

# 2 Samuel 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these?  
And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

## Analysis

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**And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.**

This verse contributes to the narrative of David's Humiliation, emphasizing suffering within God's sovereignty. David's humiliation through Shimei's cursing and Ziba's deception tests his faith in God's sovereignty. His refusal to punish Shimei demonstrates trust that God controls even unjust accusations. Ahithophel's counsel and Absalom's public sin with David's concubines fulfill Nathan's prophecy (12:11-12). Theological themes include suffering within God's sovereign plan, responding to unjust accusations with faith, and the full exposure of hidden sin.

## Historical Context

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The historical setting of 2 Samuel 16 occurs during David's reign (circa 1010-970 BCE) over Israel's united monarchy. Archaeological discoveries, including the Tel Dan inscription mentioning the 'House of David,' corroborate biblical historicity. Ancient Near Eastern customs regarding suffering within God's sovereignty

provide crucial background. The geopolitical situation involved regional powers—Philistines, Ammonites, Arameans, Moabites, Edomites—as David consolidated and expanded Israel's territory. Cultural practices concerning kingship, warfare, covenant relationships, family dynamics, and religious observance differed significantly from modern Western contexts, requiring careful attention to avoid anachronistic interpretation while extracting timeless theological principles applicable across cultures and eras.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of suffering within God's sovereignty?
2. What does this verse reveal about God's character, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?
3. In what specific ways can you apply this truth to your current circumstances and relationships this week?

## Interlinear Text

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אָל	הָמָּ לֶךְ	וַיֹּאמֶר	אָל	צִיבָא	מָה	אָלָהָ
	<b>And the king</b>	<b>said</b>	<b>What meanest thou by these</b>	<b>And Ziba</b>		
H413	H4428	H559	H6717		H4100	H428
לְבֵית	הַחֲמוֹרִים	צִיבָא	וַיֹּאמֶר	לֶךְ		
<b>household</b>	<b>The asses</b>	<b>What meanest thou by these</b>	<b>And Ziba</b>	<b>said</b>		
H1004	H2543	H6717	H559	H0		
לֶאֱכֹל	וְהַקֵּץ	וְלֶחֶם	לְרִכְבּ	הָמָּ לֶךְ		
<b>to eat</b>	<b>and summer fruit</b>	<b>and the bread</b>	<b>to ride on</b>	<b>And the king</b>		
H398	H7019	H3899	H7392	H4428		
בַּמִּדְבָּר׃	הֵיטֵעַ	לִשְׁתּוֹת	וְהַיֵּין	הַנְּעָרִים		
<b>in the wilderness</b>	<b>that such as be faint</b>	<b>may drink</b>	<b>and the wine</b>	<b>for the young men</b>		
H4057	H3287	H8354	H3196	H5288		

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Samuel 17:29** (Parallel theme): And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

**Judges 10:4** (Parallel theme): And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

**Judges 5:10** (Parallel theme): Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.