

### 17.35 More Kingdom Division (2 Samuel 19:41–43; 20:1–26)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [ . . . ] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

#### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) Ram’s horn and disinfectant wipes if you allow students to try to blow it
- Stones and stick “logs” to make a ramp
- Lego wall and “battering ram” stick
- Belt for sword; toy sword or dagger
- Felt or other cut-out numbers 1 and 0

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *to kiss*: in Old Testament times to touch cheeks with another in greeting
- *sheath*: a holder for a sword or dagger

#### Scripture: (ESV)

2 Samuel 19:41 Then all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, “Why have our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David’s men with him?” 42 All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, “Because the king is our close relative. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense? Or has he given us any gift?” 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, “We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?” But the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

20:1 Now there happened to be there a worthless man, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjaminite. And he blew the trumpet and said, “We have no portion in David, and we have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel!” 2 So all the men of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba the son of Bichri. But the men of Judah followed their king steadfastly from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to care for the house and put them in a house under guard and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood.

4 Then the king said to Amasa, “Call the men of Judah together to me within three days, and be here yourself.” 5 So Amasa went to summon Judah, but he delayed beyond the set time that had been appointed him. 6 And David said to Abishai, “Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take your lord’s servants and pursue him, lest he get himself to fortified cities and escape from us.” 7 And there went out after him Joab’s men and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men. They went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. 8 When they were at the great stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was wearing a soldier’s garment, and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened on his thigh, and as he went forward it fell out. 9 And Joab said to Amasa, “Is it well with you, my brother?” And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. 10 But Amasa did not observe the sword that was in Joab’s hand. So Joab struck him with it in the stomach and spilled his entrails to the ground without striking a second blow, and he died.

Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri. 11 And one of Joab’s young men took

his stand by Amasa and said, “Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab.” 12 And Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the highway. And anyone who came by, seeing him, stopped. And when the man saw that all the people stopped, he carried Amasa out of the highway into the field and threw a garment over him. 13 When he was taken out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 And Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-maacah, and all the Bichrites assembled and followed him in. 15 And all the men who were with Joab came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah. They cast up a mound against the city, and it stood against the rampart, and they were battering the wall to throw it down. 16 Then a wise woman called from the city, “Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, ‘Come here, that I may speak to you.’” 17 And he came near her, and the woman said, “Are you Joab?” He answered, “I am.” Then she said to him, “Listen to the words of your servant.” And he answered, “I am listening.” 18 Then she said, “They used to say in former times, ‘Let them but ask counsel at Abel,’ and so they settled a matter. 19 I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why will you swallow up the heritage of the Lord?” 20 Joab answered, “Far be it from me, far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy! 21 That is not true. But a man of the hill country of Ephraim, called Sheba the son of Bichri, has lifted up his hand against King David. Give up him alone, and I will withdraw from the city.” And the woman said to Joab, “Behold, his head shall be thrown to you over the wall.” 22 Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it out to Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, every man to his home. And Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

23 Now Joab was in command of all the army of Israel; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was in command of the Cherethites and the Pelethites; 24 and Adoram was in charge of the forced labor; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder; 25 and Sheva was secretary; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests; 26 and Ira the Jairite was also David’s priest.

### **Introduction/Review:**

Benjamin, King Saul’s tribe, had some people who were friends of David. In fact, four hundred of them had come to David while he was hiding from Saul. But Saul’s tribe also had some who were enemies of David. They thought Saul’s descendants, not David’s, should be the ruling family. One of these enemies had been Ishbosheth, Saul’s son. Joab slew Ishbosheth’s army general, and it wasn’t long until Ishbosheth himself was dead.

Another enemy who wanted Saul’s family to rule was Shimei. Who was he? [The man who threw stones at David as he escaped from Absalom.] What happened to Shimei? [David said he would not die.]

### **Story:**

#### ***Sheba***

Today we’ll learn about another Benjaminite enemy whose name was Sheba. When the men of David’s tribe, Judah, were bringing David back to Jerusalem, the other tribes were upset. “Why did our brothers, the men of Judah, steal away the king to bring him back without inviting us to help?” they asked.

“We did it because he is a close relative of ours. Why are you upset? Did we eat the king’s food or take anything for ourselves?” answered Judah.

“Well, you have only one tribe; that’s one part. [Display the number 1.] We are ten tribes; that is ten parts of the king. [Annex a 0 to the 1 to display the number 10.] Therefore, we have a greater claim on him than you do. So, why are you so mean to us? Weren’t we the first to mention bringing back the king?” answered Israel.

Thus, they argued and argued, but Judah’s words were harsher than Israel’s.

“A worthless man” named Sheba, from the tribe of Benjamin, Saul’s tribe, appointed himself the leader of Israel and blew a trumpet [show and/or blow the ram’s horn], shouting, “Instead of ten shares, we have *zero*

shares in David—no shares in Jesse’s son! Let’s go home, Israel!” [Remove the *I*, leaving the number *0*.]

Instead of being loyal to King David, the men of Israel, ✓perhaps the same ones who had followed Absalom, followed after Sheba. But the men of Judah remained loyal to David.

### ***Amasa***

“Amasa!” [ah MAY sah] David summoned. Who was Amasa? ✓He was another nephew of David who had helped Absalom, being his army general. David had promised Amasa that he could take Joab’s place as his own general. David commanded, “Amasa, go gather soldiers from Judah and come back here with them in three days.”

Amasa went out to do what David had ordered, but after three days, he still hadn’t returned. That delay would prove to be deadly for him.

David lamented, “Now Sheba will harm us more than Absalom ever did! Abishai!”

Who was Abishai? Joab’s brother, a *very* good soldier but one who had wanted first to slay Saul and then to slay Shimei.

Notice that David did not call for Joab, who had been his army general. Joab was frequently trying to tell David what to do, and ✓David must have been tired of it all. Besides, Joab had slain Absalom, something David had specifically asked not be done.

“Abishai,” David ordered, “take my body guards and your brother’s soldiers and chase after Sheba, or he will get into a walled city and escape from us. We must stop this rebellion!”

So Abishai led Joab, Joab’s men, the body guards, and many mighty warriors out of Jerusalem northwest toward the city Gibeon [locate] in order to find Sheba. When they reached a big rock at Gibeon, here came Amasa to meet them. We don’t read in the Bible that he had gotten any men to help David’s cause, but ✓we can assume he had.

### ***Joab***

Joab, ✓jealous of anyone who threatened to take over his job (he had already killed Abner, Ishbosheth’s general), now tricked Amasa. Remember, ✓Joab and Amasa were cousins. Wouldn’t cousins be friendly and greet each other warmly? ✓In those days, as men “kissed”—touched cheeks with each other in greeting—they would hold the beard of their friend.

Joab counted on this custom and fixed his sheath so that his sword or dagger would fall to the ground. As he stepped toward Amasa, the sword fell. [Teacher demonstrate with a toy sword or dagger.] With his left hand, Joab picked up the sword or dagger; with his right hand he took hold of Amasa’s beard, saying, “How are you, my brother?” Amasa didn’t pay attention to the dagger in Joab’s left hand. Joab thrust it into Amasa’s belly and slew him right there in the road. Amasa fell, dead on the spot.

Joab and Abishai hardly paused but started to chase after Sheba again. One of Joab’s men stood beside Amasa’s corpse and shouted, “Whoever is on Joab’s side and David’s side, follow Joab!”

But the other soldiers would not move, looking at Amasa’s bloody body in the road. When Joab’s man realized that no one wanted to go past that body, he dragged Amasa from the road and into the field and put a cloth or garment over the body. Only then did the soldiers follow on.

They had a long way to go—clear up beyond the Sea of Galilee, near Dan, the northernmost city in Israel—chasing the rebel, Sheba. Finally, they came to the walled city where he was hiding—Abel Beth Maachah [locate]. Sheba had passed through this vast area of Israel in order to get people to follow him.

Joab and his men surrounded the city; no one could go in or come out. Then they piled stones and dirt and heavy logs against part of the wall and climbed up on the ramp they had constructed. They began ramming a log into the top of the wall—✓“One, two, three! Ram!” Sure enough! Some of the wall broke loose and fell.

This was encouraging! ✓“Keep ramming, boys!” shouted Joab. “We’ll take over this city soon!”

### ***An old woman***

[Teacher, enact this next paragraph.] “Wait a minute! I hear someone calling. Stop battering the wall! Listen!”

An old woman’s voice called from the other side of the wall. “Tell Joab to come here.” Joab went toward the voice. “Are you Joab?” she called.

“I am,” he answered.

“Listen to what I have to say,” said she.

“I am listening,” Joab replied.

“Our city is known to be a peace-loving, faithful Israelite city. We are an old and prominent city. Why do you want to swallow up the Lord’s inheritance—“swallow up what the Lord has given”?

“I would never want to do that,” answered Joab, “but a man named Sheba has rebelled against the king—against David. If you hand over this man, we will withdraw from the city.”

“His head will be thrown to you from the wall,” answered the old woman.

Then she wisely talked with the city leaders, and they paid attention to her. They found Sheba, beheaded him, and tossed his head over the wall to Joab.

Joab sounded his trumpet, signaling the end of the battle, and all the soldiers went home. David’s kingdom was saved again.

### **Lessons from This Lesson:**

- We see Jesus:

The situation of the ten tribes of Israel being, at first, loyal to David and then disloyal, reminds one of a situation with Jesus Christ. When He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He was worshiped and hailed as a great king, but by the end of that week, He was reviled, hated, and crucified.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: wall; battering ram; sword or dagger
- Snack: carrot spears
- Blow a ram’s horn, wiping carefully with disinfectant after each student’s use
- On a paper or plastic covering, construct a siege mound (ramp) with stones, dirt, and sticks against a Lego® or plastic brick wall. Ram the top of the wall with a pretend log.
- Review questions: (Game: Have a foam swimming pool noodle—a long plastic foam “log”—available. A student who answers a question correctly may ram the end of the noodle against a classroom wall.)
  1. Why did Judah and the rest of Israel quarrel? [They were arguing about who had a greater interest in King David.]
  2. How great a part did Israel claim to have in David? [Ten parts—for ten tribes.]
  3. How great a part did Israel claim Judah had in David? [One part.]
  4. Who was the “worthless man” who said Israel had zero parts in David? [Sheba.]
  5. What did Sheba do? [Gathered Israel against David.]
  6. Whom had David sent to get men together to fight for him? [Amasa, Absalom’s former general.]
  7. When Amasa delayed his return, what did David do? [Had Abishai lead his army to conquer Sheba and Israel.]

8. When Amasa and Joab and Abishai and David's soldiers met at Gibeon, what did Joab do to Amasa? [Tricked him and slew him with a dagger or sword.]
9. What did Joab and the soldiers do at the town Abel of Beth-maacah? [Set up a ramp and began ramming the wall.]
10. Who was the peacemaker in Abel of Beth-maacah? [A wise old woman.]

**Memory Verse[s]:** I heartily recommend the song and visual at [Psalm 139 - NKJV \(thywordcreations.com\)](https://thywordcreations.com/psalm-139-nkjv).

- Psalm 139:1 O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

13 For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You. . . .

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

### **Handwork:**

- Print a copy for each student of the city wall found below. Students will draw a ramp (siege mound) and stick-figure soldiers climbing the ramp. Some of the soldiers at the top of the ramp may be holding a battering ram.

**sheath**

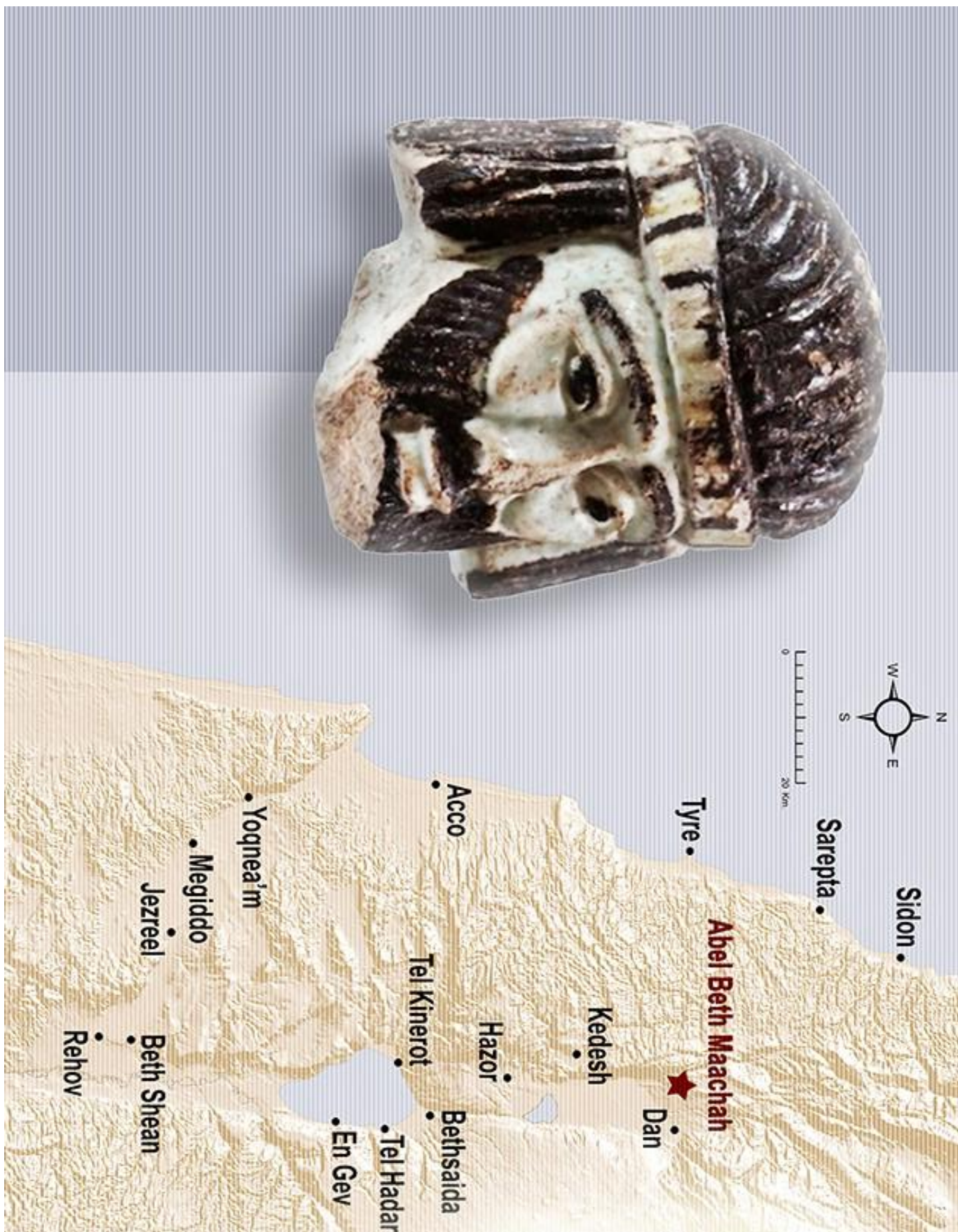
**to kiss**





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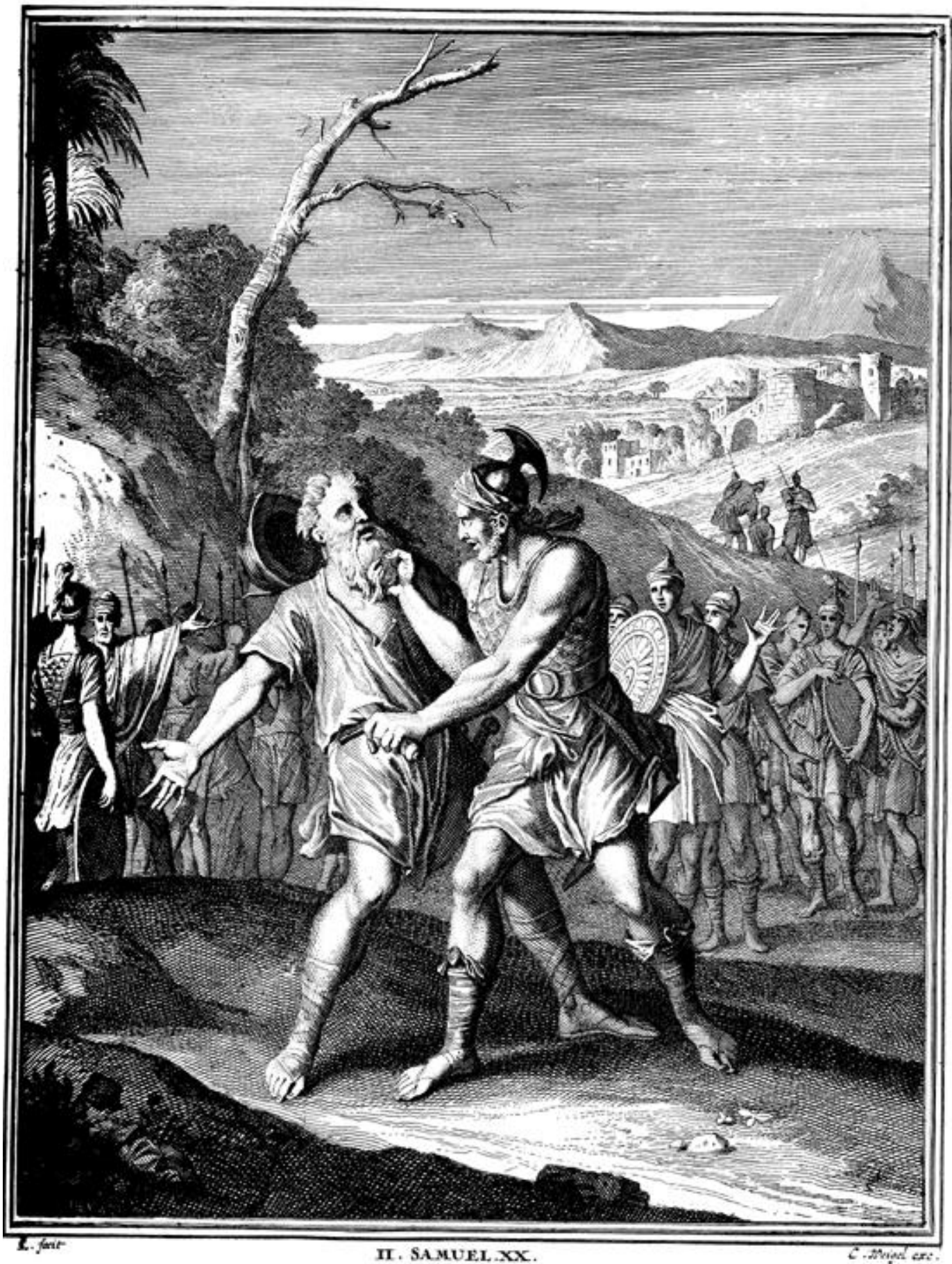




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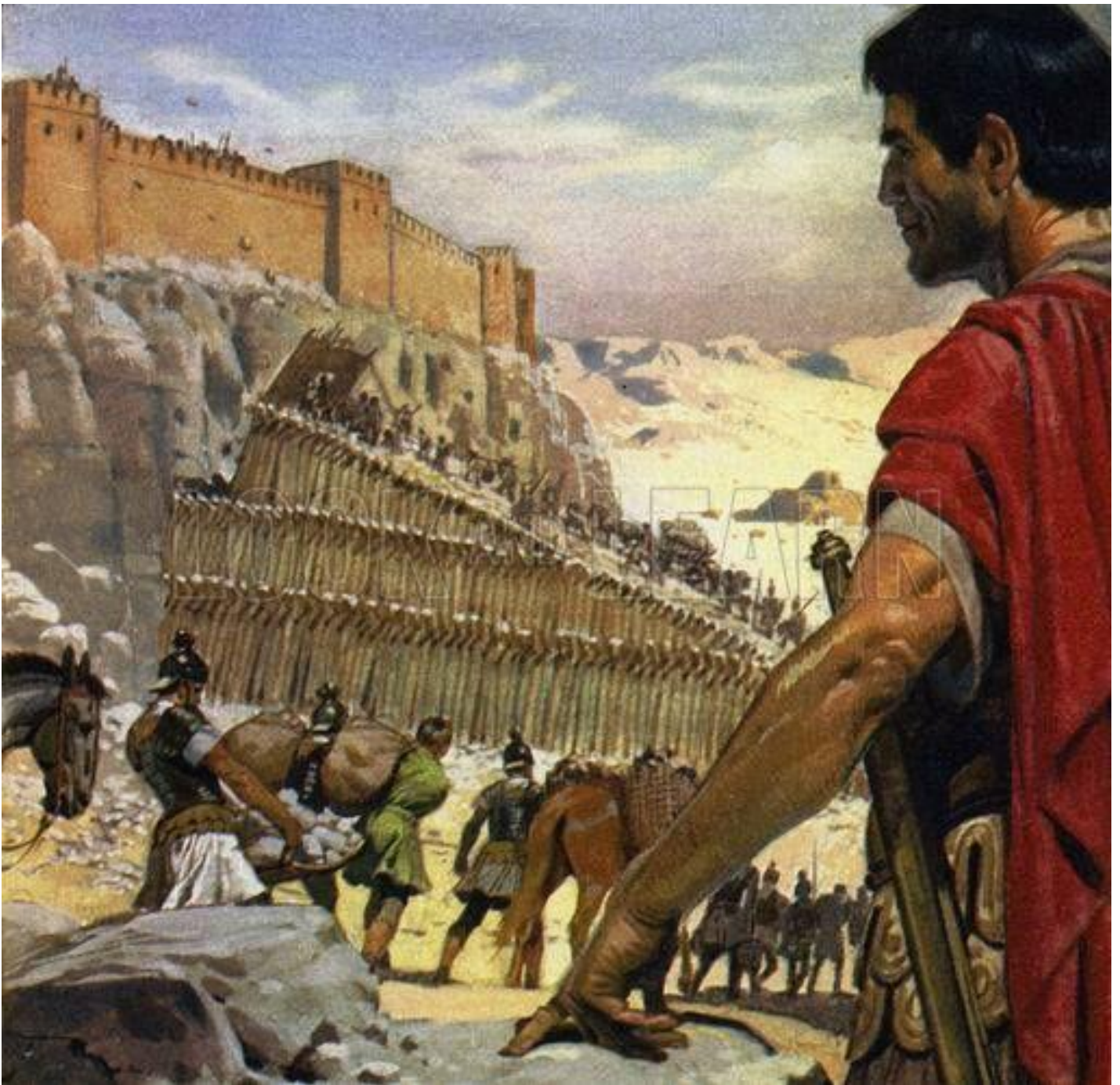
Note: The head of a man pictured is a 2-inch relic found at Abel Beth Maachah. This map shows only Israel; see the previous map for the location of Judah, which basically includes Jerusalem and the area south.





II. SAMUEL XX.





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2 Samuel 20:15 And all  
the men who were with  
Joab came and  
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