

# Life of David

A Man After God's Own Heart

## The Insult of Hanun

- Nahash, King of the Ammonites, died and was succeeded by his son, Hanun [2 Sam 10:1-2b].
  - Nahash had been at war with Israel and was summarily defeated by Saul [1 Sam 11:1-11].
  - During the reign of Saul the Ammonites continued to be hostile toward Israel [1 Sam 14:47].
  - Likewise David had been involved in military action against the Ammonites [2 Sam 8:11-12].
  - At some unspecified time, Nahash had shown kindness toward David [v. 2a].
  - Because of this, David was motivated to show kindness toward Hanun [v. 2a].
  - To show his kindness, David sent servants to console Hanun [v. 2b].
- The Ammonite princes were convinced that David's servants were spies [2 Sam 10:2c-3].
- Hanun responded by sending David's servants back in a very offensive way [2 Sam 10:4].
  - The shaving of the beards was an insult [Lev 21:5].
  - The cutting of their garments was embarrassing [Isa 20:3-4].
- The servants returned to Israel but would not go any further than Jericho because of their shame and humiliation [2 Sam 10:5].
  - David learned of what Hanun had done to his servants [v. 5a].
  - David showed his servants compassion by allowing them to remain at Jericho until their beards grew back [v. 5b].
- The Ammonites realized that Hanun's actions were a declaration of war, so they enlisted the support of the Arameans [2 Sam 10:6].
- When David heard about this, he sent his army of mighty men [2 Sam 10:7].
  - This was a punitive strike, not a conquest, so David did not go out to lead the army but sent Joab instead.
  - This military operation apparently took place in the winter and would be followed up by a springtime offensive [2 Sam 11:1].
- The Ammonites took up a defensive stance while the Arameans were in position to strike the rear of Israel's army [2 Sam 10:8].
- When Joab discerned the trap, he divided the forces accordingly [2 Sam 10:9-10].
  - Joab led "choice men" against the Arameans [v. 9].
  - Abishai led the remainder of the forces against the Ammonites [v. 10].
- Joab used clever strategy in leading the army as well as spiritual wisdom [2 Sam 10:11-12].
  - The design in dividing the forces was such that if one group was in trouble, the other could provide the needed support [v. 11].
  - Joab was oriented to God's will and encouraged the soldiers to be courageous knowing who they were fighting for [v. 12].

- As soon as the battle began, the Arameans and Ammonites fled [2 Sam 10:13-14].
  - More than likely the Arameans realized their attempt to flank the army of Israel had failed, so they retreated from the battle [v. 13].
  - The Ammonites followed suit by retreating into the city, so Joab directed the men to return to Jerusalem [v. 14].
- The Arameans decided to regather and attack Israel [2 Sam 10:15-16].
  - It is possible the Arameans viewed Joab's lack of pursuit as a sign of weakness.
  - Then again, maybe they just wanted to get revenge for their defeat.
  - In any case, Hadadezer gathered various Aramean forces together at Helam [v. 16].
- When David found out he gathered the armies of Israel together and led them to meet the Arameans at Helam [2 Sam 10:17-19].
  - David gathered "all Israel" [v. 17] meaning active duty and reserve components of the army.
  - He won decisively and allowed no retreat [v. 18].
  - The Arameans made peace with Israel and broke off any allegiance with the Ammonites [v. 19].