

2 Samuel 10

King James Version (KJV)

10 And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. (Nahash had been king; Nahash = serpent) 1Chronicles-19:1 & 1Samuel-11

²Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon. (Maybe Nahash had helped David when he was on the run from Saul)

³And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? (The king's advisers and princes are saying that David sent spies into their nation)

⁴Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. (The beard to a Hebrew man was an ornament of pride. It was also protection from the hot sun)

(Cutting their beards and clothes was a disgrace to these Israelites and an insult to David. Cutting their clothes also caused them to get severe sunburn)

⁵When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.

⁶And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bethrehob and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ishtob twelve thousand men. (They stank before David = they were hated by David)

(The Ammonites hired Syrian mercenaries to fight for them. Mercenaries have no loyalties. They fight for the highest bidder)

⁷And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. (He sent the best men of his army after them)

⁸ And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ishtob, and Maacah, were by themselves in the field. (The Ammonites are behind the gates, the Syrian mercenaries are in the open field)

⁹ When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: (Joab set his best men, to fight the Syrians. They were far more dangerous than the Ammonites)

¹⁰ And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. (These men were to lay siege to the city, and to keep the Ammonites at bay, away from helping the Syrians)

¹¹ And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. (This is a good strategy since they are facing two fronts)

¹² Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good. (Let us put forth our strength and our courage for our people – better translation)

(The battle is in God's hands. Joab and Abishai had faith in God)

¹³ And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. (Paid mercenaries are only in it for the money, not for loyalty. When the battle went against them, they fled)

¹⁴ And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem. (Winter was coming. It would be too difficult to lay siege to a walled city during the winter. Joab planned to go back in the spring and finish the Ammonites off)

¹⁵ And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.

¹⁶ And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river: and they came to Helam; and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. (They called in reinforcements from the other side of the River Euphrates) (The location of Helam is not known)

¹⁷ And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. (David gathered all of Israel this time. He led this battle)

¹⁸ And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

¹⁹ And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more. (This was David's last battle against the Syrians. The vassal kings of Syria abandoned Hadarezer and served David. When Joab returns in the spring, the Ammonites will be alone, against him)