

1 Chronicles Chapter 11

Verses 11:1 – 29:30

This section selectively recounts the reign of David with a heavy emphasis on the placement of the ark in Jerusalem and preparation to build the temple (see notes on 2 Sam. 5:1-3).

Verses 1-3

Whereas chapters 12 and 13 focus on the establishment of David's kingship over "all Israel", a more detailed account can be found (in 2 Sam. 1-5), the story is condensed here.

That David was king of Judah (the southern kingdom), for seven years before he was recognized as the king overall is barely mentioned.

The author assumes that his audience knows the story of Saul and David, so he chooses his details in order to emphasize the wealth of support for David as king.

1 Chronicles 11:1 "Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we [are] thy bone and thy flesh."

For a time after Saul's death, loyalties in "Israel" were divided between Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, and "David" (2 Sam. Chapters 2-4).

With the desertion of Ish-bosheth's general, Abner, to "Hebron, David's capital, to recognize his kingship over all Israel (2 Sam. 5:1-5).

For an expanded account concerning David's forces at Hebron (see 12:23-40).

When Saul first died, Abner anointed Ish-bosheth king in his father's place.

Samuel had already anointed David king.

All of the people accepted David as king.

Ish-bosheth reigned for two years over 11 tribes, until two of his own captains killed him.

David immediately became king of Judah.

David was king first in Hebron.

For seven and one half years, David reigned over just Judah.

David had six sons born in Hebron.

"All Israel" is speaking of all of the elders of all the tribes of Israel.

David asked God where he would go to set up his kingdom, and the LORD told him Hebron.

Hebron was located between Jerusalem and Beer-sheba.

Many of the patriarchs are buried in Hebron.

David was indeed, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh.

He was descended from Judah.

1 Chronicles 11:2 "And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou [wast] he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel."

David had been anointed king (1 Sam. 16:13), after "Saul's" disobedience to "God's" command given through Samuel (1 Sam. 15:22-23).

Part of the promise in the Davidic covenant was that as "ruler over Israel," the line of David would shepherd God's "people" (2 Sam. 7:8; 1 Chron. 17:7; Ezek. 34:23-31; 37:24).

It appears, that the people greatly admired David for the way he handled the problem with Saul.

David did have a following of loyal men.

The LORD had anointed David king of Israel, and these people accepted that anointing.

They wanted to be ruled by David.

This Scripture is almost prophetic in the fact that Jesus of the tribe of Judah, descended in the flesh from David, is indeed the Shepherd.

David was a shepherd boy who knew the importance of feeding the sheep.

He was a shepherd.

Jesus is the great Shepherd.

1 Chronicles 11:3 "Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel."

The assembly of elders, the Senate of Israel, make a contract with David concerning his prerogative and the rights of his people, thus formally determining “the manner of the kingdom.” (Compare 1 Sam. 8:9; 10:25).

Representative institutions appear to have been the rule in the best period of Israel’s national existence.

The elders or hereditary heads of the tribal subdivisions met in council to discuss and settle matters of national concern.

Compare 1 Chron. 12:23.

"Before the LORD":

In the presence of the high priest, and perhaps before the ark.

(Compare Exodus 21:6; 1 Sam. 2:25), where the priestly judge is called God, as representing the authority of the Divine judge (Exodus 22:28).

"According to the word of the LORD by Samuel":

A reflection added by the chronicler, and based upon the facts related in (1 Sam. 15:28; 16:1-13).

This says the covenant was made with them before the LORD.

It is not certain the location of this covenant, except it was in the presence of the LORD.

The anointing of David as king was done by the men of Judah confirming the anointing that Samuel had done previously.

The place of the anointing could have been in some place of worship in Hebron, because two priests were there at the time, Abiathar and Zadok.

They would not have been there if worship were not going on.

Samuel had anointed David king on the Word of the LORD.

Verses 4-5

“Jebus,” the home of the powerful “Jebusites,” was also known as “Jerusalem” (Joshua 15:63; Judges 19:10).

“David” had earlier brought Goliath’s head here (1 Sam. 17:54).

Because Jerusalem was a seemingly impregnable fortress, its citizens had thrown taunts at David and his men (2 Sam. 5:6-7).

After Jerusalem's capture, it became known as the "city of David," or "Zion."

In (verses 4-7), David made a strategic choice when he invaded "Jerusalem" in 1000 B.C. and claimed it as "the City of David."

Jerusalem was located on a tribal border and was therefore a neutral territory; thus, David would not be seen as favoring one tribe over another.

It was also a relatively small city located on a hill, making it easier to defend from invaders.

See notes on (2 Sam. 5:6-10).

Verses 4-9 (see notes on 2 Sam. 5:6-10).

1 Chronicles 11:4 "And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which [is] Jebus; where the Jebusites [were], the inhabitants of the land."

"And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem":

Of this and the following verses (see 1 Chron. 11:9, see notes on 2 Sam. 5:6).

Jebus was the ancient name of Jerusalem.

It was also spelled Jebusi in some Scriptures.

Jerusalem would become the city of God.

This would be the city where David would rule all of Israel.

It was 7-1/2 years after David went to Hebron, that he made Jerusalem his headquarters.

1 Chronicles 11:5 "And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which [is] the city of David."

"Thou shalt not come hither":

The inhabitants of Jebus added something besides (2 Sam. 5:6).

They had said, "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, "David cannot come in hither."

"The castle of Zion":

This fort became the site of the temple.

It is the Acra of Josephus, and is different from the modern Zion.

It was the eastern hill in the city, and was the second highest elevation in the city.

And up to the time of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem was uniformly named Zion, though from the time of Constantine it has been used for the name of the western hill, the site of Jerusalem.

There is but little doubt of the identity of the hill of Moriah with the hill of Zion, though no individual passage of Scripture asserts it.

The passage before us, however, with its parallel, tells us plainly enough that the city of David, and that which became the sacred hill of Zion are one.

And many passages in the Psalms and the prophets both confirm this and point out the difference between Zion and Jerusalem.

The castle of Zion became the location where the temple was built.

Mount Moriah and Mount Zion are in the same area.

The Jebusites tried to keep David from taking this area, but he took it anyway.

Jerusalem is called the city of David.

Zion is symbolic of the church.

1 Chronicles 11:6 "And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief."

For the capture of Jerusalem (see the note on 2 Sam. 5:8).

Joab had fallen out of favor with David for killing Abner.

He had to prove himself again.

He destroyed the Jebusites and was restored as chief and captain.

He had been demoted when David disapproved of him.

Now, he is back in good standing.

1 Chronicles 11:7 "And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David."

The prowess of Joab on this occasion, and the part which he took in the building of the city of David (1 Chron. 11:8), are known to us only from this passage of Chronicles.

The name was changed, because of the downfall of the Jebusites and the rise of David.

Jerusalem is still called the city of David.

1 Chronicles 11:8 "And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city."

“Joab repaired the rest of the city”:

David built a new town to the north of the old one on Mount Zion; but Joab was charged with a commission to restore the part that had been occupied by the ancient Jebus.

To repair the breaches made during the siege, to rebuild the houses which had been demolished or burned in the sacking of the town, and to preserve all that had escaped the violence of the soldiery.

This work of reconstruction is not noticed elsewhere.

For the “Millo” (see the note on 2 Sam. 5:9).

Millo would probably have been a place of fortification.

"Millo" means a mound.

The city would probably be built out from the castle to give it protection from every side.

Joab, restored to his place of authority, heads up the repairs.

1 Chronicles 11:9 "So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts [was] with him."

“LORD of hosts was with him”:

The LORD of Hosts is doubtless a contracted form of the fuller expression, LORD God of Hosts, as it appears in Samuel.

The LORD (or God), of Hosts is a title derived from God’s supremacy over the host of heaven, i.e., the stars, worshipped as deities by the races environing Israel, insomuch that the very word for God in the old Babylonian is represented by a star (*).

And in the later Assyrian character star was represented by the symbol for God thrice repeated.

Assur, the supreme deity of the Assyrian Pantheon, is called in the inscriptions “king of the legions of heaven and earth,” or “of the great gods.”

Similar titles were given to the Babylonian Nebo and Merodach.

The Hebrew phrase is therefore, in one sense, equivalent to a concise assertion of the statement, “Jehovah your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords” (Deut. 10:17; compare also Psalms 95:3; 97:7)

That the hosts in question are the stars appears from (Psalm 33:6; Isa. 40:26; Judges 5:20).

The blessings of God were upon David.

He reigned as king of all Israel for 33 years.

His entire reign was for 40 years.

He was the most loved of God, besides Jesus.

Verses 10-14

The three “mighty men”, Josheb-Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah are mentioned in more detail (in 2 Sam. 23:8-11).

These men pledged their loyalty to David while he was hiding from Saul and then fought beside David.

No matter how competent David’s fighting men were, however, the credit for their success in battle went to only One;

“The LORD brought about a great victory.”

11:10-41 (see notes on 2 Sam. 23:8-39).

1 Chronicles 11:10 "These also [are] the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, [and] with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel."

“Who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom”:

Who helped him with all their might to settle him in his kingdom.

"With all Israel":

In conjunction with all those loyal Israelites who joined with David; of whom see the next chapter.

(See the note on 2 Sam. 23:8).

These chief of the mighty men had been with David, and they actually helped David gain the rule over the entire tribes of Israel.

He became king, partly because of their strong support.

Of course, he was king because God made him king.

He had to have strong men around him.

He gave them jobs of position in his kingdom for their efforts in his behalf.

1 Chronicles 11:11 "And this [is] the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain [by him] at one time."

Jashobeam ... Hachmonite”:

(In 27:2), he is called the son of Zabdiel, so Hachmonite may be, strictly speaking, his grandfather (27:32).

For a variation in name and number (300; see note on 2 Sam. 23:8).

A copyist’s error would best account for 800 being reported (in 2 Sam. 23:8).

The “number” of the enemy “slain” by “Jashobeam” is given (in 2 Sam. 23:8), as eight hundred, probably the correct figure.

The number here may have been miscopied, perhaps influenced by the number slain by Abishai (in verse 20).

Jashobeam was the chief of his captains.

He was over 24,000 fighting men.

Hachmonite is probably the same as Tachmonite.

Jashobeam is said to have killed 300 enemies in one battle.

If Tachmonite is the same, he is said to have killed 800.

It really does not matter if he killed just 300.

That was a tremendous number for one man to kill.

1 Chronicles 11:12 "And after him [was] Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who [was one] of the three mighties."

"Dodo":

The LXX has Dodai (so does 1 Chron. 27:4), and the Hebrew text of Samuel.

But Syriac and Vulgate has: "his uncle," a translation of dodo.

"The Ahohite":

I.e., of the clan Ahoah; perhaps the Benjamite house of this name (1 Chron. 8:4).

"Who was one of the three mighties":

"He was among the three heroes," i.e., one of the first or leading trio of warriors, whose names were Jashobeam (Eshbaal), Eleazar, and Shammah (2 Sam. 23:11).

This Eleazar is the same as Azareel.

Dodo is spoken of as Dodi, and Dodai.

Ahohite is the same as Ahoah.

The third mighty man is not named here, but is called Shammah, the Hararite (in 2 Samuel 23:11).

1 Chronicles 11:13 "He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines."

Or Ephes-dammim, between Shochoh and Azekah in the Mountains of Judah, where David encountered Goliath.

The name does not now appear in (2 Sam. 23:5), being probably concealed under the word rendered "when they defied."

"And there the Philistines were gathered together to battle":

After these words several lines have been lost, as may be seen by comparison of (2 Sam. 23:9-10).

The text may be restored thus: "He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines had gathered to the battle; and the men of Israel went up (perhaps, up the mountain side, in retreat).

And he stood his ground, and smote the Philistines until his hand was benumbed, and clave to the sword.

And Yahweh wrought a great victory on that day.

And the people began returning (from flight), behind him only to spoil (the slain).

And after him (was) Shammah ben Agê, a Hararite.

And the Philistines gathered together unto Lehi (Judges 15:9).

And there was a parcel, etc.," (1 Chron. 11:13).

The cause of this serious omission was perhaps the double occurrence of the phrase "the Philistines gathered together."

The eye of some copyist wandered from one to the other.

What was originally told of Eleazar the second hero, was that his prowess turned the flight at Pas-dammim into a victory.

"Where was a parcel of ground full of barley":

The scene of the exploit of the third hero, Shammah, son of Agê.

Perhaps the Philistines were intent on carrying off the crop (1 Sam. 23:1).

Samuel reads lentils.

The Hebrew words for barley and lentils are very similar.

We cannot tell which text is right.

"Pas-dammim" means the boundary of blood.

Barley was cheaper than wheat.

It was used to feed animals as well as people.

There appeared to have been many battles fought in this place.

In fact, this was where David had come against Goliath and slew him.

In the battle mentioned in the verse above, the people fled before the Philistines.

1 Chronicles 11:14 "And they set themselves in the midst of [that] parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD saved [them] by a great deliverance."

"And they set themselves ... and delivered ... and slew":

These verbs should be singular, as describing the exploit of Shammah (2 Sam. 23:12).

After the omission just noticed had become perpetuated in the text, some editor must have altered the words into the plural, supposing that they referred to David and Eleazar (1 Chron. 11:13).

"Saved them":

Samuel:

"Made a great deliverance":

Transpose one letter, and the Hebrew words are identical.

LXX and Syriac agree with Samuel.

These men were mighty men, because the LORD was with them.

The blessings of the LORD were upon everything that David did.

The Philistines were the enemy of David, but they were also God's enemies, as well.

They stopped running in the middle of the barley field, and fought against the Philistines and won.

1 Chronicles 11:15 "Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim."

Literally, three out of the thirty chiefs went down; a mode of description which appears to distinguish this trio from the former (1 Chron. 11:11-14).

The form of the verb, however, connects this exploit with the same war (compare 2 Samuel 23:13-17).

"To the rock":

'Al haç-çûr (later use of 'al, "on").

Samuel has "at (or towards), harvest," 'el qaçir.

In Hebrew writing the phrases are very similar.

Our phrase looks like a correction of that in Samuel.

At any rate, the Syriac, Targum, Arabic, and probably the LXX, read qaçir in the manuscripts of Samuel.

Here the LXX has “to the rock;” Syriac omits the phrase.

"Cave of Adullam" (see 1 Sam. 22:1).

"Valley of Rephaim" (see Joshua 15:8).

It lay south-west of Jerusalem, in the direction of Bethlehem.

It may have got its name from the aboriginal Rephaim (Deut. 3:11).

Authorized Version, giants (Joshua 17:15).

It was a rich corn land (Isa. 13:5; compare 1 Chron. 11:13).

This is speaking of the same cave that David camped in over and over, when he was fleeing from Saul.

"Rephaim" means giants.

The three captains that we have just read about are the leaders of the other thirty captains.

The thirty are over smaller groups and are probably subject to the three we have just discussed.

There is very little known of the thirty.

They are alluded to several times, however.

1 Chronicles 11:16 "And David [was] then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison [was] then at Beth-lehem."

The stronghold or rock-fortress of Adullam (2 Sam. 5:17; 23:14).

"The Philistines' garrison":

An outpost; for their army was camping near Jerusalem.

This is probably the same as in (2 Sam. 5: 17-18).

This happened just after David was anointed king over Israel.

The Philistines thought they would destroy him, before he got settled as king.

The hold was probably the cave.

David inquired of God what he should do and God gave the Philistines into the hands of David.

Verses 17-19

This story of “the three might men” demonstrates the deep loyalty David inspired and how much David valued that loyalty.

By offering a drink offering (Gen. 35:14), David put God at the center of it all, in stark contrast to Saul.

1 Chronicles 11:17 "And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that [is] at the gate!"

"The well of Bethlehem":

The traditional well is half a mile distant, to the north of the town, and consists of a group of three cisterns, while the present town is supplied with water by an aqueduct.

“At the gate”:

Nothing else is known of this well.

No trace of it exists now, according to Dr. Robinson.

1 Chronicles 11:18 "And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that [was] by the gate, and took [it], and brought [it] to David: but David would not drink [of] it, but poured it out to the LORD,"

Not the main army, but the outpost in front of Beth-lehem.

There were heroes before Agamemnon, and there was chivalry before the Crusades.

"By the gate":

Hebrew: “in”.

"Poured it out": As a libation or drink-offering.

The technical term is used (as in Gen. 35:14).

An act of free sacrifice, done under a sudden impulse of thankfulness, and not according to any formal prescription of the Law.

Beth-lehem was surrounded by Philistines at the time.

The three, spoken of here, are the three captains who are in charge of David's men.

We can see their bravery and their loyalty to David in this.

It is interesting that David was thirsty for the water, and yet would not drink it.

He offered the water to the LORD by pouring it out.

1 Chronicles 11:19 "And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with [the jeopardy of] their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest."

Literally, the blood of these men should I drink in their lives (souls)?

It put him into the utmost confusion, to think three brave men should hazard their lives to fetch water for him.

In his account, it turns the water into blood.

It is to the honor of great men, not to be prodigal of the blood of those they employ.

Their lives appears to be spurious here, as it occurs again immediately, and is read only once in Samuel.

David regards the water as blood: it had been obtained at the hazard of life, and "the life is the blood" (Gen. 9:4).

The question in Samuel runs: "The blood of the men who went in (at the risk of), their lives?"

The verb seems to have fallen out by accident.

"For with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it":

Literally, in their lives.

This remark is not found in Samuel, and looks like an explanation of the words, "shall I drink the blood of these men?"

"These things did these three mightiest":

Rather, these things did the three mighty men (or, warriors).

The Hebrew text of this narrative presents only a few verbal differences from (2 Sam. 23:13-17).

David was not speaking of literal blood, but he felt they had put their life at peril to get this water for him.

He did not drink it to satisfy his physical thirst, because of the sacrifice they had made for him to get it.

1 Chronicles 11:20 "And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew [them], and had a name among the three."

Hebrew, Abshai, but in Samuel, Abishai.

Compare Abram and Abiram.

Samuel adds "son of Zeruiah" after Joab.

Compare 1 Chron. 2:16 and 18:12; 19:11 for other deeds of Abishai.

"He was chief of the three":

Apparently the second triad, one of whose famous exploits has just been related (1 Chron. 11:15-19).

The Hebrew text of Samuel seems to read "knights," but some manuscripts, the Hebrew margin, and all the versions, agree with Chronicles.

"For lifting up":

Literally, and he had brandished his spear over three hundred slain.

The exploit of Jashobeam (1 Chron. 11:11).

"And had a name among the three":

That is, among the second triad, of which he was captain.

1 Chronicles 11:21 "Of the three, he was more honorable than the two; for he was their captain: howbeit he attained not to the [first] three."

"Of the three, he was the most honorable."

The word, translated "in the second rank," is however certainly corrupt (compare 2 Sam. 23:19), and should be corrected.

We then translate:

“He was more honorable than the two”:

The verse probably comes from a lost poem.

What is meant by the three and by the first three cannot be determined owing to the loss of the context.

Abishai was the one who had volunteered to go into the camp of Saul at night with David.

He was a very brave man.

There are so many accounts of bravery of Abishai, it would be difficult to name them here.

We might even come to the conclusion from his acts, that he was the bravest of the three mighty men.

He was one of the three captains who were over David's army.

1 Chronicles 11:22 "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts; he slew two lionlike men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day."

Captain of the royal guard (1 Chron. 18:17), and third “captain of the host” (1 Chron. 27:5-6).

"Son of a valiant man":

“Son” is probably a spurious addition here, as elsewhere.

The Syriac has “Benaiah son of Joiada, a strong warrior.”

The LXX, however, reads, “son of a mighty man.”

"Kabzeel":

A town of southern Judah, site unknown (Joshua 15:21; Neh. 11:25), Jekabzeel.

"Who had done many acts":

The margin is correct.

This poetic phrase only occurs in this and the parallel passage.

"He slew two lionlike men of Moab":

See (1 Chron. 18:2).

So the Syriac: "He slew two giants of Moab."

The Hebrew has, "He smote the two Ariel of Moab."

Ariel, "lion of God", a title of heroes with the Arabs and Persians.

Appears to be used as an appellative (Isa. 33:7):

"Lo, the heroes ('ariêlîm), cry without!" (Hebrew).

The (LXX of 2 Sam 23:20) reads, "The two sons of Ariel of Moab;" whence some think that Ariel denotes here the king of Moab; but the former sense is better.

"Also he went down and slew a lion":

Literally, and he (it was who), went down and smote the lion in the middle of the cistern in the day of snow.

The article pointedly refers to some well-known feat of Benaiah's.

1 Chronicles 11:23 "And he slew an Egyptian, a man of [great] stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand [was] a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear."

Literally, and he it was who smote the Egyptian, a man of measure, five cubits tall.

Samuel has only "who (was), a sight;" or "a man to look at" (Hebrew margin).

The chronicler says why.

"Like a weaver's beam":

Not in Samuel.

Perhaps due to a recollection of the combat of David and Goliath.

Compare also 2 Sam. 21:19.

Yet the LXX of (2 Sam. 23:21), has "like the beam of a ship's ladder"; and this may be original.

"Went down":

To the combat.

The staff (shēbet), of Benaiah differs from David's (maqquēl; 1 Sam. 17:40; 17:43); and the similarity of the two accounts, so far as it extends, is a similarity not of fiction, but of fact.

"With a staff":

Rather, the staff, which he happened to carry.

1 Chronicles 11:24 "These [things] did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties."

Literally, and to him (was), a name among the three heroes, viz., the second triad.

Benaiah was son of the high priest Jehoiada.

David set Benaiah over his guard.

The person five cubits high means that he was seven and one half feet tall.

Benaiah was over 24,000 fighting men.

1 Chronicles 11:25 "Behold, he was honorable among the thirty, but attained not to the [first] three: and David set him over his guard."

Rather, above the thirty behold he was honored.

"But attained not to the first three":

For he was a member of the second triad of heroes.

The third member is omitted here, as in the case of the first triad.

"Over his guard":

Literally, over his obedience; an abstract for concrete (as in Isaiah 11:14; meaning vassals).

The Cherethites and Pelethites, a small corps probably of foreigners, who constituted David's body-guard, and were under his direct orders, appear to be meant here (see 2 Sam. 8:18; 20:23).

The word has this precise sense only in this place and its parallel.

We mentioned above, that he was over the personal guard of David.

1 Chronicles 11:26 "Also the valiant men of the armies [were], Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,"

The Heb. phrase has this meaning (1 Chron. 12:8); but elsewhere it denotes “valiant heroes” (1 Chron. 7:5; 7:7), and so here.

(2 Sam. 23:24), has “Asahel brother of Joab was among the thirty.”

It thus appears that the warriors of this list are none other than the famous band of thirty warriors already spoken of (1 Chron. 11:15; 11:25).

From having been the original number, thirty may have become the conventional name of the corps even when its limits had been enlarged.

It is noticeable that so far as to (1 Chron. 11:41), the heroes are arranged in pairs, and that the gentile or cantonal name is usually added to that of the hero.

They mostly belong to Judah and Benjamin; whereas the sixteen additional names, so far as known, belong to the trans-jordanic tribes, and the northern tribes are not represented at all.

"Elhanan":

Dodo is very much like David.

Is this a third alias of the slayer of Goliath?

See note on 1 Chron. 20:5.

Asahel was the nephew of David.

He was swift of foot and outran Abner after the battle at Gibeon.

Abner threw a lance through him and killed him.

We dealt with Dodo earlier in the lessons.

The list that follows, including Asahel and Elhanan, would be 31, but is called thirty because of the early death of Asahel.

He is still honored by being listed as one of the thirty.

He was replaced at his death, and that makes the list 31.

There are actually 48 listed in this chapter, but some of them are replacements for others who died or were added later.

1 Chronicles 11:27 "Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite,"

Samuel has “Shammah (of which Shammoth is plural) the Harodite.”

A place called Harod occurs (in Judges 7:1; compare also 1 Chron. 27:8).

Note (2 Sam. 23:26), adds another Harodite, Elikam (? Elikam), omitted here by accident.

"Helez the Pelonite":

Samuel, "the Paltite," perhaps more correctly.

The Syriac and Arabic read "of Palton" and "Faltûna."

Beth-phelet was a town of Judah (Neh. 11:26), but (1 Chron. 27:10), calls Helez "the Pelonite of the sons of Ephraim."

The Hebrew peloni (Authorized Version, Pelonite), means so-and-so, and may be a scribe's substitute for an illegible name.

1 Chronicles 11:28 "Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abi-ezer the Antothite,"

Of Tekoa, in Judah. Abi-ezer, of Anathoth, in Benjamin (compare 1 Chron. 27:9; 27:19).

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary (11:10-47).

An account is given of David's worthies, the great men who served him.

Yet David reckoned his success, not as from the mighty men that were with him, but from the mighty God, whose presence is all in all.

In strengthening him, they strengthened themselves and their own interest, for his advancement was theirs.

We shall gain by what we do in our places for the support of the kingdom of the Son of David; and those that are faithful to Him, shall find their names registered much more to their honor, than these are in the records of fame.

1 Chronicles 11:29 "Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite,"

The correct name (see 1 Chron. 27:11).

He slew the giant Saph (2 Sam. 21:18).

Samuel calls him Mebunnai, by confusion of similar letters.

Sibbecai was a Zarhite, i.e., of clan Zerach.

Hushah, his township, was in Judah (1 Chron. 4:4).

"Ilai": Samuel has Zalmon, which may be correct, letters having faded.

"Ahohite" (see 1 Chron. 11:12).

1 Chronicles 11:30 "Maharai the Netophathite, Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,"

So in (1 Chron. 27:13), with "of the Zerahites" (R.V.) added.

A Netophathite might come either from Netophah (a village in Judah not far from Beth-lehem), or from the "villages of the Netophathites" (1 Chron. 9:16).

"Heled":

In (1 Chron. 27:15).

"Heldai," a name found in (Zech. 6:10).

"Heleb" in (2 Sam. 23:29), is probably a wrong reading.

1 Chronicles 11:31 "Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, [that pertained] to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,"

Samuel, "Ittai," an older pronunciation.

Not to be confused with "Ittai the Gittite" (2 Sam. 15:19).

"Gibeah ... of Benjamin":

was near Ramah.

"Benaiah the Pirathonite" (1 Chron. 27:14).

Of course different from Benaiah son of Jehoiada.

"Pirathon in the land of Ephraim" (Judges 12:15), may be the modern Ferâta, southwest of Shechem.

1 Chronicles 11:32 "Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite,"

In (2 Samuel 23:30), "Hiddai."

The true form of the name is uncertain; neither form occurs elsewhere.

"Gaash":

A mountain in Ephraim (Judges 2:9; also Joshua 24:30).

"Abiel":

In (2 Sam. 23:31), "Abi-albon."

"Arbathite" means "inhabitant of Beth Arabah"; (Joshua 15:6), a town on the border between Judah and Benjamin.

1 Chronicles 11:33 "Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,"

Of Bahurim, the town of Shimei (2 Sam. 16:5; 3:16), in Benjamin.

Samuel has the transposed form, "Barhumite."

"Eliahba":

God hideth.

"Shaalbonite":

Of Shaalbim (Joshua 19:42), a Danite town near Ajalon.

1 Chronicles 11:34 "The sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,"

Samuel has "the sons of Jashen, Jonathan" (Hebrew).

Here the Syriac and Arabic have "the sons of Shēm of 'Azun, Jonathan son of Shaga of Mount Carmel."

The word "sons" (bnê), is an accidental repetition of the last three letters of the Hebrew word for Shaalbonite.

"Jashen the Gizonite" is probably the right reading.

"Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite":

This appears more correct than the text of Samuel, "Shammah the Hararite."

"Shammah son of Age the Hararite" was the third hero of the first triad (2 Sam. 23:11).

Perhaps, therefore, the original reading here was "Jonathan son of Age (or Shammah) the Hararite."

The Syriac and Arabic, however, supports Shage.

1 Chronicles 11:35 "Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphaz the son of Ur,"

(Wages) is probably right, not “Sharar” (Samuel).

LXX Vat. has “Achar,” “Sachar.”

Syriac, “Sacham.”

Instead of "Hararite", Samuel has “Ararite,” or “Adrite” (Syrian).

"Eliphal the son of Ur":

Instead of this, Samuel reads, “Eliphelet son of Ahasbai son of the Maachathite.”

Eliphelet (the name of a son of David) seems right.

1 Chronicles 11:36 "Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,"

Wanting in the present text of Samuel.

Mecherah is unknown as a place, and a comparison with Samuel (1 Chron. 11:34), suggests “Hepher the Maachathite,” i.e., of Abelbeth-Maachah, or perhaps the Syrian state of Maachah (2 Sam. 10:8).

"Ahijah the Pelonite":

Instead of this Samuel has “Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite.”

For Ahithophel (see 2 Sam. 15:31).

The Pelonite, i.e. so-and-so, may indicate either that Ahithophel’s name had become obscure in the chronicler’s manuscript, or that he was unwilling to mention the traitor.

Ahijah (Jah is a brother) and Eliam (God is a kinsman), might be names of one person.

1 Chronicles 11:37 "Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai,"

Syriac, “Hezri” and so perhaps Samuel, margin; but Samuel, text, “Hezro.”

"Carmelite":

Of Carmel (Karmul), a town south of Hebron (Joshua 15:55).

"Naarai the son of Ezbai":

Samuel, “Paarah the Arbite.”

Arab also was a town south of Hebron, in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:52).

1 Chronicles 11:38 "Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Haggeri,"

"Mibhar the son of Haggeri": "Mibhar" (choice), is unlikely as a proper name, and is probably a corruption of Miçcobah, "of Zobah," as in Samuel.

After this word Samuel adds "Bani the Gadite."

The name "Bani" has fallen out of our text.

"Haggeri" is an easy corruption of Haggadi "the Gadite."

1 Chronicles 11:39 "Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armor-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah,"

Many of David's warriors were aliens.

Compare "Uriah the Hittite;" "Ittai the Gittite;" and "Ithmah the Moabite"; 1 Chron. 11:46).

"Berothite":

Of Beeroth in Benjamin (Joshua 18:25).

1 Chronicles 11:40 "Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,"

The Ithrite.

One of the families of Kirjath-jearim (1 Chron. 2:53).

Other similar colonists from Kirjath-jearim, and descended from Shobal, were the Puthite, the Shumathites, and the Izrahite.

With this verse we count up, including the dropped-out Elik, the names of "thirty mighty men."

And we may understand Samuel's thirty-seven to consist of these, increased by Uriah and the two parties of three each.

Verses 41-47

This adds new material to (2 Sam. Chapter 23).

1 Chronicles 11:41 "Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai,"

His history, omitted by Chronicles, is told (in 2 Samuel chapter 11).

The list of heroes in Samuel closes with this name, adding by way of summation, “all, thirty and seven.”

The sixteen names which follow may indicate a later revision of the catalogue. They are not given elsewhere.

The Uriah, mentioned above, is the same as the husband of Bath-sheba.

David had him killed to get his wife.

Beginning with (verse 42), the list seems to be additions.

They are not included (in 2 Samuel chapter 23).

1 Chronicles 11:42 "Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,"

A captain of the Reubenites (or chief; Hebrew meaning head), and thirty with him (besides him).

Literally, upon him.

So LXX Syriac reads “and he was commanding thirty men,” which gives the apparent meaning of the verse.

If, as seems likely, the “thirty” were the officers of David’s guard of six hundred warriors (1 Sam. 23:13; 30:10; 2 Sam. 15:18), called “the mighty men,” or heroes (2 Sam. 10:7; 20:7; 1 Kings 1:8).

Each captain would lead about twenty men.

Adina’s corps is mentioned perhaps as being larger than usual.

1 Chronicles 11:43 "Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,"

The LXX has “the Mathanite,” or “the Bethanite.”

Syriac, “Azi of Anathoth”!

1 Chronicles 11:44 "Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite,"

"The Ashterathite":

I.e. inhabitant of Ashtaroth (1 Chron. 6:71), a city of Manasseh east of Jordan.

"And Jehiel the sons of Hothan":

R.V. and Jeiel the sons of Hotham.

"The Aroerite":

I.e. inhabitant of Aroer.

There were two cities of this name, both east of Jordan (compare Joshua 13:16; 13:25).

1 Chronicles 11:45 "Jediael the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,"

Perhaps the Manassite who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:20).

1 Chronicles 11:46 "Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,"

Perhaps the Gadite of (1 Chron. 12:11).

"The Mahavite":

Probably a corruption of "the Mahanaimite."

Mahanaim was in Gad.

1 Chronicles 11:47 "Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite."

"The Mesobaite":

This name is entirely unknown, unless it may be the same as Mezobah.

1 Chronicles Chapter 11 Questions

1. What did all Israel say to David at Hebron?
2. Who did Abner anoint as king in Saul's place?
3. Who had previously anointed David king?
4. How long did Ish-bosheth reign?
5. What happened to him?
6. How long did David reign in Hebron, over Judah?
7. Who is "all Israel" speaking of in verse 1?

8. Why had David gone to Hebron?
9. Where was Hebron located?
10. How is verse 2 prophetic?
11. Who is the great Shepherd?
12. David was a _____.
13. Who did David make a covenant with at Hebron?
14. Who anointed David king over Israel at Hebron?
15. Who were the acting priests at that time?
16. What was the ancient name for Jerusalem?
17. How many years, after David became king of Judah, did he go to Jerusalem?
18. What did the castle of Zion become?
19. Who went up first to smite the Jebusites?
20. Why had Joab been out of favor with David?
21. Why was Jerusalem called the city of David?
22. Why did David wax greater and greater?
23. How long did David reign in Hebron, and in Jerusalem?
24. Who killed 300 enemies of David by himself?
25. Eleazar, in verse 12, is the same as _____.
26. What does "Pas-dammim" mean?
27. How many captains went down to the rock to David?
28. What does "Rephaim" mean?
29. Who went to Beth-lehem through the Philistines, and got water for David?
30. Why did David not drink the water?
31. Who might we assume to be the bravest of the three mighty men?
32. Who was Asahel?

33. Who are listed in verses 27 through 41?
34. Who was the Uriah listed here?
35. Which, of all of these men, are not listed in 2 Samuel chapter 23?