

woman: for my husband is dead.

6 And thy handmaid had two sons: and they quarrelled with each other in the field, and there was none to part them: and the one struck the other, and slew him.

7 And behold the whole kindred rising against thy handmaid, saith: Deliver him that hath slain his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother, whom he slew, and that we may destroy the heir: and they seek to quench my spark which is left, and will leave my husband no name, nor remainder upon the earth.

8 And the king said to the woman: Go to thy house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Thecua said to the king: Upon me, my lord be the iniquity, and upon the house of my father: but may the king and his throne be guiltless.

10 And the king said: If any one shall say ought against thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 And she said: Let the king remember the Lord his God, that the next of kin be not multiplied to take revenge, and that they may not kill my son. And he said: As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 The woman said: Let thy hand maid speak one word to my lord the king. And he said: Speak.

13 And the woman said: Why hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God, and why hath the king spoken this word, to sin, and not bring home again his own exile?

14 We all die, and like waters that return no more, we fall down into the earth: neither will God have a soul to perish, but recalleth, meaning that he that is cast off should not altogether perish.

15 Now therefore I am come, to speak this word to my lord the king before the people. And

thy handmaid said: I will speak to the king, it maybe the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

16 And the king hath hearkened to me to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of all that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.

17 Then let thy handmaid say, that the word of the Lord the king be made as a sacrifice. For even as an angel of God, so is my lord the king, that he is neither moved with blessing nor cursing: wherefore the Lord thy God is also with thee.

18 And the king answering, said to the woman: Hide not from me the thing that I ask thee. And the woman said to him: Speak, my lord the king.

19 And the king said: Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this? The woman answered, and said: By the health of thy soul, my lord, O king, it is neither on the left hand, nor on the right, in all these things which my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he commanded me, and he put all these words into the mouth of thy handmaid.

20 That I should come about with this form of speech, thy servant Joab commanded this: but thou, my lord, O king, art wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to understand all things upon earth.

21 And the king said to Joab: Behold I am appeased and have granted thy request: Go therefore and fetch back the boy Absalom.

22 And Joab falling down to the ground upon his face, adored, and blessed the king: and Joab said: This day thy servant hath understood, that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king: for thou hast fulfilled the request of thy servant.

23 Then Joab arose and went to Gessur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

24 But the king said: Let him return into his house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned into his house, and saw not the king's face.

25 But in all Israel there was not a man so comely, and so exceedingly beautiful as Absalom: from the sole of the foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

26 And when he polled his hair (now he was polled once a year, because his hair was burdensome to him) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred sicles, according to the common weight.

27 And there were born to Absalom three sons: and one daughter, whose name was Tamar, and she was very beautiful.

28 And Absalom dwelt two years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.

29 He sent therefore to Joab, to send him to the king: but he would not come to him. And when he had sent the second time, and he would not come to him,

30 He said to his servants: You know the field of Joab near my field, that hath a crop of barley: go now and set it on fire. So the servants of Absalom set the corn on fire. And Joab's servants coming with their garments rent, said: The servants of Absalom have set part of the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom to his house, and said: Why have thy servants set my corn on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab: I sent to thee beseeching thee to come to me, that I might send thee to the king, to say to him: Wherefore am I come from Gessur? it had been better for me to be there: I beseech thee therefore that I may see the face of the king: and if he be mindful of my iniquity, let him kill me.

33 So Joab going in to the king, told him all:

and Absalom was called for, and, he went in to the king: and prostrated himself on the ground before him: and the king kissed Absalom.

Chapter 15

Now after these things Absalom made himself chariots, and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom rising up early stood by the entrance of the gate, and when any man had business to come to the king's judgment, Absalom called him to him, and said: Of what city art thou? He answered, and said: Thy servant is of such tribe of Israel.

3 And Absalom answered him: Thy words seem to me good and just. But there is no man appointed by the king to hear thee. And Absalom said:

4 O that they would make me judge over the land, that all that have business might come to me, that I might do them justice.

5 Moreover when any man came to him to salute him, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

6 And this he did to all Israel that came for judgment, to be heard by the king, and he enticed the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 And after forty years, Absalom said to king David: Let me go, and pay my vows which I have vowed to the Lord in Hebron.

8 For thy servant made a vow, when he was in Gessur of Syria, saying: If the Lord shall bring me again into Jerusalem, I will offer sacrifice to the Lord.

9 And king David said to him: Go in peace. And he arose, and went to Hebron.

10 And Absalom sent spies into all the tribes of Israel, saying: As soon as you shall hear the

sound of the trumpet, say ye: Absalom reigneth in Hebron.

11 Now there went with Absalom two hundred men out of Jerusalem that were called, going with simplicity of heart, and knowing nothing of the design.

12 Absalom also sent for Achitophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city Gilo. And while he was offering sacrifices, there was a strong conspiracy, and the people running together increased with Absalom.

13 And there came a messenger to David, saying: All Israel with their whole heart followeth Absalom.

14 And David said to his servants, that were with him in Jerusalem: Arise and let us flee: for we shall not escape else from the face of Absalom: make haste to go out, lest he come and overtake us, and bring ruin upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's servants said to him: Whatsoever our lord the king shall command, we thy servants will willingly execute.

16 And the king went forth, and all his household on foot: and the king left ten women his concubines to keep the house:

17 And the king going forth and all Israel on foot, stood afar off from the house:

18 And all his servants walked by him, and the bands of the Cerethi, and the Phelethi, and all the Gethites, valiant warriors, six hundred men who had followed him from Geth on foot, went before the king.

19 And the king said to Ethai the Gethite: Why comest thou with us: return and dwell with the king, for thou art a stranger, and art come out of thy own place.

20 Yesterday thou camest, and to day shalt thou be forced to go forth with us? but I shall go whither I am going: return thou, and take

back thy brethren with thee, and the Lord will shew thee mercy, and truth, because thou hast shewn grace and fidelity.

21 And Ethai answered the king, saying: As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth: in what place soever thou shalt be, my lord, O king, either in death, or in life, there will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ethai: Come, and pass over. And Ethai the Gethite passed, and all the men that were with him, and the rest of the people.

23 And they all wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself went over the brook Cedron, and all the people marched towards the way that looketh to the desert.

24 And Sadoc the priest also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God, and they set down the ark of God: and Abiathar went up, till all the people that was come out of the city had done passing.

25 And the king said to Sadoc: Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find grace in the sight of the Lord, he will bring me again, and he will shew me it, and his tabernacle.

26 But if he shall say to me: Thou pleasest me not: I am ready, let him do that which is good before him.

27 And the king said to Sadoc the priest: O seer, return into the city in peace: and let Achimaas thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons, be with you.

28 Behold I will lie hid in the plains of the wilderness, till there come word from you to certify me.

29 So Sadoc and Abiathar carried back the ark of God into Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 But David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, going up and weeping, walking barefoot,