



## **"Misunderstood Kindness"**

**2 Samuel 10**

**October 18, 2026**

### **THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE**

#### **2 Samuel 10:1-19**

After this the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. 2 And David said, "I will deal loyally with Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father dealt loyally with me." So David sent by his servants to console him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the Ammonites. 3 But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think, because David has sent comforters to you, that he is honoring your father? Has not David sent his servants to you to search the city and to spy it out and to overthrow it?" 4 So Hanun took David's servants and shaved off half the beard of each and cut off their garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away. 5 When it was told David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown and then return."

6 When the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob, 12,000 men. 7 And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men. 8 And the Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate, and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country. 9 When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them against the Syrians. 10 The rest of his men he put in the charge of Abishai his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. 11 And he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. 12 Be of good courage, and let us be courageous for our people, and for the cities of our God, and may the LORD do what seems good to him." 13 So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. 14 And when the Ammonites saw that the Syrians fled, they likewise fled before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

15 But when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. 16 And Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphrates. They came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head. 17 And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan and came to Helam. The Syrians arrayed themselves against David and fought with him. 18 And the Syrians fled before Israel, and David killed of the Syrians the men of 700 chariots, and 40,000 horsemen, and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. 19 And when all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. So the Syrians were afraid to save the Ammonites anymore.

## MAIN THEME

When Nahash, king of Ammon, died, David sent ambassadors to comfort his son Hanun. David intended to show the same loyalty that Nahash had once shown him. But Hanun's advisers assumed the worst. They convinced him that David's servants were spies sent to prepare the way for conquest.

Hanun responded by humiliating David's messengers—shaving half their beards and cutting away their garments. David did not blame his wounded servants or demand that they return immediately. He protected their dignity by allowing them to remain in Jericho until their beards grew back. His compassion toward them stands in sharp contrast to Hanun's cruelty. Instead of admitting his wrong, Hanun prepared for war and hired thousands of soldiers from surrounding Aramean kingdoms. Joab and Abishai found themselves surrounded, but they agreed to support one another. Joab called them to courage for God's people and God's cities while humbly leaving the outcome in God's hands.

David's sincere kindness was misunderstood and led to conflict, yet he remained faithful and God gave Israel victory. We cannot control how others interpret our motives, but we can examine assumptions carefully, continue doing what is right, care for those who have been wounded, and trust God with the outcome.

## DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

### 1. Kindness Can Be Misunderstood

2 Samuel 10:1–4; Proverbs 18:13, 17; 1 Corinthians 13:7

- What did David intend by sending ambassadors to Hanun?
- What assumptions did Hanun's advisers make about David's motives?
- How did suspicion turn an opportunity for friendship into humiliation and conflict?
- When are you most tempted to assume the worst about another person's motives?

### 2. Care for People Who Have Been Wounded

2 Samuel 10:4–5; Romans 12:10, 15; Galatians 6:2

- Why would the treatment of David's ambassadors have been deeply humiliating?
- What does David's response reveal about his concern for their dignity?
- How can shame cause people to withdraw after they have been mistreated?
- How can you give patience, protection, and dignity to someone who has been wounded?

### 3. Courage Grows When We Stand Together

2 Samuel 10:6–14; Ecclesiastes 4:9–12; Philippians 1:27–28

- What made Israel's military position especially dangerous?
- How did Joab and Abishai prepare to support one another during the battle?
- What does Joab's call to courage teach us about facing opposition together?
- Who needs your encouragement or practical support in a difficult situation right now?

#### **4. Do What Is Right and Trust God With the Outcome**

2 Samuel 10:12–19; Romans 12:17–21; 1 Peter 2:19–23

- How did Joab combine courageous action with humble trust in God?
- Why are we responsible for our faithfulness but not for controlling every outcome?
- How should we respond when sincere kindness is rejected or misunderstood?
- Where is God asking you to remain gracious and faithful despite another person's response?

#### **PRAY**

Faithful God, give us wisdom not to judge the motives of others too quickly. When our kindness is misunderstood, keep us from bitterness or retaliation. Help us care for people who have been humiliated or wounded, stand courageously with one another, and continue doing what is right. Teach us to act faithfully and leave the outcome in your hands. Amen.

#### **DIG DEEPER**

For Further Study:

- 1 Samuel 11:1–11
- 1 Chronicles 19:1–19
- Proverbs 18:13–17
- Romans 12:14–21
- 1 Corinthians 13:4–7
- 1 Peter 2:19–23

#### **NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA**

2 Samuel 11:1–27

David's devastating choices reveal how quickly concealed desire can grow into destructive sin.