

# David to Joab

by [Thomas Banks](#) (March 2021)



*David gives Uriah Joab's Letter, Jacob Backer, 1632-33*

*"For the sword devoureth one as well as another." –II  
Samuel 11:25*

My thanks to you for your report,  
And be assured, we who have known  
Our share of war's uncertain sport  
(By which we do possess our throne),  
Likewise know well enough its cost,  
The random lives which battles take;  
Yet (peace upon the men we've lost)  
The sacrifice we still must make,

Though it weigh heavily on us  
Who bear the burden of command.  
The way of war was always thus;  
The dead themselves would understand.  
Some commendation would be right  
For one who has so bravely fought  
And, falling foremost in the fight,  
Is left (regrettably) to rot.  
For our good cause he gave his life,  
Our worst loss since this war began.  
So I shall tell Uriah's wife,  
And comfort her as best I can.

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Thomas Banks has taught literature and Latin for many years in Idaho, Montana, and North Carolina, where he currently lives. Other writings of his have appeared in *First Things* and the *St. Austin Review*.

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