appear to recognize that what God had done here is grace.*
5. For indulging in a strong passion, and speaking unadvisedly with his lips. He now forgot his own reasonings upon the death of another child (Can I bring him back again?) and his own resolution to keep his mouth as with a bridle when his heart was hot within him, as well as his own practice at other times, when he quieted himself as a child that was weaned from his mother. *David should at least have had the sense to keep his mouth shut.*

Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 18:19–33 (edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

However, there is another side to all of this, brought out by the Pulpit Commentary: *On hearing of the death of his son, David retired into secrecy and poured out his soul in perhaps the most touching language to be found in the Bible. The strength and depth of feeling expressed were evidently in proportion to the interest which all along he had cherished in this abandoned child. Some writers have reproached David for yielding to what is termed "weakness" for a son whose just punishment ought to have been accepted with a calm acquiescence. But the criticism on his conduct is not really justified when all the facts are considered. He was a man constitutionally of strong, generous feelings kindly and tender in his bearing toward others. A father cannot forget that he is a father; and the more holy and generous his nature, the more powerfully will the fatherly feeling assert itself. As seen in our Saviour's case, when he wept over Jerusalem already doomed because of sin against him, equal to, yea, worse even than, that of Absalom, the natural feelings of the heart may flow forth in most touching strains, while there is in the soul a most perfect accord with the righteous judgment of God. Nowhere does Scripture require men to suppress natural sentiments, or, in other words, require us to cease to be true human beings when we are brought face to face with the appalling judgments of God. Moreover, it is given to all parents to cherish hope of the most prodigal of sons while life continues, and David's personal experience of the mercy of God was such as certainly warranted his*

cherishing hope of the renewal and salvation of even this wicked son; and if such a long cherished hope was suddenly crushed, and that, too, when care had been taken to prevent its being crushed (ver. 5), surely it was no sin for him, but an acceptable deed in the sight of God, when he vented his grief that now all hope of such a change was gone. There is no complaint against the wisdom and justice of God, no trace of a spirit of discontent with the administration of Divine love; it was pure sorrow for a ruined life. David's humanity was not lost in his kingly office. The love of a father's heart is not eradicated by a son's ingratitude. The parable of the prodigal son is evidence of this and also of its Divine counterpart. And in the case of David, the remembrance of his own sad fall having possibly exercised a detrimental influence over Absalom, just in the most critical period of his life, could not but render both just and natural this great lamentation.¹⁰²

"Absalom afflicted his father more by his death than by his life" (Augustine).

The Pulpit Commentary on David's Grief

This expression of intense and absorbing grief, in which all joy of victory is swallowed up, (2Sam. 19:2) is indicative of:

1. Parental affection from which it springs. Five times the afflicted father cries, "My son!" (B'ni); thrice, "Absalom!" A father's love (especially in such a fervid soul as David's) is:
 - 1) The natural, instinctive, spontaneous effect of the relationship which subsists between a father and his child. It is the closest relationship of life, and is mercifully joined by the Creator and Father of all with a great and peculiar affection; which, nevertheless (whilst it is intensified and exalted by a proper appreciation of its object, as "the offspring of God") requires to be regulated by intelligence and piety.
 - 2) The relationship between father and son is deeply rooted, enduring, indestructible. It is not eradicated by a son's estrangement (Luke 15:12), wilfulness, manifold transgressions, or even by his open rebellion. A father's love makes large allowances, has much patience and forbearance; **believes all things**, etc. (1Cor. 13:7) and **covers all sins** (Prov. 10:12). David apparently feels persuaded that Absalom has "some good thing in him," and cannot endure the thought of an eternal separation from him. Absalom is referred to as "the youth," as if his youth were a full excuse for his conduct" ("Speaker's Commentary").
 - 3) The father-son relationship is sympathetic and self-sacrificing (Psalm 103:13). **"My son, my beloved, my beautiful Absalom! miserably slain, and now lying dead! Would that I had died for you!"** (2Sam. 24:17 Ex. 32:32 Rom. 9:3).
2. The relationship of David and Absalom is filled with disappointed expectation and hope. All through the course pursued by Absalom, David doubtless cherished the hope that:
 - 1) Absalom might see the error of his ways, and, constrained by his father's affection, turn away from his evil and his rebellion. David may have supposed Absalom to be possibly even penitent at the time of his return, (2Sam. 14:23) and that his reconciliation (2Sam. 14:33) would be followed by filial love and obedience.
 - 2) Absalom might fulfil the anticipations formed at his birth, strengthened by the brilliant promise of his early youth, and apparently justified by his more recent diligence and religious zeal (which was phony (2Sam. 15:2, 8). The love of a parent often blinds him to the many defects and malicious designs of his son.
 - 3) Until this moment David hoped (ver. 5) that his life, at least, might be spared and his destruction averted.
3. David should have asked himself, *Had the righteous judgment of God overtaken Absalom because he had "risen up against him" (v. 31)?* David should have remembered that:
 - 1) Absalom had despised the commandment of the Lord, and rebelled against the Divine King of Israel.
 - 2) David himself had contributed by his own conduct to the misconduct of his Son. "The worst

¹⁰² *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:19–33.

The Pulpit Commentary on David's Grief

- ingredient in this cup of anguish would be, I think, the consciousness in David's heart that, if he had himself been all he ought to have been, his son might not thus have perished" (W.M. Taylor).
- 3) David was still suffering the chastisement of Heaven, of which his son's death was a part. There was the curse that David's sin brought on his own house (2Sam. 12:10) and that the misdeed of the fathers that is visited on the children (Ex. 20:5). However, there is also the fact of Absalom's own wickedness and recklessness, which made him the bearer of the family curse. David looks at Absalom's deed not on the latter sense, but as related to his own shortcomings as a father (for his own guilt seems to him so great, that he looks little at Absalom's). Hence his...heartbroken cry, "["Would God I had died for you!"](#)" This was not only the utterance of self-sacrificing love, but the confession that he himself deserved the punishment which fell upon another (Kirkpatrick).
 4. Absalom's death meant irreparable loss and separation. No cries nor tears can restore him to his father or [the land of the living](#) (1Sam. 25:29 2Sam. 4:11 Psalm 26:9 49:8). Whatever David may have thought of his condition in Sheol, no parent can contemplate the death of a rebellious and impenitent son without heart rending grief, arising from the fear of his exclusion from the presence of God, sharing the doom of the Lord's enemies, and endless separation from the fellowship of saints. "Abandon all hope, you who enter here!" (Dante, "Inferno," 3.).

The Pulpit Commentary; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 18:33 (severely edited).

One of the most important things to take from this is, all the potential in the world will come to naught without the careful guiding hand of a father. Kids cannot raise themselves.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom is David's fault, to some degree. David did not raise this young man as he should have. Absalom was the spitting image of David, but he had not been redeemed, nor had he been exposed to justice and honor. That Absalom got to a point of where he could not be redeemed, David no doubt blamed this lack in Absalom's character on himself. Whether David could have put all of this together in his thinking, we do not know, as all we know from David here is his great pain at knowing that his son has died, and there is nothing that he can do to change that.

Allow me to counter this thinking with David's own life. If you will recall that David, in his youth, was essentially abandoned by his parents. When Samuel came to them to crown their son king, David's father went through each of his sons, but did not think about David for such a position. David was out with the sheep, and he had, in his father's eyes, no potential. So David's own father had not showered him with guidance or encouragement (although, on the other hand, David's father did ingrain him with personal responsibility).

David did a lousy job in raising Absalom—there can be no argument about this. But Absalom chose a life apart from God. No doubt that some of David's sorrow was that he recognized that Absalom chose a life apart from God. This does happen. There are many children who abandon God, despite the piety of their parents; and many children who come to God, even though God's name was not uttered in their home (except as a curse).

There is the parallel of the father-son relationship in life, and that of God over mankind.

The Father-Son Relationship in Scripture

1. That David is in deep sorrow over the death of his son is quite apparent here; it overshadows the blessing of God's victory over David's enemies.
2. God has given most men the blessing of a child; and how this child grows into a man is very much on the shoulders of the father.

The Father-Son Relationship in Scripture

3. The father is responsible to teach the Word of God to his children. Fathers were to help their sons memorize God's words. Deut. 6:6–9 **"Think seriously and believe these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. Write them down on your ipad and use them as screensavers on your laptop computer. Put them on post-in notes and place these around your house in conspicuous places."** (God's Word™ greatly modified)
4. For the child who is unable to be restrained, Deuteronomy 21:18-21 reads: **"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear."** (ESV) A lot has been made of this verse, as if men were hauling their children out to be stoned to death every few minutes. Much of what we find in the Mosaic Law is that which preserves a nation. Rebellious teens do not preserve a nation; if anything, they bring a nation down, exposing it to divine discipline and to internal rot. It ought to be clear that, this decision is made by both the father and the mother to bring such a child to the city gate and to say, "We can fix this boy. He is out of control. We have tried everything." Making a decision like this is quite difficult for any parent and much more so for two parents. For two parents to agree and bring their son to be executed indicates that this son is quite far gone.
5. There is a similar, in fact, even lower bar for execution, given in Lev. 20:9 **"For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him."** We also have this command: Exodus 21:15 **"Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death."** (ESV). These are both extensions of Ex. 20:12 **"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the land the LORD your God is giving you."** So there is no question that children were to be obedient and not to even curse their parents. Now, you may think, "Well, I have cursed my parents a hundred times." Obviously, there is no such consequence for us today. Had this been known to be a consequence, would you have cursed your parents? Furthermore, have you cursed your parents in public? I lived in a generation where there was great disrespect given to one's parents, including from me to my own. In my generation, I have been born into the greatest country in human history, and because of our stupidity, we in my generation (and those younger than me) are about ready to throw all of this away. Our nation is not even 300 years old yet, and God needed to preserve the Jews for all time; so God gave restrictions to that people which may seem radical to us, but would help us greatly as a nation and as a people. It is also important to recognize, when there are real consequences for various actions, these actions did not occur very often.
6. Discipline is clearly a part of raising a child: Proverbs 13:24 **Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.** (ESV)
7. As has been discussed in this and previous chapters, David needed to show his son love mixed with righteousness and justice. David was sentimental about his son, but he was unable to instill discipline in him. You may recall that Amnon, the son that Absalom killed, was a self-indulgent layabout. This means that David was not doing his job. Mothers give their children a great deal, but what they do not tend to give the child is enforced humility and stern discipline. This usually comes from the father, as in, "Just wait till your father comes home."
8. As has also been studied in a previous chapter, single mothers are just not as good at raising a child as a father and mother household. A child raised in a home headed by a single mother is more likely to be involved in drug or alcohol abuse, they are more like to be criminals, they are more likely to drop out of high school and not enter into college, and they are more likely to become pregnant before they are married. It is not that the mother does not provide a significant component in the raising of a child; she is just unable to provide all that a child needs.
9. Family is one of the divine institutions found in Scripture. This means, this is an organization which is important for society as a whole, for the nation and for those involved with the family. This applies to believers and to unbelievers. One of the ways that you know a political movement is anti-God is, they will

The Father-Son Relationship in Scripture

oppose the nuclear family and try to support some substitution (a single-mother household, two parents of the same sex heading a household, a polygamous household, a commune of sorts, etc.). See the **Laws of Divine Establishment**. ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Included in this study will be a full examination of the Divine Institutions. When a society encourages these alternate groupings of people, the society is on a downward spiral.

10. How a son develops into manhood is a direct reflection on the household of his parents. Prov. 17:25 [A foolish son is a heartache to his father and bitter grief to his mother.](#)

This is a very rich subject and far more time could be spent on this.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The believer in Jesus Christ needs to know that we only have so much time on this earth, and we only have so many contacts, and because we are spiritually not in the right place, we are like David, out chasing skirt, when he should have been raising his sons, when he should have been guiding them in this life. The son to whom David felt the most, the son who had the most promise, and was David’s natural successor, would never be that successor, because David let him down.

Jesus, in His humanity, had the very same depth of emotion, when even of His persecutors, He said, **“Forgive them, Father, for they do not know what they are doing.”** No matter what any of those men had done—not matter their cursing, their striking their hatred toward Jesus—had they only believed in Him, at any point in their lives, He would accept them and deliver them from eternal judgement, despite their great sinfulness. The prodigal son who returns brings great joy to the father to whom he returns, and is the reason for great celebration (Luke 15:7, 10, 23). This concept is both applicable to the sinner who changes his mind, as well as to the believer who has been out of fellowship for a very long time, and then returns to the fold.

David’s great lamentation over the loss of his son: [The king was clearly agitated as he went up to the roof-chamber situated over the gate, and he began to weep when he could not be seen. As he went up, he kept saying, “Absalom, my son, my son—O that I might have died in your place, my son Absalom.”](#)

Some of the Great Lamentations in Scripture

Citation	Text/Commentary
Job 3:1–11 Job curses the day of his birth. (JPCT)	Afterwards, Job opened his mouth and cursed his day. Now Job raised his voice and said, "Would the day in which I was to be born be lost, and the night when one said, 'A man has impregnated.' May that day be dark; let God not seek it from above, and let no light shine upon it. May darkness and the shadow of death defile it; let pitch darkness dwell upon it; let them frighten it like demons of the day. That night-may pitch darkness take it; it shall not rejoice among the days of the year; in the number of months it shall not come. Behold that night shall be lonely; no joyful singing shall come therein. May those who curse the day, curse it-those destined to be childless in their union. May the stars of its evening be darkened; it shall hope for light but have none, neither shall it see the rays of dawn. For He did not shut the doors of my womb, neither did He hide trouble from my eyes. Why did I not die from the womb? Why did I not emerge from the belly and perish?"

Some of the Great Lamentations in Scripture

Citation	Text/Commentary
<p>Psalm 88:1–7</p> <p>David calls out to the Lord when in great pain and misery.</p> <p>(ESV)</p>	<p>O LORD, God of my salvation; I cry out day and night before you. Let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry! For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol. I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am a man who has no strength, like one set loose among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, like those whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand. You have put me in the depths of the pit, in the regions dark and deep. Your wrath lies heavy upon me, and you overwhelm me with all your waves.</p>
<p>Psalm 88:13–18</p> <p>David calling out to the Lord when under great discipline.</p> <p>(ESV)</p>	<p>But I, O LORD, cry to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you. O LORD, why do you cast my soul away? Why do you hide your face from me? Afflicted and close to death from my youth up, I suffer your terrors; I am helpless. Your wrath has swept over me; your dreadful assaults destroy me. They surround me like a flood all day long; they close in on me together. You have caused my beloved and my friend to shun me; my companions have become darkness.</p>
<p>Lam 3:1–8</p> <p>Lamentation of a man (nation) under God's discipline.</p> <p>(HCSB)</p>	<p>I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of God's wrath. He has driven me away and forced me to walk in darkness instead of light. Yes, He repeatedly turns His hand against me all day long. He has worn away my flesh and skin; He has shattered my bones. He has laid siege against me, encircling me with bitterness and hardship. He has made me dwell in darkness like those who have been dead for ages. He has walled me in so I cannot escape; He has weighed me down with chains. Even when I cry out and plead for help, He rejects my prayer.</p>
<p>Isa. 53:3–8</p> <p>Jesus, our Savior, taking upon Himself our sins.</p> <p>(ESV)</p>	<p>He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?</p>

Some of the Great Lamentations in Scripture

Citation	Text/Commentary
Matt. 23:33–37 Jesus laments over the hardness of the hearts of the people of Israel. (NJB)	'You serpents, brood of vipers, how can you escape being condemned to hell? This is why -- look -- I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some you will slaughter and crucify, some you will scourge in your synagogues and hunt from town to town; and so you will draw down on yourselves the blood of every upright person that has been shed on earth, from the blood of Abel the holy to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. In truth I tell you, it will all recoil on this generation. 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you refused!'
Rom. 9:1–3 Paul's sadness for Israel. (NJB)	This is the truth and I am speaking in Christ, without pretence, as my conscience testifies for me in the Holy Spirit; there is great sorrow and unremitting agony in my heart: I could pray that I myself might be accursed and cut off from Christ, if this could benefit the brothers who are my own flesh and blood.

Scripture lists many people on many occasions who suffer grief and sadness in this life. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, neither shall there be anguish (sorrow and mourning) nor grief nor pain any more, for the old conditions and the former order of things have passed away (Rev. 21:4; Amp).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Chapter Outline	Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines	
Beginning of Document	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
Introduction	Addendum	
www.kukis.org	Exegetical Studies in Samuel	

Addendum

What We Learn from 2Samuel 18

1. Bad leadership or leadership that you do not like does not mean that you should ever engage in revolution. Even under the worse president, you do not rebel.
2. We have studied revolution and establishment government, and we know not to rebel even against a got which is moving far left (as our own is, in the year of our Lord 2013). We learned that our solutions are always spiritual and never political.
3. Trusting God does not mean that you do nothing. David, when faced with an imminent battle, organized his troops militarily.
4. David knew when to fight and when to retreat.

What We Learn from 2Samuel 18

5. It is not the largest army that wins the war; many other factors are involved (in this example, the organization of the army itself, the excellent leadership, and the battlefield).
6. God has designed the ideal spiritual life for us. Often a part of our blessing is having the right job.
7. God gives us periods of down-time, and expects us to use this time wisely.
8. We studied the concept of living one day at a time. This is one of the most important doctrines for the believer in Jesus Christ.
9. We studied in depth how negative emotion can be destructive and defines the way that liberals think.
10. We learned about the importance of organization and planning for war. Absalom had several deficiencies in his larger army: he was not organized; they were not well-trained, and they allowed David to pick the battlefield.
11. In a revolution, God kills off many of the revolutionaries.
12. Although God is never specific as to the mechanics of how angels assist Him, there are hints in this chapter that angels may have somehow worked through the animals and even through the plants and the general environment against Absalom.
13. Because of the anti-authoritarian view of Absalom, we studied organizational humility, enforced humility and genuine humility, categories originally developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr.
14. We learn that every person has a job which is particular to his talents; and that a man in authority is able to correctly place that man in the right job.
15. David is not yet out of the interlocking systems of arrogance. He has shown great strides, but Absalom tethers David to emotional arrogance.
16. The great failure of David was to make his sons wards of the state, allowing their mothers to raise them, and to play the part of the indulgent father. Young men need discipline and guidance from their father. Just as any of David's sons could have been raised to be his proper successor; so could his lack of guidance result in a son like Absalom.

There is a great deal to be found in a chapter like this, despite how unusual it is.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

Antiquities of the Jews - Book VII

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF FORTY YEARS. FROM THE DEATH OF SAUL TO THE DEATH OF DAVID.

CHAPTER 10.

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

1. AND this was the state of David and his followers: but Absalom got together a vast army of the Hebrews to oppose his father, and passed therewith over the river Jordan, and sat down not far off Mahanaim, in the country of Gilead. He appointed Amasa to be captain of all his host, instead of Joab his kinsman: his father was Ithra and his mother Abigail: now she and Zeruah, the mother of Joab, were David's sisters. But when David had numbered his followers, and found them to be about four thousand, he resolved not to tarry till Absalom attacked him, but set over his men captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and divided his army into three parts; the one part he committed to Joab, the next to Abishai, Joab's brother, and the third to Ittai, David's companion and friend, but one that came from the city Gath; and when he was desirous of fighting himself

Josephus' History of this Time Period

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

2. Then did Joab put his army in battle-array over against the enemy in the Great Plain, where he had a wood behind him. Absalom also brought his army into the field to oppose him. Upon the joining of the battle, both sides showed great actions with their hands and their boldness; the one side exposing themselves to the greatest hazards, and using their utmost alacrity, that David might recover his kingdom; and the other being no way deficient, either in doing or suffering, that Absalom might not be deprived of that kingdom, and be brought to punishment by his father for his impudent attempt against him. Those also that were the most numerous were solicitous that they might not be conquered by those few that were with Joab, and with the other commanders, because that would be the greater disgrace to them; while David's soldiers strove greatly to overcome so many ten thousands as the enemy had with them. Now David's men were conquerors, as superior in strength and skill in war; so they followed the others as they fled away through the forests and valleys; some they took prisoners, and many they slew, and more in the flight than in the battle for there fell about twenty thousand that day. But all David's men ran violently upon Absalom, for he was easily known by his beauty and tallness. He was himself also afraid lest his enemies should seize on him, so he got upon the king's mule, and fled; but as he was carried with violence, and noise, and a great motion, as being himself light, he entangled his hair greatly in the large boughs of a knotty tree that spread a great way, and there he hung, after a surprising manner; and as for the beast, it went on farther, and that swiftly, as if his master had been still upon his back; but he, hanging in the air upon the boughs, was taken by his enemies. Now when one of David's soldiers saw this, he informed Joab of it; and when the general said, that if he had shot at and killed Absalom, he would have given him fifty shekels, - he replied, "I would not have killed my master's son if thou wouldst have given me a thousand shekels, especially when he desired that the young man might be spared in the hearing of us all." But Joab bade him show him where it was that he saw Absalom hang; whereupon he shot him to the heart, and slew him, and Joab's armor-bearers stood round the tree, and pulled down his dead body, and cast it into a great chasm that was out of sight, and laid a heap of stones upon him, till the cavity was filled up, and had both the appearance and the bigness of a grave. Then Joab sounded a retreat, and recalled his own soldiers from pursuing the enemy's army, in order to spare their countrymen.

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

4. But now Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok the high priest, went to Joab, and desired he would permit him to go and tell David of this victory, and to bring him the good news that God had afforded his assistance and his providence to him. However, he did not grant his request, but said to him, "Wilt thou, who hast always been the messenger of good news, now go and acquaint the king that his son is dead?" So he desired him to desist. He then called Cushie, and committed the business to him, that he should tell the king what he had seen. But when Ahimaaz again desired him to let him go as a messenger, and assured him that he would only relate what concerned the victory, but not concerning the death of Absalom, he gave him leave to go to David. Now he took a nearer road than the former did, for nobody knew it but himself, and he came before Cushie. Now as David was sitting between the gates, (18) and waiting to see when somebody would come to him from the battle, and tell

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him how it went, one of the watchmen saw Ahimaaz running, and before he could discern who he was, he told David that he saw somebody coming to him, who said he was a good messenger. A little while after, he informed him that another messenger followed him; whereupon the king said that he also was a good messenger: but when the watchman saw Ahimaaz, and that he was already very near, he gave the king notice that it was the son of Zadok the high priest who came running. So David was very glad, and said he was a messenger of good tidings, and brought him some such news from the battle as he desired to hear.

5. While the king was saying thus, Ahimaaz appeared, and worshipped the king. And when the king inquired of him about the battle, he said he brought him the good news of victory and dominion. And when he inquired what he had to say concerning his son, he said that he came away on the sudden as soon as the enemy was defeated, but that he heard a great noise of those that pursued Absalom, and that he could learn no more, because of the haste he made when Joab sent him to inform him of the victory. But when Cushai came, and had worshipped him, and informed him of the victory, he asked him about his son, who replied, "May the like misfortune befall thine enemies as hath befallen Absalom." That word did not permit either himself or his soldiers to rejoice for the victory, though it was a very great one; but David went up to the highest part of the city, (19) and wept for his son, and beat his breast, tearing [the hair of] his head, tormenting himself all manner of ways, and crying out, "O my son! I wish that I had died myself, and ended my days with thee!" for he was of a tender natural affection, and had extraordinary compassion for this son in particular. But when the army and Joab heard that the king mourned for his son, they were ashamed to enter the city in the habit of conquerors, but they all came in as cast down, and in tears, as if they had been beaten. Now while the king covered himself, and grievously lamented his son, Joab went in to him, and comforted him, and said, "O my lord the king, thou art not aware that thou layest a blot on thyself by what thou now doest; for thou seemest to hate those that love thee, and undergo dangers for thee nay, to hate thyself and thy family, and to love those that are thy bitter enemies, and to desire the company of those that are no more, and who have been justly slain; for had Absalom gotten the victory, and firmly settled himself in the kingdom, there had been none of us left alive, but all of us, beginning with thyself and thy children, had miserably perished, while our enemies had not wept for his, but rejoiced over us, and punished even those that pitied us in our misfortunes; and thou art not ashamed to do this in the case of one that has been thy bitter enemy, who, while he was thine own son hath proved so wicked to thee. Leave off, therefore, thy unreasonable grief, and come abroad and be seen of thy soldiers, and return them thanks for the alacrity they showed in the fight; for I myself will this day persuade the people to leave thee, and to give the kingdom to another, if thou continuest to do thus; and then I shall make thee to grieve bitterly and in earnest." Upon Joab's speaking thus to him, he made the king leave off his sorrow, and brought him to the consideration of his affairs. So David changed his habit, and exposed himself in a manner fit to be seen by the multitude, and sat at the gates; whereupon all the people heard of it, and ran together to him, and saluted him. And this was the present state of David's affairs.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-7.htm> accessed July 26, 2013. Josephus *Antiquities*; Book VII, Chapter 12.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Edersheim's commentary on this chapter, with some slight updating and editing.

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 18

He crossed the Jordan to offer battle to his father's forces. These must have considerably increased since his flight from Jerusalem (comp. 2Samuel 18:1, 2), though, no doubt, they were still greatly inferior in number to the undisciplined multitude which followed Absalom. David divided his army into three corps, led by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai - the chief command being entrusted to Joab, since the people would not allow the king himself to go into battle. The field was most skillfully chosen for an engagement with undisciplined superior numbers, being a thick forest near the Jordan,²⁶ which, with its pitfalls, morasses, and entanglements, destroyed more

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 18

of Absalom's followers than fell in actual contest. From the first the battle was not doubtful; it soon became a carnage rather than a conflict.

One scene on that eventful day had deeply and, perhaps, painfully impressed itself on the minds of all David's soldiers. As they marched out of Mahanaim on the morning of the battle, the king had stood by the side of the gate, and they had filed past him by hundreds and by thousands. One thing only had he been heard by all to say, and this he had repeated to each of the generals. It was simply. "Gently,²⁷ for my sake, with the lad, with Absalom!"

If the admonition implied the existence of considerable animosity on the part of David's leaders against the author of this wicked rebellion, it showed, on the other hand, not only weakness, but selfishness, almost amounting to heartlessness, on the part of the king. It was, as Joab afterwards reproached him, as if he had declared that he regarded neither princes nor servants, and that it would have mattered little to him how many had died, so long as his own son was safe (2 Samuel 19:6). If such was the impression produced, we need not wonder that it only increased the general feeling against Absalom. This was soon to be brought to the test. In his pursuit of the rebels, one of Joab's men came upon a strange sight. It seems that, while Absalom was riding rapidly through the dense wood in his flight, his head had somehow been jerked in between the branches of one of the large spreading terebinths - perhaps, as Josephus has it (Ant. 7. 10, 2), having been entangled by the flowing hair. In this position the mule which he rode, perhaps David's royal mule - had run away from under him; while Absalom, half suffocated and disabled, hung helpless, a prey to his pursuers. But the soldier who first saw him knew too well the probable consequences of killing him, to be tempted to such an act by any reward, however great. He only reported it to Joab, but would not become his tool in the matter. Indeed, Joab himself seems to have hesitated, though he was determined to put an end to Absalom's schemes, which he must have resented the more, since but for his intervention the prince would not have been allowed to return to Jerusalem. And so, instead of killing, he only wounded Absalom with pointed staves,²⁸ leaving it to his armor-bearers finally to dispatch the unhappy youth. His hacked and mangled remains were cast into a great pit in the wood, and covered by a large heap of stones. A terrible contrast, this unknown and unhonored criminal's grave, to the splendid monument which Absalom had reared for himself after the death of his sons! Their leader being dead, Joab, with characteristic love for his countrymen, sounded the rappel, and allowed the fugitive Israelites to escape.

But who was to carry to the king tidings of what had happened? Joab knew David too well to entrust them to any one whose life he specially valued. Accordingly, he sent a stranger, a Cushite; and only after repeated entreaty and warning of the danger, allowed Ahimaaz also to run with the news to Mahanaim. Between the outer and the inner gates of that city sat the king, anxiously awaiting the result of that decisive day. And now the watchman on the pinnacle above descried one running towards the city. Since he was alone, he could not be a fugitive, but must be a messenger. Soon the watchman saw and announced behind the first a second solitary runner. Presently the first one was so near that, by the swiftness of his running the watchman recognized Ahimaaz. If so, the tidings which he brought must be good, for on no other errand would Ahimaaz have come. And so it was! Without giving the king time for question, he rapidly announced the God-given victory. Whatever relief or comfort the news must have carried to the heart of David, he did not express it by a word. Only one question rose to his lips, only one idea of peace²⁹ did his mind seem capable of contemplating, "Peace to the lad, to Absalom?"

Ahimaaz could not, or rather would not, answer. Not so the Cushite messenger, who by this time had also arrived. From his language - though, even he feared to say it in so many words - David speedily gathered the fate of his son. In speechless grief he turned from the two messengers, and from the crowd which, no doubt, was rapidly gathering in the gateway, and crept up the stairs leading to the chamber over the gate, while those below heard his piteous groans, and these words, oft repeated, "My son Absalom, my son! My son Absalom! Oh, would that I had died for thee! Absalom, my son - my son?"

From <http://www.lewendwater.org/books/v5bhot.pdf> accessed July 26, 2013. Footnotes were interspersed in the text and bracketed.

²⁶ It is impossible to decide whether this "Wood of Ephraim" was west or east of the Jordan. From the context, the latter seems the more probable.

²⁷ So literally in the Hebrew text.

²⁸ The Hebrew word here used (Shevet) generally means scepter, or else staff or rod, but not dart, as in the Authorized Version (2 Samuel 18:14).

²⁹ The first word of Ahimaaz as he came close to the king was: "Shalom," "Peace" (in our Authorized Version "All is well"). David's first word to Ahimaaz also was "Shalom." Only Ahimaaz referred to the public weal, David to his personal feelings.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

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

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 18	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
King David deploys his troops	
David numbered the soldiers who [were] with him, and he placed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. David then deployed his army [lit., <i>the people</i>], a third in the hand of Joab, a third in the hand of Abishai ben Zeruiah (Joab's brother) and a third in the hand of Ittai the Gittite.	David determined the size of his army and placed lieutenant colonels over groups of a thousand and captains over groups of a hundred. David then deployed the people into three companies—one under Joab, one under Abishai, his brother, and one under Ittai the Gittite.
The king said to the people, "I will certainly go out with you [lit., <i>"Going out, I will go out with you—even me."</i>]"	David also said to the people, "I will also go out with you to battle."
The people then said, "You will not go out [with us into battle], for if we indeed retreat, they will not consider us [lit., <i>place [their] heart to us</i>]. And if half of us die, they will not consider us, for now we [are] approximately ten-thousand [strong] [or possibly, <i>...for you (are) about (equal to) 10,000 (of us)</i>]. Therefore, [it is better] that you are for us to help from [this] city."	However, the people protested, saying, "You should not go out with us into battle, for if we indeed retreat, Absalom's army will not care. If half of us die in battle, they will not care, for you are equal to ten-thousand of us. Therefore, it is better that you help us from this city."
The king then replied, "Whatever [seems] good in your eyes, [that] I will do."	The king then replied, "I will agree to what you have said."
So the king stood at the side of the gate while all the people have gone out by hundreds and by thousands. The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, "[Treat] the youth, Absalom, gently for me." And all of the people heard the king give [this] order to all the commanders for the sake of Absalom.	Therefore, the king stood at the side of the gate watching the people go out marching in formation by hundreds and by thousands. As they were leaving, the king gave specific orders to Joab, Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Treat this young man, Absalom, gently, for my sake." And all the people heard the king give this order to his commanders on behalf of Absalom.
The battle	
The people the went out [toward] the open area to meet Israel. The battle would be in the forests of Ephraim.	David's army went out toward the open area to meet Israel; the battle would take place in the forests of Ephraim.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 18

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

The people of Israel were struck down there before the servants of David. The slaughter was great that day—20,000 [men died]. The battle was scattered there upon all the earth; and the forest multiplied the devouring among the people in that day more than the sword devoured.

The people of Israel were struck down before the army of David. It was a great slaughter, where 20,000 men died. The battle spread out over that land, so that the forest devoured more people in that day than the sword did.

Absalom is found and killed

Absalom [unexpectedly] met up face to face with David's servants while Absalom was riding upon his mule [lit., *the mule*]. The mule went under the thick branches of the great oak so that his head was held fast by the oak [branches]. Consequently, he was delivered up [to them, hanging] between heaven and earth while the mule which [was] under him kept going.

Absalom unexpectedly met up with some of David's servants while Absalom was riding his mule. The mule went under some thick branches of a great oak tree so that Absalom's head was caught up in the branches of the oak. Consequently, he was delivered up there to his enemies by God, suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule under him kept on going.

One man saw [this] and he made [it] known to Joab, saying, "Listen, I have seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree."

One man saw Absalom and he went to Joab and told him about it, saying, "Listen, I know where Absalom is; he is over yonder, hanging in a tree."

Then Joab said to the man, the messenger, "Really, you saw [Absalom]? Why did you not strike him to the ground? On my account, I would have given you 10 [pieces of] silver and a certain [military] belt [signifying a promotion]."

Then Joab upbraided this messenger, saying, "Listen, you saw Absalom and you did nothing? Why didn't you kill him right then and there? I would have rewarded you with 10 pieces of silver and a military promotion."

The man said to Joab, "Even if a thousand silver [coins] are weighed out into my hands, I would not raised [lit., *put forth*] my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing, the king commanded you, [General] Abishai and [General] Ittai, saying, 'Guard [according to my] wishes Absalom, the young man.' [Even] if I make a lie in my soul then every word would not be hidden from the king and you will take a stand afar off."

The man who saw Absalom responded to Joab: "It would not matter even if you had given me a thousand silver coins—I still would not put forth my hand against the king's son. In fact, if you will recall, the king commanded all of you, in our hearing, 'Preserve the young man, Absalom, alive, for my sake.' If I kill the king's son and then lie about it everything about this will be known to the king; and you would not stand up for me."

Therefore, Joab said, "I will not, therefore, wait in front of you." Then he took 3 spears in his hand and he thrust them into Absalom, yet, he [remained] alive in the midst of the oak. The ten young men who bore the Joab's armor surrounded and then struck Absalom, thus killing him.

Therefore, Joab said, "I will not waste any more time standing around talking to you." He grabbed 3 spears in his hand, went to the tree where Absalom was hanging and thrust them into Absalom. However, Absalom remained alive, still caught in the oak. Joab's armor bearers, ten young men, surrounded Absalom and struck him until he died.

The war is over; Absalom is buried

Joab blew the trumpet so the people returned from pursuing after Israel, for Joab restrained the people.

Joab blew the trumpet to call the troops back from pursuing Israel. Joab called for restraint against the people who had followed Absalom.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 18	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Then they took Absalom and threw him into a large pit in the forest. They erected over him a very great heap of stones.	They took Absalom's body and threw it into a large pit in the forest, and then erected over him a great heap of stones.
Meanwhile, all Israel fled each one to his tent.	Meanwhile, his army fled, every man back to his own tent.
Absalom had taken and set up for himself (while he [was] alive) a pillar that [was] in the Valley of the King, for he had said, "I do not [have] a son so that my name is remembered." Therefore, he called the pillar by his [own] name; and he is proclaimed by it, [being known as] Absalom's monument even to this day.	Absalom took a pillar and set it up in the Valley of the King when he was still alive. He had observed, "I do not have a son to carry my name into the future." Therefore, he called the pillar by his own name, and it is therefore called Absalom's monument even to this day.
Joab allows two runners bring news to David	
Then Ahimaaz ben Zadok said, "Let me run, if you will, and bring good news to the king—that Y ^e howah has delivered him from the power of his enemies."	Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, asked Joab, "Could I run and take this good news to the king? I want to tell him that Jehovah has delivered him from the power of his enemies."
Joab said to him, "You [will] not [be] the man [bearing] good news today; but you will carry good news on another day. However [lit., and], today, you will not carry good news because the king's son is dead."	Joab, however, said to him, "You will not carry good news to the king today, although you may do that on another day. However, today, the king's son is dead—and that will not be good news to the king."
Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go [and] make known to the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed himself before Joab and then he ran [to David].	Then Joab spoke to the Cushite, telling him, "Go and make this information known to the king." The Cushite therefore bowed before Joab and he ran to tell David the news.
Ahimaaz ben Zadok added [again] and he said to Joab, "And why is [he the only man to bear this news]? Let me run, please, me as well, [following] after the Cushite."	Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, spoke up again, asking, "Is this the only option? May I also run, following after the Cushite?"
Joab then said, "Why? You [may] run, my son, even though no tidings are discovered [or, no reward for good news will be found]."	Joab answered, "You may run, my son, even though you do not appear to have additional tidings to bring to the king."
"Be that as it may [lit., and what is]—I would [like to] run," [Ahimaaz said].	"Come what may, I would like to run," Ahimaaz said.
Then Joab [lit., he] said to him, "Run." Therefore Ahimaaz ran [along] the way of the circular district and he overtook the Cushite.	So Joab ordered him, "Run, then." Ahimaaz ran along the way of the plain and he outran the Cushite.
The two runners bring news to David	
While David is sitting between the two gates, the watchman went to the roof of the gate toward the [outer] wall. He lifts up his eyes and looks, and he sees [lit., behold] a man running alone. The watchman calls out and makes [this] known to the king.	While David is sitting between the two gates, the watchman on duty goes up to the roof of the gate near the wall. He looks out to the horizon and he sees a man running alone. The watchman calls out to David, telling him about the runner.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 18	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
David [lit., <i>the king</i>] then said, "If he is alone, [then there is] good news in his mouth." And he continually comes drawing near [coming toward them].	David then says, "If he is alone, then he is bringing good news." And the watchman observed as the runner came closer and closer to the city.
The watchman then saw another man running, and he called out to the gatekeeper [possibly, <i>toward the gate</i>], saying, "I see [lit., <i>behold</i>] [another] man running alone."	When the watchman observed another man running toward the city, he called out to the gate and told David of the approaching man.
And the king said, "This one is also bringing good news."	Then the king remarked, "This one is also bringing us good news."
The watchman said, "I perceive [that] the first runner [is] like the running of Ahimaaz ben Zadok."	The watchman then proclaimed, "I believe that the first runner looks like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok."
And the king said, "This one [is] a good man and he is coming with good news."	And the king remarked, "He is a good man and he is bringing us good news."
The two messengers deliver the news to David	
Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "[We have secured the] peace." Then he prostrated himself before the king, his face [lit., <i>nose</i>] toward the ground, and he said, "Praise to Y ^e howah your Elohim Who delivered over the men who raised up their hands against my adonai the king."	As Ahimaaz came closer, he called out to the king, saying, "We have secured the peace." Then he prostrated himself before the king, his face toward the ground. He said, "Praise to Jehovah your God, Who delivered over those men who rebelled against my lord the king."
The king said, "[Is there] peace to the young man? To Absalom?"	The king asked if his son Absalom survived the battle.
Ahimaaz answered, "I saw a great tumult when [Joab] the servant of the king was sent out along with your servant, but I did not know what [happened to Absalom]."	Ahimaaz hemmed and hawed, answering, "When we went out into the battle—Joab and his army (myself included)—all I could see is a great tumult; I have no idea what happened to Absalom."
The king then said, "Step back [lit., <i>turn around</i>]; stand [at attention]." So he stepped back [lit., <i>turned around</i>] and stood [at attention].	The king ordered Ahimaaz to step back and stand at attention. He did what he was told to do.
Then they saw that [lit., <i>behold</i>] the Cushite had come [to them]. And the Cushite said, "My adonai the king receives good news today for Y ^e howah has delivered you from the power of those who have risen up against you."	Then the Cushite came up, and he said to them, "There is good news today for my lord the king, for Jehovah has delivered you from the power of those who have risen up against you."
The king then asked the Cushite, "Is [it] well for the young man; for Absalom?"	The king then asked the Cushite "What about the young man, Absalom—is he okay?"
And the Cushite answered, "[May] the enemies of my adonai the king be like [that] young man; [and the same goes for] all who rise against you to [do] evil [against you]."	And the Cushite clearly answered him, "I wish that all of your enemies would be like that young man. I wish the same for every man who rises up against you to do evil to you."
David mourns for his son, Absalom	

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 18	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
The king is [clearly] agitated as he goes up to the roof-chamber over the gate, and he is weeping. While going up, he said, "My son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"	The king was clearly agitated as he went up to the roof-chamber situated over the gate, and he began to weep when he could not be seen. As he went up, he kept saying, "Absalom, my son, my son—O that I might have died in your place, my son Absalom."

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time: **Psalm 2** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. covered this chapter in lessons #631_0460 through 631_0480 of his **1972 David series**.

Chapter Outline		Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines
Beginning of Document	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
Introduction		Addendum
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Samuel