



## INTRODUCTION

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The book of Second Samuel is the 61<sup>st</sup> on which I have worked. Along with 1 Samuel which I had to re-translate and for which I prepared a second commentary through a digital loss this book proved at first less inspirational or should I say engaging than its inclusion in the “former prophets” might have suggested.

When I applied the “Help” afforded by the rabbinic comment at the conclusion I was better able to capture the value of *the plethora of conversations (the Rabbis calculate these oral statements at over 1500 and there are certainly well over 200 exchanges taking in both books)* that render the book rich. Besides the contrast of the harshness of the sons of Zeruiah and the gallantry and kindness of Abner and David deliver within the pages of the book several lessons on divine grace and compassion.

A second great contrast between the victory of David at Rabbah and his flight under the pressure of Absalom’s revolt lead to that shining example of grace to Shimei.

Yet another contrast between David’s victory in 1 Samuel 17 and his near death engagement with a son of Goliath in 2 Samuel 21 lead to the autobiographical song of thanksgiving that is 2 Samuel 22 and its virtually identical counterpart Psalm 18.

The story of ABNER is pivotal to the legend of the book (“the king enthroned revered and victorious) and the development of a **united kingdom** under David as a foretaste of Messiah’s realm. Abner displayed more character than Ishbosheth and set himself to deliver the northern kingdom to David after the affair with Rizpah. Deep covenant commitment and a concept of one nation under God was the essential groundwork of Abner’s overture to David together with his diplomacy and his fortitude. His courage and lack of bitterness was the starting place to bring Israel together. Without mutual greatness of heart based on love for God and one another David and Abner could not have acted in concert. In the commentary I have drawn attention not once or twice to the contribution Abner made to the Davidic settlement at great cost to himself.

The label of the disk is an attempt to capture the twilight crossing of the Jordan as David takes flight to Mahanaim. It is superimposed on a quite ancient impression by Rochgrosse.

I have not made any significant reference to the 80 or so oral readings found as footnotes to the Hebrew text nor to the alternative plurals and various scribal corrections suggested. The nine Hebrew textual gaps I have noticed and made suitable comments. Such spaces are a feature of both 1 and 2 Samuel and they give decided opportunity for positive comment though critics spend their wasted breathe on expounding what they are pleased to call “textual corruption”. The Rabbis speak wiser concerning oral repair and it is easy to see that the gaps give pause for meditation under the Spirit of God and this to me is as much part of the provenance of these scriptures as is the inclusion of what the Spirit of God requires us to know.

I have the pleasure to afford yet another disc to the Christian public and in doing so may I turn you to the generous spirited David who when reviled passed on whilst

Shimei cast dirt and stones at him and cursed him. David simply said “Let him alone and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him. It may be that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day. And David went his way!” Should you, dear saint of God, find yourself the butt of ridicule remember Calvary-remember David and look up 2Samuel 19.16 and see the glorious sight of your adversary returning to greet you with love and a thousand men with him!” Where sin abounds grace does much more abound!

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**A BIBLE COMPANION**

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