

# 2 Samuel 5 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[2 Samuel Chart](#), from Charles Swindoll

TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1Chr 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.



Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel

**2 Samuel 5:1** Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, '**Behold**, we are your bone and your flesh.

- **came:** 1Ch 11:1-3 12:23-40
- **we:** 2Sa 19:13 Ge 29:14 De 17:15Jdg 9:2 Eph 5:30 Heb 2:14

## ALL ISRAEL COMES TO DAVID AT HEBRON

**Then** - Marks progression in the narrative about David as he ascends to the throne. Chapters 5-10 recount the reign of David over all Israel at Jerusalem. During these years he enjoyed great prosperity and blessing from God ([see the gradual "upward" progression in the diagram above](#)).

**all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'Behold, we are your bone and your flesh** - **All the tribes** indicate God is bringing about unification of the nation under King David. David's godly, righteous actions in regard to the unjust deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth clearly contributed to the willingness of all the tribes to seek David as their king. The Hebrew idiom **your bone and your flesh** signifies they were relatives and is used several times in the OT (Ge 2:23; Ge 29:14; Jdg 9:2; 2Sa 19:12-13). While they were from 11 other tribes, they were all ultimately children of Jacob (Israel) and thus united by blood ties.

**Matthew Henry - Verses 1-5.** David was anointed king a third time. His advances were gradual, that his faith might be tried, and that he might gain experience. Thus his kingdom typified that of the Messiah, which was to come to its height by degrees. Thus Jesus became our Brother, took upon him our nature, dwelt in it that he might become our Prince and Saviour: thus the humbled sinner takes encouragement from the endearing relation, applies for his salvation, submits to his authority, and craves his protection.

### James Smith - DAVID CROWNED KING OVER ALL 2 Samuel 5:1-5

"In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to Thee,  
Thine utterly, and only, and evermore to be!  
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be Thine alone,  
And all we are, and all we have, shall henceforth be Thine own."  
—HAVERGAL.

It was a great day in Israel when all the tribes gathered together in Hebron to make David king over a united people. Perhaps the wisdom and advocacy of Abner had much to do with the bringing about of this happy event (chap. 3:17-19). The man who had been anointed with the holy oil (Spirit), and who lives by faith in God, will have a path that shineth more and more with the light of His favour. We are reminded here of the time when all the tribes of earth shall confess Jesus Christ as King, and crown Him Lord of all. The turning of the kingdom to David, like the turning of the kingdoms of the world to our God and to Christ, was "according to the Word of the Lord" (1 Chron. 12:23). We shall note here—

**I. The Confession.** They came to David, as we may come to Christ, making confession of—

**1. KINSHIP.** "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh" (v. 1). To have a "flesh and bone" relationship with a king is surely a great privilege, and a mighty plea in urging a request. Such is the honourable position of every Christian. "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30). Did not the first Adam say of Eve—a type of the Church—"This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). This close and living union with Him brings us as members into vital connection one with another (Rom. 12:5).

**2. FAILURE.** "In time past, Saul was king over us" (v. 2). There is a ring of sorrowful disappointment in these words. In time past we had an untrustworthy ruler over us, one who broke away from the command of the Lord, and who sought to destroy the influence of His anointed, and to lead us to war against the purposes of God. What a faithful type of the prince of this world, and of the woeful conductor of all those whose minds are blinded by Him. Let the time past suffice for the will of the flesh and the work of the Devil.

**3. GRACE.** "Thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel" (v. 2). This is a confession of the wisdom and goodness of David's work among them. David, like the Lord Jesus Christ, dealt with them "according to the integrity of his heart and the skilfulness of his hands" (Psa. 101:2). It is wonderful, in looking back over even our past sinful life, how much of the wisdom and grace of our Lord we now see. What we then thought was opposed to our highest interests we can now trace to the skilfulness of His hands.

**4. FAITH.** "The Lord said unto thee, Thou shalt feed My people." By these words the elders made confession of their faith in David as the one appointed by Jehovah to lead them and feed them as a shepherd. He whom God hath set up shall not be easily overthrown. Hath not Christ, the Shepherd of our souls, been commissioned of the Father to feed His sheep? And shall not we, like these elders, acknowledge our King as He who spreadeth a table for us in the wilderness, and as He who is in Himself the "Living Bread."

**5. SURRENDER.** "Thou shalt be prince (or ruler) over Israel" (v. 2, R.V.). This language is expressive of perfect subjection to His word and will. Thou shalt rule over us, and our lives are at thy disposal for the carrying out of all the purposes of thy heart. Are we prepared so to yield ourselves as instruments of righteousness to Him who is our Redeemer and King? Can we pray in truth, "Thy will be done in us, as it is done in Heaven?"

**II. The Covenant.** "King David made a covenant with them" (v. 3, R.V.). This offer was accepted, and an everlasting bond of union formed. David's league with them was the pledge and promise that his wisdom and power would be exercised for their personal and national wellbeing. So they anointed David king over Israel. So may it be with us. All who are prepared to crown Jesus King over all will have the benefit of His covenant of promise and power. The crowning of Jesus over our lives means for us a life of victory and blessing.

"CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL."

**2 Samuel 5:2 "Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.'"**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:2 καὶ χθὲς καὶ τῆς πρὸς Σαουλ βασιλείας φημί σοι ἔγωγε καὶ ἐσθλῶν τῶν Ἰσραηλίων καὶ ἐπέκτιστος πρὸς σὲ ποιμανεὶς τὸ λαὸν μου τῶν Ἰσραηλίων καὶ σσειεὶς γομῶν πᾶσι τῶν Ἰσραηλίων

LXE 2 Samuel 5:2 And heretofore Saul being king over us, thou was he that didst lead out and bring in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be for a leader to my people Israel.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

NET 2 Samuel 5:2 In the past, when Saul was our king, you were the real leader in Israel. The LORD said to you, "You will shepherd my people Israel; you will rule over Israel."

CSB 2 Samuel 5:2 Even while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led us out to battle and brought us back. The LORD also said to you, "You will shepherd My people Israel and be ruler over Israel."

ESV 2 Samuel 5:2 In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, "You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel."

NIV 2 Samuel 5:2 In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, "You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler." "

NLT 2 Samuel 5:2 In the past, when Saul was our king, you were the one who really led the forces of Israel. And the LORD told you, 'You will be the shepherd of my people Israel. You will be Israel's leader.' "

NRS 2 Samuel 5:2 For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel."

NJB 2 Samuel 5:2 In days past when Saul was our king, it was you who led Israel on its campaigns, and to you it was that Yahweh promised, "You are to shepherd my people Israel and be leader of Israel." '

NAB 2 Samuel 5:2 In days past, when Saul was our king, it was you who led the Israelites out and brought them back. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd my people Israel and shall be commander of Israel.'"

YLT 2 Samuel 5:2 also heretofore, in Saul's being king over us, thou hast been he who is bringing out and bringing in Israel, and Jehovah saith to thee, Thou dost feed My people Israel, and thou art for leader over Israel.'

GWN 2 Samuel 5:2 "Even in the past when Saul ruled us, you were the one who led Israel in battle. The LORD has said to you, 'You will be shepherd of my people Israel, the leader of Israel.'"

BBE 2 Samuel 5:2 In the past when Saul was king over us, it was you who went at the head of Israel when they went out or came in: and the Lord said to you, You are to be the keeper of my people Israel and their ruler.

- **lead out:** Nu 27:17 1Sa 18:13,16 1Sa 25:28 Isa 55:4
- **feed:** 2Sa 7:7 1Sa 16:1,12,13 25:30 Ps 78:70-72 Isa 40:11 Eze 34:23 Eze 37:24,25 Mic 5:4 Mt 2:6 Joh 10:3,4,11
- **a ruler:** 1Sa 9:16 13:14 2Ki 20:5 Isa 55:4 Heb 2:10

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 18:13; 16+ (DAVID'S MILITARY PROWESS AND ISRAEL'S LOVE FOR HIM) Therefore Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him as his commander of a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.....16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, and he went out and came in before them.

1 Samuel 25:28+ (ABIGAIL WAS AWARE THAT DAVID WOULD ONE DAY REIGN OVER ISRAEL) "Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant; for the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and evil will not be found in you all your days.

### ALL ISRAEL ACKNOWLEDGES DAVID'S MILITARY PROWESS

**Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in** - Heb literally = "Heb "you were the one leading out and the one leading in Israel." **NLT** = "you were the one who really led the forces of Israel" David led them out in battle and brought them back, signifying they did not come running back defeated, but came back victorious under David's leadership.

**And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd** (KJV = feed) **My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel** - Apparently it was common knowledge throughout Israel that Yahweh had selected David to be His shepherd and ruler **over Israel**. (cf [see above](#) for Abigail's knowledge)

**Utley summarizes** "three reasons given why David should be king of the united tribes. (1) He was their relative, 2Sa 5:1 (2) He was a successful military leader under Saul (cf. 1Sa 18), 1Sa 5:2 (lit. "lead out and in") (3) He was the Lord's choice (cf. 1 Sam. 16:13; 2 Samuel 7), v. 2 **SHEPHERD** is powerful imagery used of YHWH, His presence, care, and provision. (1) Moses acted like a shepherd, Nu 27:17 (2) David was a shepherd when Samuel called and anointed him (cf. 2Sa 7:8) (3) YHWH is characterized as a shepherd in Ps 23; Ps 78:52; Ps 80:1; Isa. 40:11 (4) the Messiah is described by this imagery in Jn 10:1; 1Pe. 2:24-25, Heb 13:20-21 (wounded in Zechariah 13:7)

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**Shepherd** (07462) [raah](#) is actually a verb meaning to feed, to tend; to be a shepherd (its participial form rō'eh), its sense in over 60 of the 160 uses in the OT. And so raah means generally to care for, to protect, to graze, to feed flocks and herds (Ge. 30:31, 36; 37:2; Ex. 3:1; 1 Sa 17:15). The first use describes "Abel was a keeper of flocks" (Ge 4:2) and later shepherders (Ge 29:9) those who pasture and lead the sheep. Figuratively raah is used of God as the Shepherd of Jacob (Ge 48:15; Isa.

40:11; Hos. 4:16). Raah referred to the king of Israel who was to shepherd the people for God (2 Sa 5:2; 7:7; Jer. 3:15) and in general to leaders of God's people (Jer. 2:8; 22:22; Ezek. 34:2, 3, 8, 10). God is pictured as the one who shepherds an individual soul, a person (Ps. 49:14).

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## John Butler - Sermon Starters - THE REQUEST TO RULE 2 Samuel 5:2

“Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel” (2 Samuel 5:2).

This text is about the occasion when the men of Israel came to David and requested him to be king over all the land and not just Judah.

### FIRST—THE REASONS FOR THE REQUEST

“Also in time past ... thou shalt be captain over Israel.” There are at least three reasons for the request.

- The failure reason. “Thou shalt be captain over Israel.” The failure is in the Israelites not coming sooner to ask David to be their king. They had gone after Ishbosheth when Saul was killed and Ishbosheth proved to be a great flop as king. How often men chase after Ishbosheths when there is a David who could do much better. They want Barabbas instead of Jesus. It is still seen today when men chase after many false hopes when Jesus Christ is standing near by ready to save their souls.
- The family reason. “Also.” The word “also” refers back to the previous verse in their seeking David as king because of his relationship to the people. The people now wanted to claim a relationship to David. Fortunately, they came in time to gain David as their king. In salvation we can claim a family relationship if we come in time to Jesus Christ for salvation. He will make us a child of God.
- The fighting reason. “Thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in.” David had proven again and again that he was the great soldier of Israel. He smote Goliath when no one else would even attempt fighting him. And after that David excelled many times in battle. How many times must Christ excel for the soul to receive Him as Savior? No one can do what Christ can do.

### SECOND—THE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE REQUEST

“Thou shalt feed my people Israel.” In “feed my people” are summed up the responsibilities of David’s monarchy. The word translated “feed” means “all the care of a shepherd over his flock” (Wilson). David, as king, was to care for Israel. He was to “feed” them not fleece them. Most governments seem to be better at fleecing (such as taxing) the people than at feeding the people. David was made king not for personal aggrandizement but to benefit the nation of Israel.

### THIRD—THE RANK IN THE REQUEST

“Thou shalt be a captain over Israel.” It is significant that David’s responsibilities (feeding the people) were stressed before his rank. Most men are interested in the “captain” privilege but not very interested in their feeding responsibilities. But we need to be more concerned about our responsibilities than our rank. We need to be more interested in the help we give to others than in the honor they give us. It is not our prestige but our performance that is important.

**2 Samuel 5:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the LORD at Hebron; then they anointed David king over Israel.**

- **So all:** Ex 3:16 1Ch 11:3
- **made:** 1Sa 11:15 2Ki 11:17 2Ch 23:16 Ne 9:38
- **before:** Jdg 11:11 1Sa 23:18
- **anointed:** 2Sa 2:4 1Sa 16:13

## ISRAEL LAY LEADERS CROWN DAVID KING IN HEBRON

**So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made** (“cut” - [karath](#)) **a covenant** ([beriyth](#)) **with them before the LORD at Hebron - King David made** (“cut”) **a covenant with them** suggests that David initiated the covenant, which was the solemn and binding agreement men could enter in the ancient world. **Before the LORD** signifies his covenant was with the people but that Yahweh was clearly involved in the covenant. In 1 Samuel 10:25 when Saul was made king. there was a written

document "Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, and wrote them in the book and placed it before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his house."

**Cutting Covenant** - There are not specific details of this making of covenant but if it was in the manner as other covenants were cut, likely an animal was killed, cut in half and the agreeing parties then walked between, saying something like may it happen to me as it happened this animal if I break this covenant with you. (See covenant ceremony and serious nature of cutting covenant in Jeremiah 34:15-17, 18-20)

**Then** - When? After the solemn cutting of the binding covenant.

**They anointed** ([maschah](#); Lxx - [chrio](#)) **David king over Israel** - Now David was king over all 12 tribes. This was the third of three anointings of David- (1) First, by Samuel in Bethlehem before his family (1Sa 16:13), (2) Second as king of Judah in Hebron before Judah by the men of Judah (2Sa 2:4 more than 15 yrs after the first anointing); (3) Third also at Hebron by all Israel (2Sa 5:3) resulting in unification of the 12 tribes.

**Life Application Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) - David's life as an outlaw had looked bleak, but God's promise to make him king over all Israel was now being fulfilled. Although the kingdom would be divided again in less than 75 years, David's dynasty would reign over Judah, the southern kingdom, for over 400 years.

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**Make** [a covenant], cut off, destroy) ([03772](#)) [karath](#) literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action. For example, Zipporah "cut off her son's foreskin." (Ex 4:25) or the Jews "cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24, cf Dt 19:5, 20:19-20, Jdg 9:48-49, 1Sa 5:4, 17:51, 24:4-5, 11, 31:9, 2Sa 10:4, 2Sa 20:22) In another literal use as punishment to Israel for breaking the Mosaic covenant (cf Dt 29:25, 31:16), God says He will "cut down (karath) your incense altars" (Lev 26:30, cf Jdg 6:25-26, cf 1Sa 28:9). A sacrificial animal was not to be offered if it was "cut" (karath) (Lev 22:24). Karath means "chewed" (cutting food with teeth) in Nu 11:33.

**Covenant** ([01285](#)) [berit/berith/beriyth](#) means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below [beriyth](#) describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (For summary of covenants see - [Covenant in the Bible](#)). **Covenant** can be summarized as follows (1) Between two parties (sometimes equal, other times superior to inferior) -- (a) **nations** -- (peace) treaty, alliance of friendship (b) **individuals** -- a pledge or agreement with mutual obligations to each other (c) **monarch and subjects** (2Sa 3:21, 5:3, 1Chr 11:3) -- a constitution (d) **God and man** -- Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenants. [TWOT](#) (online) adds that "Apart from blood ties the covenant was the way people of the ancient world formed wider relationships with each other The accounts of the relationship between David and Jonathan are the only unequivocal mention of a compact between two individuals in the Old Testament (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18). It is spoken of as "a covenant of the Lord" because the Lord witnessed the transaction and protected the legal order."

**Anointed** ([04886](#)) [masah/maschah](#) is a verb which basically means to smear something on, to rub with oil, to anoint (as in setting one apart for office or function - Elisha as prophet = [1Ki 19:16](#), kings for office = [1Sa 9:16](#) = Saul, [1Sa 16:12](#) = David, [1Ki 1:39](#) = Solomon) and by implication to sanctify (set aside for sacred purpose) or consecrate (dedicate for a sacred purpose) (altar = Nu 7:10; vessels for worship - Ex 29:36 = "you shall anoint it to consecrate it;" Ex 30:26, 40:9-10). In the first OT use, Jacob "**anointed** a pillar" and made a vow to God (Ge 31:13; Lxx = alepho = to anoint by applying a liquid - Jesus' feet were anointed with perfume - Lk 7:38, 46). **Masah** is translated in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) with [chrio](#) which means to anoint and in the NT only referred to an anointing by God of someone, setting them apart for special service under divine direction (2Co 1:21+). In Lk 4:18+ [chrio](#) refers to the anointing of Jesus for His ministry (quoting from Isa 61:1+ which also uses chrio to translate masah) **Chrio** also refers to Jesus' being anointed in Hebrew 1:9+ "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS **ANOINTED** YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS."

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**ANOINTING** - Anointing a king was common practice in some parts of the ancient Near East. Among the Egyptians and Hittites, anointing was believed to protect a person from the power of netherworld deities. Much of the evidence comes from Hittite sources describing enthronement ceremonies. There is no evidence of kings being anointed in Mesopotamia. In Egypt the pharaoh was not anointed, but he anointed his officials and his vassals. This anointing established their subordinate relationship to him and indicated his protection of them. In the Amarna texts there is reference to a king of Nuhasse (in modern Syria) being anointed by the pharaoh. This model would fit the idea of David being anointed as a vassal to God. In 2 Samuel 2:4 it is the people who anoint David. This anointing suggests some sort of contractual agreement between David and the people he will govern. In Nuzi, individuals entering a business agreement anoint one another with oil, and in Egypt, oil anointment is used in wedding ceremonies. For information on



royal coronations see comment on 11:15. The spices used for anointing purposes were myrrh, cinnamon, cane and cassia (see recipe in Ex 30:23–25). Oil symbolized the gifts of God to the people and the responsibilities now laid on their leaders through this ceremony. In Israelite practice, anointing was a sign of election and often closely related to endowment by the Spirit. Additionally, throughout the ancient world anointing symbolized an advance of a person's legal status. Both concepts of protection and change of status may correlate to the king's anointing, for it would offer him protection on the throne and identify him with the divine realm. (See page 545 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

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#### Related Resources:

- [Covenant: Summary Table](#)
- [Covenant: The Exchange of Robes](#)
- [Covenant: The Exchange of Armor and Belts](#)
- [Covenant: Solemn and Binding](#)
- [Covenant: A Walk Into Death](#)
- [Covenant: The Oneness of Covenant](#)
- [Covenant: Oneness Notes](#)
- [Covenant: Withholding Nothing from God](#)
- [Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic](#)
- [Covenant: New Covenant in the Old Testament](#)
- [Covenant: Why the New is Better](#)
- [Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#)

#### 2 Samuel 5:4 David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.

- **thirty:** Lu 3:23
- **forty:** 1Ch 26:31 29:27

### DAVID KING OF ISRAEL AT AGE 30

**David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years-** Keep the context in mind -- David has been in God's school of training men for kingship for some 10 years, most of the this time as a fugitive and under difficult circumstances. David is now ready to step into his role and become the greatest king in Israel's history, excepting the greater Son of David, Who Alone is King of kings (Rev 19:16+).

**THOUGHT** - David was but a youth when Samuel first anointed him as future king. But David would be forced to wait patiently for the fulfillment some 15 years later. Has God given you a promise that is yet to be fulfilled? Probably most of us have something we could answer "Yes" to that question. Here is the point, don't fall into the trap of feeling like you need to fulfill the promise in your strength and each time you are tempted to run ahead of the LORD, pause and ponder the pattern of a man after God's own heart! Just as David's waiting time was not wasted time but used by the Spirit to hone him and refine him and prepare him for his promised role, so too your (my) time of waiting is to refine us and strengthen our character and our trust the LORD. There was an old song "[Hang on sloopy, hang on!](#)" Dear brother, dear sister in Christ, write and sing your own version of "Hang on sloopy, hang on!"

**Guzik** - 1 Chronicles 12:23-40 describes the great assembly that gathered in Hebron to recognize David as king over all Israel. Chronicles describes the impressive army that came to Hebron and numbers the soldiers at over 340,000 men. It then describes the scene: All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king. And they were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their brethren had prepared for them.... for there was joy in Israel (1 Chronicles 12:38-40).

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#### Age Is No Excuse

2 Samuel 5:3-4 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord. And they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

Someone once defined middle age as "a brief period of time between being too young to do something and being too old to want to." And there's truth to that. It seems we spend the first part of our lives being told, "No, you're too young to date. You're too young to drive. You're too young to get married." Then we spend the latter years of our lives being told, "No, you're too old to start a new career. You're too old to go back to school. You're too old to live alone." In American society, age is often a critical factor.

I suspect when David began to reign at the age of 30 some said, "David, you're too young to be king. We need someone older." By the time he had ruled for 40 years and reached the respectable age of 70, others were probably saying, "David, you're too old to be king over Israel. It's time to turn it over to someone younger." But in God's sight, age is not really an issue.

Scripture indicates that God uses the very young. The prophet Jeremiah said, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth" (Jer. 1:6), but God used him anyway. Timothy, too, must have ministered at a very young age, because Paul admonished him, "Let no one despise your youth" (1 Tim. 4:12). On the other hand, there were men like Caleb, who at the age of 85 could still claim, "I wholly followed the Lord" (Josh. 14:6-14). The apostle John continued to minister and, according to tradition, wrote the Book of Revelation in his elder years.

Is someone telling you that you're too young to serve the Lord? Don't believe it. Is someone telling you that you're too old to respond to God's call? Forget it. With God, age is never an excuse. Don't follow their advice; follow your heart. ([Back to the Bible](#))

Age is no issue with an ageless God.

**2 Samuel 5:5 At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.**

- **seven years and six months:** 2Sa 2:11 1Ki 2:11 1Ch 3:4

## **DAVID REIGNED AT HEBRON & JERUSALEM**

**At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah** - If David was first anointed by Saul as a youth (say about 15), that means that God had David in "future king school" for almost 15 years. Surely one of the things David learned was patience and waiting on the LORD. In a sense, God had used a two-step procedure to make David king over united Israel. Recall also that in his early years, David had been intimate with the life of a monarch in his music ministry and military service to King Saul, even sitting at the king's table, the ultimate sign of intimacy and fellowship in the ancient near east. The second "step" was David's 10 years of fleeing for his life from Saul.

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**Gleason Archer** - see page 187 in [New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#) -

**How could David have reigned seven and a half years in Hebron if Ish-bosheth, his rival, reigned only two years before he died?**

In 2 Samuel 5:5 we are told that the length of David's reign in Hebron as King of Judah (before he became acknowledged by the northern tribes as king over all Israel) was seven and a half years. This is confirmed by 1 Chronicles 3:4. Yet 2 Samuel 2:10 reports that David's rival, Ish-bosheth son of Saul, ruled over Israel (under Abner's sponsorship) for only two years. But this did not prevent the very next verse from affirming that David's rule in Hebron was indeed seven and a half years. How could both statements be true? On the assumption that the two years for Ish-bosheth represented the true interval, the Jerusalem Bible even amended 1 Chron. 3:4 to read, "Hebron, where he reigned for three years and six months" [*italics mine*]—even though no similar alteration has been made in the other two passages [2 Sam. 2:11; 5:5], interestingly enough!

A careful survey of the circumstances surrounding the career of Ish-bosheth furnishes a clue for the brevity of his reign. After the total collapse of Israel's army at the disaster of Mount Gilboa, it became necessary for Abner and the other fugitives from the victorious Philistines to take refuge east of the Jordan, leaving the entire area of Ephraim and Manasseh to the control of the conquerors. Abner must have set up his headquarters at Mahanaim, where he placed Ish-bosheth for safekeeping in the hinterland of the tribe of Gad. It apparently took Abner five long years of hard fighting to force the Philistines back from Beth-shan (where they had displayed the impaled bodies of Saul and his sons) all the way up the valley of the Esdraelon, and thus link up the northern tribes of Issachar, Naphtali, and Asher with Benjamin to the south. But until that was accomplished, it was premature to celebrate any formal coronation of Ish-bosheth as king of Israel.

However, at the end of five years Abner had been sufficiently successful to call representatives from all Ten Tribes to a public



coronation ceremony in Mahanaim—which remained the provisional capital for the time being, safely out of the reach of retaliatory expeditions launched by the Philistines. Thus it came about that Ish-bosheth actually reigned for only two years, at the end of which he was assassinated in bed by two of his army commanders, Baanah and Rechab (2 Sam. 4:5–6), sometime after they had heard of Abner's murder at the hand of the treacherous Joab (2 Sam. 3:27).

David, however, had been crowned by the men of Judah at Hebron quite soon after the battle of Mount Gilboa; and thus he wore the crown for a full seven and a half years, even though Ish-bosheth had formally begun his reign only two years before his death.

**2 Samuel 5:6 Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here."**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:6 κα π λθεν Δαυιδ κα ο νδρες α το ε ς Ιερουσαλημ πρ ς τ ν Ιεβουσα ον τ ν κατοικο ντα τ ν γ ν κα ρρ θη τ Δαυιδ ο κ ε σελε σει δε τι ντ στησαν ο τυφλο κα ο χωλο λ γοντες τι ο κ ε σελε σεται Δαυιδ δε

LXE 2 Samuel 5:6 And David and his men, departed to Jerusalem, to the Jebusite that inhabited the land: and it was said to David, Thou shalt not come in hither: for the blind and the lame withstood him, saying, David shall not come in hither.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.

NET 2 Samuel 5:6 Then the king and his men advanced to Jerusalem against the Jebusites who lived in the land. The Jebusites said to David, "You cannot invade this place! Even the blind and the lame will turn you back, saying, 'David cannot invade this place!'"

CSB 2 Samuel 5:6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites who inhabited the land. The Jebusites had said to David: "You will never get in here. Even the blind and lame can repel you," thinking, "David can't get in here."

ESV 2 Samuel 5:6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off"-- thinking, "David cannot come in here."

NIV 2 Samuel 5:6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here."

NLT 2 Samuel 5:6 David then led his men to Jerusalem to fight against the Jebusites, the original inhabitants of the land who were living there. The Jebusites taunted David, saying, "You'll never get in here! Even the blind and lame could keep you out!" For the Jebusites thought they were safe.

- **Jerusalem:** Ge 14:18 Jos 10:3 Jdg 1:8 Heb 7:1
- **the Jebusites:** Jos 15:63 18:28 Jdg 1:8,21 19:10-12
- **Except:** Jer 37:10

#### Related Passages:

Judges 1:8 Then the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.

Judges 1:21 But the sons of Benjamin **did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem**; so the Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

Joshua 15:63 Now as for the **Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah could not drive them out**; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day.

## DAVID ATTACKS THE JEBUSITES IN THE FORTRESS OF JERUSALEM

**Now** - This introduces a new subject for the new king of Israel

**The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land** - Note the new designation of David "**Now the king...**" Jerusalem had been conquered by Judah in the period of the judges (Jdg 1:8), but neither Judah nor Benjamin had been successful in permanently occupying the city or in driving out its Jebusite inhabitants (Jos 15:63; Jdg 1:21).

**and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here."** NLT - "The Jebusites taunted David, saying, "You'll never get in here! Even the blind and lame could keep you out!" For the Jebusites thought they were safe." An exchange of taunts or insults prior to battle was common practice in the ancient Near East. The sense is that they did not even need to send their strong warriors against David, but would only need to send the blind and lame because David was so impotent. The overconfident Jebusites would soon "**eat their words**!" As Pr 16:18 says "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."

**Dale Ralph Davis** adds the words of the Jebusites are "simply an arrogant put-down: sightless eyes and helpless legs are enough to repel any attack of yours. It's a good line; memorable words—unless one has to eat them. ([2 Samuel - Out of Every Adversity](#))

**Utley on Jerusalem** - Apparently the city was divided into two halves, a lower city probably on Mt. Moriah and an upper fortress on Mt. Zion. The lower city fell to Joshua and was burned although it was never occupied by the Hebrews, cf. Josh. 11:3; 15:63; Jdg. 1:8,21. This city was a natural fortress and was located between the borders of Ephraim and Benjamin, therefore, it made a perfect site for the capital of Israel. This city goes by several names in this chapter - (1) Jerusalem, (2) the stronghold of Zion (for "Zion" see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1314-1321) and (3) the city of David. See [SPECIAL TOPIC: MORIAH, SALEM, JEBUS, ZION, JERUSALEM](#).

**Life Application Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) - The fortress of Zion (which became the city of Jerusalem) was located on a high ridge near the center of the united Israelite kingdom. It was considered neutral territory because it stood on the border of the territory of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and it was still occupied by the Jebusites, a Canaanite tribe that had never been expelled from the land (Judges 1:21). Because of its strategic advantages, David made Jerusalem his capital.

**Henry Morris** The Jebusites were a tribe descended from Mizraim, the son of Ham (Genesis 10:16), and had been in Canaan since at least the time of Abraham (Genesis 15:21). Joshua had been unable to drive them out of Jerusalem, their capital, and neither had the hosts of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who had been given that region of the promised land (Joshua 15:20-62,63; Judges 1:21). As a result, the Jebusites were quite smug in their fortress, mocking David by saying their blind and lame could repel his forces. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** - David took the fortress called Jebus and renamed it the "City of David." This established his kingship militarily and politically. He then established his religious leadership by moving the ark of the covenant to the City of David. Solomon later expanded northward to Mt. Moriah and built the temple and the royal palace. The Jebusites felt so secure in their walled city that they believed the blind and lame could defend it successfully. David took up the taunt in v. 8, referring to all of the Jebusites as "lame" and "blind." This also gave rise to a proverb to the effect that unclean people such as the Jebusites had no right to enter the house, that is, the presence of the Lord.

**Matthew Henry** - Verses 6-10. The enemies of God's people are often very confident of their own strength, and most secure when their day to fall draws nigh. But the pride and insolence of the Jebusites animated David, and the Lord God of hosts was with him. Thus in the day of God's power, Satan's strong-hold, the human heart, is changed into a habitation of God through the Spirit, and into a throne on which the Son of David rules, and brings every thought into obedience to himself. May He thus come, and claim, and cleanse, each of our hearts; and, destroying every idol, may he reign there for ever!

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**Jerusalem.** The city is strategically located along an east-west road that runs from the fords of the Jordan near Jericho to the coastal highway. It is also by the most significant north-south road that runs through the hill country from Beersheba to Beth Shan. Its location is also strategic because of its position by the border between Judah and Benjamin. The deep valleys on the east and west of the ridge and the reliable water supply found at the Gihon spring combined to make the location defensible and desirable. The earliest reference to Jerusalem is in the Egyptian execration texts from early in the second millennium B.C., where its kings are named Yaqirammu and Shayzanu. The next reference is found in six letters in the Amarna texts from Abdi-Heba, king of Jerusalem, to the pharaoh requesting military support. Jerusalem was one of the key cities in the region and in the Amarna period was competing with Shechem for control of the hill country. Jerusalem was defeated by the Israelite armies at the time of the conquest, but the inhabitants had not been driven out and it had not been occupied by the Israelites (Judg 1:21). The city of Jerusalem in this period occupied only the north-south ridge covering about ten acres that runs south of the modern city walls. The top of the ridge is only about four hundred feet wide and about fifteen hundred feet long. The population would not have exceeded one thousand. The Canaanite city was built on an artificial platform that was supported by a series of terraces. Archaeologists have uncovered a stepped stone structure over fifty feet tall at the northeast corner of this ridge. This was most likely the platform for the Jebusite

citadel referred to in verse 7, and was enhanced by David for use as the foundation of his palace built in verse 11. The city was surrounded by a ten-footthick wall that had first been built over eight hundred years earlier. There is little else that archaeologists have found in the city that is attributable to the time of David. (see [IVP Background Commentary](#))

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## 2 Samuel 5:1-10 The King Gives Victory - Theodore Epp

So impregnable did the Jebusites think their fortress to be that they jeered at David and his men, saying that the blind and the lame could hold it against David's army.

"Nevertheless," we are told, "David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David" (2 Sam. 5:7).

David then moved into the city and made it the headquarters for his government, and later on it became the central place of worship for God's people. Eventually Solomon's great temple was erected in Jerusalem.

From this city the Lord Jesus Christ will rule in the Millennium and establish His New Jerusalem of which the Prophet Ezekiel spoke.

There is a rich spiritual lesson for us here. Some habits of sin are so deeply entrenched in our minds and bodies that we have struggled in vain against them from the day of our new birth.

We may have felt it was no use to try to overcome these habits and that we might as well give up. What we need, of course, is to let the King, the Lord Jesus Christ, lead us in the battle against this entrenched sin.

We can never defeat the Enemy by ourselves. It must always be done through the strength of Christ.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

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### QUESTION - [Who were the Jebusites?](#)

**ANSWER** - When God promised to give Abraham a land for his descendants, it was described as being inhabited by many tribes, including the **Jebusites** (Genesis 15:18–21). Who were these people, and where did they come from?

According to the [Table of Nations](#) in Genesis 10, the Jebusites were descended from Noah's son Ham, through his son Canaan. They were one of the [Amorite](#) tribes who were placed under judgment by God for their wickedness (Genesis 15:16). God described their pagan worship as abominable practices (Deuteronomy 20:18), which may have included child sacrifice. As a result of that judgment, God told the Israelites to exterminate all of the Amorite tribes when they came into the land. The Israelites were also forbidden to intermarry with them, so the Jebusites would not pass on their pagan practices.

The **Jebusites** dwelt in the hill country, with Jerusalem as one of their key cities (Numbers 13:29; Judges 19:10–11). The **Jebusites'** name for "Jerusalem" was "**Jebus**," and it retained that name until the time of King David (1 Chronicles 11:4–5). During the time of Joshua, the Jebusite king Adoni-zedek joined with four other Amorite kings to attack the Israelites at Gibeon (Joshua 10:5), but he was defeated and put to death. Later, the **Jebusites** joined with Jabin, king of Hazor, in a pitched battle against the Israelites, but they were also defeated by Joshua's army (Joshua 11:3). Despite these defeats, the **Jebusites** continued to live in the hill country around Jerusalem for many generations. During the time of the judges, some Israelites began to intermarry with the Jebusites, causing God to bring judgment on the nation (Judges 3:5).

When David became king of Israel, he attacked the **Jebusites** of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6) and conquered the city, which then became known as the **City of David**. Apparently, David granted terms of peace with the remaining Jebusites, because he made a friendly deal with [Araunah the Jebusite](#) to purchase land for building the temple (2 Samuel 24:18–25). The **Jebusites** remained subjugated to Israel and were part of the forced labor Solomon later used for his building projects.

Though they were allowed to live among the Israelites, the **Jebusites** and other Amorite tribes maintained their distinctive ways and thus became a continuing snare to the people of Israel. When [Ezra the priest](#) led a revival among the Jews who returned from the Babylonian captivity, he had to deal with the issue of intermarriage with **Jebusites** and others (Ezra 9:1). Ezra commanded the men of Israel to confess their sins and put away their pagan wives so that God would take away His wrath.

After this, the **Jebusites** disappear from history; likely, they were absorbed into the other Gentile peoples who lived in the land of Israel. An extra-biblical reference to the Jebusites may be contained in one of the tablets discovered at Mari, in modern-day Syria. One cuneiform tablet mentions a people called the "Yabusiim," which could very well be a reference to the Jebusites. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## NAVE'S SUMMARY OF JEBUSITES

- **One of the tribes of Canaan**, Deut. 7:1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the **Jebusites**, seven nations greater and stronger than you"
- **Land of, given to Abraham and his descendants**, Ge 15:21; Ex. 3:8, 17; Ex 23:23, 24; Deut. 20:17 = "But you shall **utterly destroy** them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the **Jebusite**, as the LORD your God has commanded you." Ex. 33:2; 34:10, 11.
- **Conquered by Joshua**, Josh 10-12; Josh 24:11;
- **Conquered by David**, 2 Sam. 5:6-9.
- **Jerusalem within the territory of**, Josh. 18:28.
- **Not exterminated, but intermarry with the Israelites**, Jdg. 3:5, 6; Ezra 9:1-2; Ezra 10:18-44.
- **Pay tribute to Solomon**, 1Ki 9:20, 21.

**Jebusites** (yebusi) - 41x/39v - Ge 10:15-16 - Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth 16 and the **Jebusite** and the Amorite and the Girgashite ; Gen. 15:21; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:8; Jos. 15:63; Jos. 18:16; Jos. 18:28; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 3:5; Jdg. 19:11; 2 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 5:8; 2 Sam. 24:16; 2 Sam. 24:18; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Chr. 1:14; 1 Chr. 11:4; 1 Chr. 11:6; 1 Chr. 21:15; 1 Chr. 21:18; 1 Chr. 21:28; 2 Chr. 3:1; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Zech. 9:7

## 2 Samuel 5:7 Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David.

BGT 2 Samuel 5:7 κα καταλαβειτο Δαυιδ τ ην περιουχ ν Σιων α τη π λικ το Δαυιδ

LXE 2 Samuel 5:7 And David took first the hold of Sion: this is the city of David.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

NET 2 Samuel 5:7 But David captured the fortress of Zion (that is, the city of David).

CSB 2 Samuel 5:7 Yet David did capture the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:7 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:7 Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:7 But David captured the fortress of Zion, which is now called the City of David.

- Zion: Ps 2:6 9:11 48:12 51:18 87:2 132:13 Isa 12:6 59:20 Mic 4:2 Ro 9:33 Heb 12:22 Rev 14:1
- the same: 2Sa 5:9 6:10 1Ki 2:10 3:1 8:1 1Ch 11:7 2Ch 5:2 24:16

## JERUSALEM, ZION CITY OF DAVID

**Nevertheless** - Despite the fact that the taunting Jebusites had a clear military advantage, and boasted in their impregnable walls, they did not realize that they were up against David who had the hand of God on his life.

**David captured the stronghold (mesudah) of Zion, that is the city of David** - While the city had been taken briefly in Joshua's day, it was left to David to capture the seeming impregnable city from the Jebusites (see **THOUGHT** below for application). Jerusalem was built on seven hills; one of them, on which David built his palace, was Zion. It became a designation for the entire city. Here an editor added "(that is, the city of David)." See See [SPECIAL TOPIC: MORIAH, SALEM, JEBUS, ZION, JERUSALEM](#).

**City of David** - 42 verses in the Bible (note 2 in NT) - 2 Sam. 5:7; 2 Sam. 5:9; 2 Sam. 6:10; 2 Sam. 6:12; 2 Sam. 6:16; 1 Ki. 2:10; 1 Ki. 3:1; 1 Ki. 8:1; 1 Ki. 9:24; 1 Ki. 14:31; 1 Ki. 15:8; 1 Ki. 15:24; 2 Ki. 8:24; 2 Ki. 9:28; 2 Ki. 12:21; 2 Ki. 14:20; 2 Ki. 15:7; 2 Ki. 15:38; 2 Ki. 16:20; 1 Chr. 11:5; 1 Chr. 11:7; 1 Chr. 13:13; 1 Chr. 15:1; 1 Chr. 15:29; 2 Chr. 5:2; 2 Chr. 8:11; 2 Chr. 12:16; 2 Chr. 14:1; 2 Chr. 16:14; 2 Chr. 21:1; 2 Chr. 21:20; 2 Chr. 24:16; 2 Chr. 24:25; 2 Chr. 27:9; 2 Chr. 32:5; 2 Chr. 32:30; 2 Chr. 33:14; Neh. 3:15; Neh. 12:37; Isa. 22:9; Lk. 2:4; Lk. 2:11

**THOUGHT** On the same principle (DAVID CAPTURING A LONG TIME STRONGHOLD), King Jesus

conquers old strongholds when He becomes King over our lives. Territory (**ED: LIKE JEBUS**) that should have been given to Him long ago is now conquered. "I want to say to you in the name of the Lord Jesus that there is no habit that has gone so deep but that the power of the blood of Jesus can go deeper, and there is no entrenchment of sin that has gone so far but the power of the risen Lord, by His Holy Spirit, can go further." (Alan Redpath in [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** - Jerusalem, being on the border between Judah and Israel, would be the perfect site for a capital to unite the two regions. "Zion" originally referred to the hill that projected south between the Kidron and Central (Tyropoean) Valleys. Protected on three sides by valleys, Zion was almost impregnable. Since the temple was built there, "Zion" later came to refer poetically to the entire city.

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**EASTON'S BIBLE DICTIONARY - ZION** - means "sunny; height," one of the eminences on which Jerusalem was built. It was surrounded on all sides, except the north, by deep valleys, that of the Tyropoeon (q.v.) separating it from Moriah (q.v.), which it surpasses in height by 105 feet. It was the south-eastern hill of Jerusalem. When David took it from the Jebusites (Josh. 15:63; 2 Sam. 5:7) he built on it a citadel and a palace, and it became "the city of David" (1 Kings 8:1; 2 Kings 19:21, 31; 1 Chr. 11:5). In the later books of the Old Testament this name was sometimes used (Ps. 87:2; 149:2; Isa. 33:14; Joel 2:1) to denote Jerusalem in general, and sometimes God's chosen Israel (Ps. 51:18; 87:5). In the New Testament (see SION) it is used sometimes to denote the Church of God (Heb. 12:22), and sometimes the heavenly city (Rev. 14:1)

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**Dale Ralph Davis on Zion** - Verse 7 contains the first mention of **Zion** in the Bible. Originally it referred to this conquered Jebusite town, this 'city of David,' on the (southeast) Hill Ophel (1Ki 8:1) but also came to designate the **temple mount** (Ps. 74:2-3; 84:7), the **city of Jerusalem** (Ps. 87:2-3; 147:12), the **people of God** (Isa. 49:14; 51:16), and, significantly, the **center of Yahweh's kingdom in the age to come** (Isa. 2:3; 4:3-5; Mic. 4:7; Zech. 8:1-3). The day will come when **Yahweh of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem'** (Isa. 24:23), but that reign first became visible in old Jebusburg on a mere eleven acres of real estate.

Yahweh's promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:18-21) has proven true. If verses 1-5 taught us that Yahweh's promises are certain in spite of intense opposition, verses 6-10 teach us that his promises are certain in spite of chronological distance. Eight hundred years (Abraham-to-David, plus or minus) does not erode the reliability of Yahweh's word. His promises are not stamped with an expiration date in small print. All of which should make a difference in the way waiting Christians read their Bibles and look to their future (cf. 2 Pet. 3). Hence 'Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken' (Heb. 12:28, RSV)—not because we are unshakeable but because Yahweh's promises are firm, so firm that time cannot dissolve them (the case of Abraham) nor enemies sabotage them (the case of David). Yahweh's promises may be old or opposed but never false. ([2 Samuel - Out of Every Adversity](#))

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#### **NAVE'S TOPIC - ZION, called also Sion, stronghold of Jerusalem.**

Taken from the Jebusites by David, 2 Sam. 5:6-9; 1 Chr. 11:5-7.

Called thereafter "the city of David," 2 Sam. 5:7, 9; 6:12, 16; 1 Kin. 8:1; 1 Chr. 11:5, 7; 15:1, 29; 2 Chr. 5:2.

Ark of the covenant placed in, 2 Sam. 6:12, 16; 1 Kin. 8:1; 1 Chr. 15:1, 29; 2 Chr. 5:2; removed from, to Solomon's temple on Mount Moriah, 1 Kin. 8:1; 2 Chr. 5:2, with 2 Chr. 3:1.

Collectively, the place, the forms, and the assemblies of Israel's worship, 2 Kin. 19:21, 31; Psa. 9:11; 48:2, 11, 12; 74:2; 132:13; 137:1; Isa. 35:10; 40:9; 49:14; 51:16; 52:1, 2, 7, 8; 60:14; 62:1, 11; Jer. 31:6; 50:5; Lam. 1:4; Joel 2:1, 15; Matt. 21:5; John 12:15; Rom. 9:33; 11:26; 1 Pet. 2:6.

Name of, applied to Jerusalem, Psa. 87:2, 5; 149:2; Song 3:11; Isa. 33:14, 20; Jer. 9:19; 30:17; Zech. 9:13.

Called the city of God, Psa. 87:2, 3; Isa. 60:14.

Restoration of, promised, Isa. 51:3, 11, 16; 52:1, 2, 7, 8; 59:20; 60:14; Obad. 17, 21; Zeph. 3:14, 16; Zech. 1:14, 17; 2:7, 10; 8:2, 3; 9:9, 13.

Name of, applied to the city of the redeemed, Heb. 12:22; Rev. 14:1.

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#### **ISBE - ZION [ISBE] ZION - zi'-on (tsiyon; Sion):**

##### **1. Meaning of the Word:**

A name applied to Jerusalem, or to certain parts of it, at least since the time of David. Nothing certain is known of the meaning. Gesenius and others have derived it from a Hebrew root tsahah, "to be dry"; Delitzsch from tsiwwah, "to set up" and Wetzstein from tsin, "to protect." Gesenius finds a more hopeful suggestion in the Arabic equivalent cihw, the Arabic cahwat signifying "ridge of a mountain" or "citadel," which at any rate suitably applies to what we know to have been the original Zion (compare Smith, HGHL, under the word).

Considerable confusion has been caused in the past by the want of clear understanding regarding the different sites which have respectively been called "Zion" during the centuries. It will make matters clearer if we take the application of the name: in David's time; in the early Prophets, etc.; in late poetical writings and in the Apocrypha; and in Christian times.

## **2. The Zion of the Jebusites:**

Jerus (in the form Uru-sa-lim) is the oldest name we know for this city; it goes back at least 400 years before David. In 2 Sam 5:6-9, "The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites. .... Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David .... And David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the city of David." It is evident that Zion was the name of the citadel of the Jebusite city of Jerusalem. That this citadel and incidentally then city of Jerusalem around it were on the long ridge running South of the Temple (called the southeastern hill in the article JERUSALEM, III, (3) (which see)) is now accepted by almost all modern scholars, mainly on the following grounds:

(1) The near proximity of the site to the only known spring, now the "Virgin's Fount," once called GIHON (which see). From our knowledge of other ancient sites all over Palestine, as well as on grounds of common-sense, it is hardly possible to believe that the early inhabitants of this site with such an abundant source at their very doors could have made any other spot their headquarters.

(2) The suitability of the site for defense.--The sites suited for settlement in early Canaanite times were all, if we may judge from a number of them now known, of this nature--a rocky spur isolated on three sides by steep valleys, and, in many sites, protected at the end where they join the main mountain ridge by either a valley or a rocky spur.

(3) The size of the ridge, though very small to our modern ideas, is far more in keeping with what we know of fortified towns of that period than such an area as presented by the southwestern hill--the traditional site of Zion. Mr. Macalister found by actual excavation that the great walls of Gezer, which must have been contemporaneous with the Jebusite Jerusalem, measured approximately 4,500 feet in circumference. G. A. Smith has calculated that a line of wall carried along the known and inferred scarps around the edge of this southeastern hill would have an approximate circumference of 4,250 feet. The suitability of the site to a fortified city like Gezer, Megiddo, Soco, and other sites which have been excavated, strikes anyone familiar with these places.

(4) The archaeological remains on these hills found by Warren and Professor Guthe, and more particularly in the recent excavations of Captain Parker (see JERUSALEM), show without doubt that this was the earliest settlement in pre-Israelite times. Extensive curves and rock-cuttings, cave-dwellings and tombs, and enormous quantities of early "Amorite" (what may be popularly called "Jebusite") pottery show that the spot must have been inhabited many centuries before the time of David. The reverse is equally true; on no other part of the Jerusalem site has any quantity of such early pottery been found.

(5) The Bible evidence that Zion originally occupied this site is clear. It will be found more in detail under the heading "City of David" in the article JERUSALEM, IV, (5), but three points may be mentioned here: (a) The Ark of the Covenant was brought up out of the city of David to the Temple (1 Ki 8:1; 2 Ch 5:2), and Pharaoh's daughter "came up out of the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her"--adjacent to the Temple (1 Ki 9:24). This expression "up" could not be used of any other hill than of the lower-lying eastern ridge; to go from the southwestern hill (traditional Zion) to the Temple is to go down. (b) Hezekiah constructed the well-known Siloam tunnel from Gihon to the Pool of Siloam. He is described (2 Ch 32:30) as bringing the waters of Gihon "straight down on the west side of the city of David." (c) Manasseh (2 Ch 33:14) built "an outer wall to the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley" (i.e. nachal--the name of the Kedron valley).

## **3. Zion of the Prophets:**

Zion, renamed the City of David, then originally was on this eastern ridge. But the name did not stay there. It would almost seem as if the name was extended to the Temple site when the ark was carried there, for in the pre-exilic Prophets the references to Zion all appear to have referred to the Temple Hill. To quote a few examples: "And Yahweh will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night" (Isa 4:5); "Yahweh of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion" (Isa 8:18); "Let us go up to Zion unto Yahweh our God" (Jer 31:6); "Yahweh will reign over them in mount Zion" (Mic 4:7). All these, and numbers more, clearly show that at that time Zion was the Temple Hill.

## **4. Zion in Later Poetical Writings and Apocrypha:**

In many of the later writings, particularly poetical references, Zion appears to be the equivalent of Jerusalem; either in parallelism (Ps 102:21; Am 1:2; Mic 3:10,12; Zec 1:14,17; 8:3; Zeph 3:16) or alone (Jer 3:14; Lam 5:11); even here many of the references will do equally well for the Temple Hill. The term "Daughter of Zion" is applied to the captive Jews (Lam 4:22), but in other references to the people of Jerusalem (Isa 1:8; 52:2; Jer 4:31, etc.). When we come to the Apocrypha, in 2 Esdras there are several references in which Zion is used for the captive people of Judah (2:40; 3:2,31; 10:20,39,44), but "Mount Zion" in this and other books (e.g. 1 Macc 4:37,60; 5:54; 6:48,62, etc.) is always the Temple Hill.



## 5. Omission of Name by Some Writers:

It has been pointed out as a curious and unaccountable exception that in Ezekiel as well as in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, there is no mention of Zion, except the incidental reference to David's capture of the Jebusite fort. The references in the other Prophets and the Psalms are so copious that there must be some religious reason for this. The Chronicler (2 Ch 3:1), too, alone refers to the Temple as on Mount Moriah. It is also noticeable that only in these books (2 Ch 27:3; 33:14; Neh 3:26 f; 11:21) does the name "Ophel" appear as a designation of a part of the southeastern hill, which apparently might equally fitly have been termed Zion. See OPHEL. Josephus never uses the name "Zion" nor does it occur in the New Testament, except in two quotations (Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1).

## 6. The Name "Zion" in Christian Times:

Among the earlier Christian writers who mention "Zion," Origen used it as equivalent to the Temple Hill, but in the 4th century writers commence to localize it up the southern part of the western hill. It was a period when Biblical topography was settled in a very arbitrary manner, without any scientific or critical examination of the evidence, and this tradition once established remained, like many such traditions, undisputed until very recent years. To W. F. Birch belongs much of the credit for the promulgation of the newer views which now receive the adherence of almost every living authority on the topography of Jerusalem.

**2 Samuel 5:8 David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." Therefore they say, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house."**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:8 κα ε πεν Δαυιδ τ μ ρ κε ν π ς τ πτων Ιεβουσα ον πτ σθω ν παρξιφ δι κα το ς χωλο ς κα το ς τυφλο ς κα το ς μισο ντας τ ν ψυχ ν Δαυιδ δι το το ρο σιν τυφλο κα χωλο ο κ ε σελε σονται ε ς ο κον κυρ ου

LXE 2 Samuel 5:8 And David said on that day, Every one that smites the Jebusite, let him attack with the dagger both the lame and the blind, and those that hate the soul of David. Therefore they say, The lame and the blind shall not enter into the house of the Lord.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:8 And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

NET 2 Samuel 5:8 David said on that day, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites must approach the 'lame' and the 'blind' who are David's enemies by going through the water tunnel." For this reason it is said, "The blind and the lame cannot enter the palace."

CSB 2 Samuel 5:8 He said that day, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites must go through the water shaft to reach the lame and the blind who are despised by David." For this reason it is said, "The blind and the lame will never enter the house."

ESV 2 Samuel 5:8 And David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack 'the lame and the blind,' who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house."

NIV 2 Samuel 5:8 On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies. " That is why they say, "The 'blind and lame' will not enter the palace."

NLT 2 Samuel 5:8 On the day of the attack, David said to his troops, "I hate those 'lame' and 'blind' Jebusites. Whoever attacks them should strike by going into the city through the water tunnel. " That is the origin of the saying, "The blind and the lame may not enter the house."

NRS 2 Samuel 5:8 David had said on that day, "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house."

NJB 2 Samuel 5:8 That day, David said, 'Whoever gets up the tunnel and kills a Jebusite . . .' As for the blind and the lame, David hated them with his whole being. (Hence the saying: the blind and the lame may not enter the Temple.)

NAB 2 Samuel 5:8 On that day David said: "All who wish to attack the Jebusites must strike at them through the water shaft. The lame and the blind shall be the personal enemies of David." That is why it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not enter the palace."

YLT 2 Samuel 5:8 And David saith on that day, 'Any one smiting the Jebusite, (let him go up by the watercourse), and the lame and the blind -- the hated of David's soul,' -- because the blind and lame say, 'He doth not come into the house.'

GWN 2 Samuel 5:8 That day David said, "Whoever wants to defeat the Jebusites must reach the lame and the blind who hate me by using the water shaft." So there is a saying, "The blind and the lame will not get into the palace."

BBE 2 Samuel 5:8 And that day David said, Whoever makes an attack on the Jebusites, let him go up by the water-pipe, and put to death all the blind and feeble-footed who are hated by David. And this is why they say, The blind and feeble-footed may not come into the house.

- **Whoever:** Jos 15:16,17 1Sa 17:25
- **shall:** 1Ch 11:6-9

#### Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 11:4-9 Then David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (that is, Jebus) (NOT TO VISIT BUT TO TAKE THE CITY); and the **Jebusites**, the inhabitants of the land, were there. 5 The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You shall not enter here." Nevertheless David captured the stronghold of Zion (that is, the city of David). 6 Now David had said, "Whoever strikes down a Jebusite first shall be chief and commander." **Joab** the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. 7 Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore it was called the **city of David**. 8 He built the city all around, from the Millo even to the surrounding area; and Joab repaired the rest of the city. 9 David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him.

### DAVID'S CHARGE TO DESTROY THE JEBUSITES

David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." NLT - "When the insulting message from the defenders of the city reached David, he told his own troops, "Go up through the water tunnel into the city and destroy those 'lame' and 'blind' Jebusites. How I hate them." NRSV renders it "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind those whom David hates." While not everyone agrees, one consideration based on David's words is that he bypassed the Jebusites military advantages by entering the city through **the water tunnel** and surprising the arrogant, self-confident Jebusites.

**THOUGHT-** "Only in God are we truly safe and secure. Anything else is false security. Whether you are surrounded by mighty walls of stone, a comfortable home, or a secure job, no one can predict what tomorrow may bring. Our relationship with God is the only security that cannot be taken away." (Life Application Study Bible [borrow](#))

**NET Note** on **water tunnel** - If a water tunnel is in view here, it is probably the so-called **Warren's Shaft** that extends up from Hezekiah's tunnel. It would have provided a means for surprise attack against the occupants of the city of David. The LXX seems not to understand the reference here, translating "by the water shaft" as "with a small knife."

**Therefore they** (Jebusites) **say**, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house - NLT = "That is the origin of the saying, "The blind and the lame may not enter the house."

**John Bright** ([See page 182 in A History of Israel](#)) - By this move (SECURING JERUSALEM) David both eliminated a Canaanite enclave from the center of the land and gained a capital from which he could rule a national state. Hebron, located far to the south and on Judahite soil, could not have been permanently acceptable as a capital to the northern tribes. But a capital in the north would have been doubly unacceptable to Judah. **Jerusalem**, centrally located between the two sections and within the territory of none of the tribes, offered an excellent compromise.'

**2 Samuel 5:9** So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

- **city:** 2Sa 5:7
- **Millo:** Jdg 9:6,20 1Ki 9:15,24 11:27 1Ch 11:8 2Ch 32:5

#### Related Passage:

1 Chronicles 11:8 He built the city all around, from the Millo even to the surrounding area; and Joab repaired the rest of the city.

## DAVID MOVED FROM HEBRON TO JERUSALEM HIS CITY

**So David lived in the stronghold ([mesudah](#)) and called it the city of David** - Jerusalem was now the capital of David's kingdom.

**And David built all around from the Millo and inward** - David immediately fortified his city. 1Ch 11:8 explains that "Joab repaired the rest of the city." Recall that Joab had been the one to lead the assault on the fortress and was rewarded with command of David's armies (1Ch 11:8).

**Believer's Study Bible** - "Millo," which in Hebrew means "filling" (Lit. The Landfill), was most likely a fortress or defensive tower erected on a filled-in piece of earth to help protect the City of David. The crucial fact is in v. 7, namely, that David captured this ancient Jebusite fortress and made it "the City of David." Thus began the history of the city of Jerusalem as a sacred city for the Jewish people.

**Stronghold** (fortress)([04686](#)) [mesudah](#) from **tsud** = to hunt) means a fastness, stronghold. Mesudah (mesuda) refers to a wilderness or mountainous places for hiding, defense, and gathering supplies for battle (1Sa 22:4, 5; 24:22) especially David's city when he captured the "stronghold of Zion" (2Sa 5:7, 9). Job 39:28 gives us a good word picture of the meaning of this word describing the home of the eagle "On the cliff he dwells and lodges, Upon the rocky crag, an **inaccessible place** ([mesudah](#))."

**Mesudah - 17v - fortress(6), inaccessible place(1), stronghold(10).** 1 Sam. 22:4; 1 Sam. 22:5; 1 Sam. 24:22; 2 Sam. 5:7; 2 Sam. 5:9; 2 Sam. 5:17; 2 Sam. 22:2; 2 Sam. 23:14; 1 Chr. 11:5; 1 Chr. 11:16; Job 39:28; Ps. 18:2; Ps. 31:2; Ps. 31:3; Ps. 71:3; Ps. 91:2; Ps. 144:2

**MILLO [SMITH]** (a rampart, mound) a place in ancient Jerusalem. Both name and place seem to have been already in existence when the city was taken from the Jebusites by David. (2 Samuel 5:9; 1 Chronicles 11:8) Its repair or restoration was one of the great works for which Solomon raised his "levy," (1 Kings 9:15,24; 11:27) and it formed a prominent part of the fortifications by which Hezekiah prepared for the approach of the Assyrians. (2 Chronicles 32:5) The last passage seems to show that "the Milo" was part of the "city of David," that is, of Zion. Comp. (2 Kings 12:20)

**NAVES on MILLO** - A name given to part of the citadel of Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 5:9; 1 Chr. 11:8. King Solomon raises a levy to repair, 1 Kin. 9:15, 24; 11:27. Repaired by King Hezekiah, 2 Chr. 32:5. King Joash murdered at, 2 Kin. 12:20. ([SEE ALSO LONGER ISBE DESCRIPTION](#))

**2 Samuel 5:10 David became greater and greater, for the LORD God of hosts was with him.**

- **became greater and greater:** 2Sa 3:1 Job 17:9 Pr 4:18 Isa 9:7 Da 2:44,45 Lu 2:52
- **the LORD God of hosts:** Ge 21:22 Ps 46:7,11 Isa 8:9,10 Ro 8:31

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 16:18 Then one of the young men said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and **the LORD is with him.**"

1 Samuel 18:12 Now Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul.

1 Samuel 18:14 David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD was with him.

## DAVID GREW IN GREATNESS FOR

## FOR LORD OF ARMIES WAS WITH HIM

**David became greater and greater** Hebrew = went going and growing,

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, is this not what should be transpiring in each of our lives as followers of Jesus? We are to be growing "**greater and greater**," which in NT terms means we are being progressively transformed into greater and greater degrees of Christlikeness (2Co 3:18+). Are you? Am I? This progressive sanctification will only transpire because the **LORD God of hosts is with us**, as we take in His Word with which His Spirit transforms us! So it also begs the question are you daily taking in God's Word, so that God's Spirit has "raw material" to work with?

**Guzik** - In God's plan there is almost always a hidden price of greatness. Often those who become great among God's people experience much pain and difficulty in God's training process.

**For** - This is an important term of explanation, explaining how David grew in strength as king of Israel. (cf "**for**" explaining the "success" of Ezra in 7:10+)

**The LORD God of hosts was with him** - This is the first of numerous occurrences of this majestic name of God in Second Samuel. How was He with David? In 1Sa 16:13 "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward." In 1Sa 16:18 others recognized that "the LORD is with him," even as others recognized the LORD was with Joseph (Ge 39:3, 23), with Samuel (1Sa 3:19) and even with Jesus (Acts 10:38). 1 Samuel 18:14 (cf 1Sa 18:12) adds that "David was prospering in all his ways for **the LORD was with him**."

In short, **Jehovah Sabaoth, LORD of hosts (of armies)** was His strength, which reminds us of David's words in Ps 18:1 "I love You, O LORD, my **strength**." The Septuagint translates this with "**kurios pantokrator**" a designation for God as the one holding all power and ruling all things!

**THOUGHT** - Is He your strength? Or are you trying (futilely, frustratingly) to live the Christ life relying on your natural human strength, and finding it does not work very well? A supernatural life (which believers have been granted and are called to live before fallen men that they might see evidence of the invisible God - Mt 5:16+) calls for a supernatural power Source, the Spirit of God. He is "with us" and even better He is in us to empower us, lead us, etc. Seek to daily be filled (Eph 5:18+), keeping short accounts (confess quickly when you sin) and walking continually in His power for then you will not fulfill the desire of the flesh (Gal 5:16+). 1 Chronicles 16:11 should be every believer's watchword "Seek the LORD and His **strength**; Seek His face continually." Let it be so Lord, by Thy Spirit for Thy glory in Christ. Amen.

**2 Samuel 5:11 Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David.**

- **Hiram:** 1Ki 5:1,2,8,9 1Ch 14:1
- **they built:** 2Sa 7:2 1Ki 7:1-12 Ec 2:4-11 Jer 22:14-16

### Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 14:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees, masons and carpenters, to build a house for him.

## A HOUSE FOR DAVID IN THE CITY OF DAVID

**Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David** - The writer of Samuel leaves out the discussion regarding David's mighty men who supported him and aided his ascension to the throne over all Israel (See 1Ch 11:10-47 for David's mighty men).

**Tyre** was a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea and lay north of Israel. Hiram established relations with David, which was an astute move economically and politically and it was this same King Hiram who later supplied Solomon with materials for the Temple (1Ki 5:1). At this time David clearly commanded the respect of kings in nations surrounding Israel. Hiram's offer of cedar trees must be understood in the context of the fact that this prized tree (see [note](#)) once prevalent in Lebanon, was scarce by the time of David, making cedar wood quite prized! But not only did Hiram provide the supplies but also the laborers. In fact 1Ch 14:1 says Hiram's

objective was "to build a house for him." That's a nice present to give a new king! This is surely one of the manifold manifestations of the good hand of the LORD upon His king after His own heart.

**Matthew Henry** - Verses 11-16. David's house was not the worse, nor the less fit to be dedicated to God, for being built by the sons of the stranger. It is prophesied of the gospel church, The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee, Isaiah 60:10. David's government was rooted and built up. David was established king; so is the Son of David, and all who, through him, are made to our God kings and priests. Never had the nation of Israel appeared so great as it began now to be. Many have the favour and love of God, yet do not perceive it, and so want the comfort of it; but to be exalted to that, and to perceive it, is happiness. David owned it was for his people's sake God had done great things for him; that he might be a blessing to them, and that they might be happy under him.

**Walton on cedar.** Cedar trees are slow growing and can live up to three thousand years and attain heights of 120 feet. Beautiful grain, sweet-smelling aroma and durability combined to make cedar the wood of choice for most temples and palaces of the ancient world. High resin content inhibited the growth of fungus. The forests of Lebanon on the west slope of the Lebanon range (at elevation levels of about five thousand feet) were one of the few places where it grew. Both Mesopotamia and Egypt were importing it beginning as early as the fourth millennium B.C. By the year 1000, there was little that remained of the legendary forests, making the rare wood all the more valuable. (See page 329 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

**ISBE NOTE ON HIRAM** - A king of Tyre who lived on most friendly terms with both David and Solomon. After David had taken the stronghold of Zion, Hiram sent messengers and workmen and materials to build a palace for him at Jerusalem (2Sa5:11; 1Ch 14:1). Solomon, on his accession to the throne, made a league with Hiram, in consequence of which Hiram furnished the new king of Israel with skilled workmen and with cedar trees and fir trees and algum trees from Lebanon for the building of the Temple. In return Solomon gave annually to Hiram large quantities of wheat and oil (1 Ki 5:1 (Hebrew 15) ff; 2 Ch 2:3 (Hebrew 2) ff). "At the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the two houses, the house of Yahweh and the king's house," Solomon made a present to Hiram of twenty cities in the land of Galilee. Hiram was not at all pleased with these cities and contemptuously called them "Cabul." His displeasure, however, with this gift does not seem to have disturbed the amicable relations that had hitherto existed between the two kings, for subsequently Hiram sent to the king of Israel 120 talents of gold (1 Ki 9:10-14). Hiram and Solomon maintained merchant vessels on the Mediterranean and shared mutually in a profitable trade with foreign ports (1 Ki 10:22). Hiram's servants, "shipmen that had knowledge of the sea," taught the sailors of Solomon the route from Ezion-geber and Elath to Ophir, whence large stores of gold were brought to King Solomon (1 Ki 9:26; 2 Ch 8:17 f).

**2 Samuel 5:12 And David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:12 κα γνω Δαυιδ τι το μασεν α τ ν κ ριος ε ς βασιλ α π Ισραηλ κα τι π ρθη βασιλε α α το δι τ ν λα ν α το Ισραηλ

LXE 2 Samuel 5:12 And David knew that the Lord had prepared him to be king over Israel, and that his kingdom was exalted for the sake of his people Israel.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:12 And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

NET 2 Samuel 5:12 David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and that he had elevated his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:12 Then David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:12 And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:12 And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:12 And David realized that the LORD had confirmed him as king over Israel and had blessed his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

- **David:** 2Sa 7:16 1Ch 14:2
- **his people:** 1Ki 10:9 2Ch 2:11 Es 4:14 Isa 1:25-27 Da 2:30

## Related Passage:

1 Chronicles 14:2 And David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingdom was highly exalted, for the sake of His people Israel.

2 Samuel 7:16 "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.""

## DAVID ACKNOWLEDGES HIS BOUNTY FROM YAHWEH

**And** - This conjunction connects with the gift of a house from King Hiram. Clearly other kings recognized David's stature which is what opened David's eyes to the fact that it was not because he (David) was so good, but because his God was so good and generous.

**THOUGHT** - Are we quick to recognize the hand of blessing on our lives as not the result of our own doing, but the result of the **good hand of the LORD** upon our life? Perhaps the moment you (I) might bow and give Him thanks for the blessings in your (my) life.

**David realized** ([yada](#); Lxx - [ginosko](#)) **that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel** - David's realization reminds us of the words of James 1:17+ that "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." What did David realize? As he sat in "his city" he realized God was faithful, for almost 20 years earlier He had made David a promise that he would one day be king over Israel. Our God is a covenant keeping God, a promise keeping God! David also came to realize that Yahweh had not blessed him and his people because David was so good, but because He was so good and so faithful to also keep His covenant and promises He had made with Israel. David just happened to be the "instrument" in His hands by which Yahweh brought this into being!

**THOUGHT** - Dear believing reader, do you have food and shelter? Whether you live in a tent or a palace, you can know that what you have is from the hand of the LORD. It is good to frequently pause during our busy days and through our Great High Priest Jesus "continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." (Heb 13:15-16+) What have you thanked your kind, generous Father for today?

**Life Application Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) - Although the pagan kingdoms based their greatness on conquest, power, armies, and wealth, David knew that his greatness came only from God. To be great means keeping a close relationship with God personally and nationally. To do this, David had to keep his ambition under control. Although he was famous, successful, and well liked, he gave God first place in his life and served the people according to God's purposes. **Do you seek greatness from God or from people? In the drive for success, remember to keep your ambition under God's control.**

**Guzik** - David knew three things that made his reign great. Every godly leader should know these three things well.

1. **David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel:** David knew that God called him and established him over Israel.
2. **He had exalted His kingdom:** David knew that the kingdom belonged to God – it was **His kingdom**.
3. **For the sake of His people Israel:** David knew God wanted to use him as a channel to bless His people. It was not for David's sake that he was lifted up, but for the **sake of His people Israel**.

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**Realized** ([03045](#)) [yada](#) to know, to learn, to perceive, to discern, to experience, to confess, to consider, to know people relationally, to know how, to be skillful, to be made known, to make oneself known, to make to known. As noted below in several examples, the Septuagint translates yada often with the Greek verb [ginosko](#), which conveys the sense of to know by experience and/or to know intimately (as used in Mt 1:25KJV and ESV which says Joseph "knew her not" which the NAS paraphrases "kept her a virgin"). And many of the uses of **yada** also have this experiential emphasis as with the Greek [ginosko](#).

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**John Calvin** - David knew to what end God had exalted his reign: it was because of his people, Israel. David could easily have thought that God was making him prosper to maintain him as ruler over the kingdom. But to know the intention of God and to what end he does something takes far more prudence. David perceived that God was exalting him because of his people Israel. So David knew the reason why he was reigning. It was not for his personal profit but for the common salvation of all.



This is well worth noting, for we must always remember that it is not enough for us to recognize the blessings of God. We must also always use those properly. How? When God has brought us back from some illness, when he has saved us from some danger, we must realize that he does this so we might thank him and honor his name. Moreover, let us realize that we must apply everything we are granted to his service.

In sum, let us learn that, whenever God shows mercy to his people or to an individual member of the body, it is so that we will call on him and recognize him as the author of every good, then give ourselves to his service and dedicate all that we have to it.

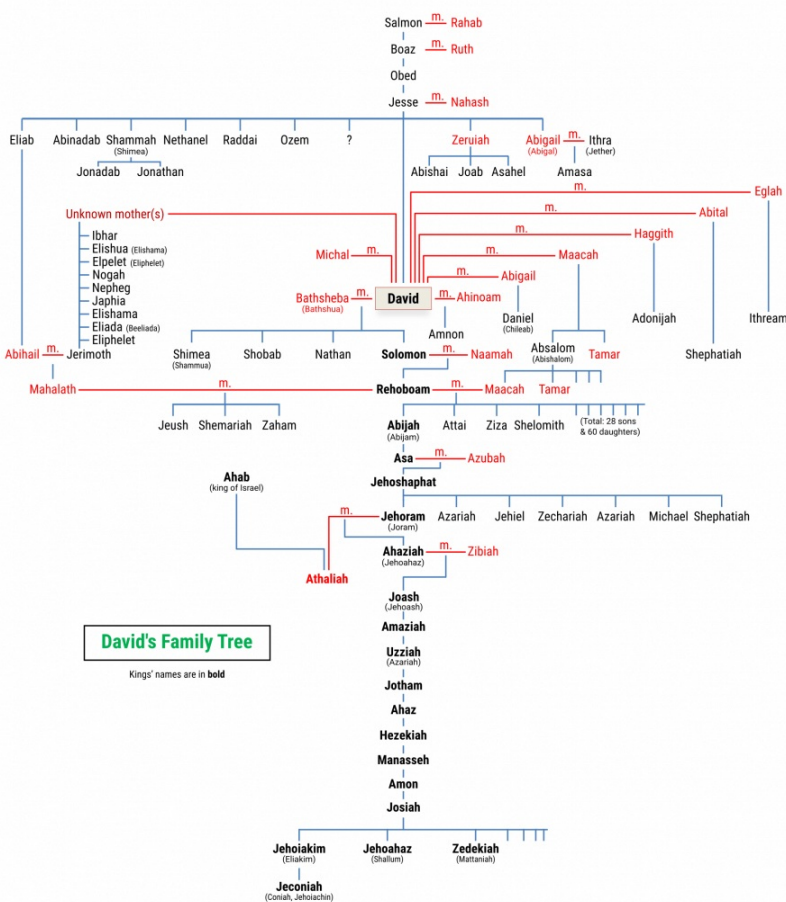
On the other hand, when I see that God has set me apart for some service, I must realize that it is not because of me that he has prolonged my life but because he wants to use me in the service of his church. This is the prudence we should manifest whenever God favors us. Let us realize that these blessings are not to be useless but always think: God has preserved me so many times. I must, therefore, show that I am aware of this.

**2 Samuel 5:13 Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David.**

- Ge 25:5,6 De 17:17 1Ch 3:9 1Ch 14:3-7 2Ch 11:18-21 13:21

**Related Passages:**

1 Chronicles 14:3-7 Then David took more wives at Jerusalem, and David became the father of more sons and daughters. 4 These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 5 Ibhaz, Elishua, Elpelet, 6 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, 7 Elishama, Beeliada and Eliphelet.



Click to Enlarge David's Family Tree  
Source: [Bibletales.online](http://Bibletales.online)

**DAVID EXPANDS HIS  
POLYGAMY & HIS FAMILY**

Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David - Wives in the ancient near east were a sign of wealth and success and also a way to make political

alliance. The number of David's wives showed that David was willing to live a life of splendor of an ancient monarch, but it would reap sorrowful consequences for him, not to mention that it set a pattern for Solomon imitated and which eventually led to his ruin and splitting of the Kingdom of Israel (1Ki 11:1-17).

**David** is directly disobeying the LORD'S clear instruction in Dt 17:17+ "He (THE KING OF ISRAEL) **shall not multiply wives for himself, (HERE IS THE PROBLEM)** or else **his heart will turn away**; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself."

**Guzik** has an interesting comment - Certainly, David (and everyone else) saw these many children as God's sign of blessing upon David and his many marriages (ED: cf Ps 127:3-4). Yet most of the trouble to come in David's life came from his relationships with women and problems with his children. **It is often true that the seeds to our future trouble are sown in times of great success and prosperity. In some ways, David handled trials better than success.**

**Believer's Study Bible** - The following verses list additional children born to David as a result of his new acquisitions in wives and concubines. This willingness to live with the splendor of an ancient monarch not only reaped sorrowful consequences for David, but also established a pattern for Solomon, his son and successor, which eventually spelled Solomon's ruin.

**Walton on more concubines and wives** - Royal marriages as political strategy. Marriage was a tool of diplomacy throughout the ancient Near East. Towns, city-states, tribes or nations who wished to ally themselves with a ruler or come under his protection sealed the treaty with a marriage of a daughter of their chief family to the suzerain or his son. This was an act of loyalty on the part of the vassal, who would then have a personal stake in preserving the dynasty. For instance, Zimri-Lim, the king of Mari during the eighteenth century B.C., successfully placed his daughters in the harems of nearby kingdoms and married several foreign wives himself to increase his power and the stability of his realm. Similarly Pharaoh Thutmose IV (1425-1412 B.C.) arranged a marriage with a daughter of the Mitannian king to demonstrate good relations and end a series of wars with that middle Euphrates kingdom. In David's case, prior to becoming king of Israel he made a series of marriages that strengthened his political and economic position (see comment on 1 Sam 25:39-44). The marriages in this verse likely assured the support of some of the leading families of Jerusalem. (See page 329 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

**Walter Brueggemann**, (Borrow [First and Second Samuel, Interpretation](#)) writes 'David acts like a king. He has concubines. He already had many wives (1Sa 3:2-4), but in Hebron the word 'concubine' was not used. Now in the royal city there is a new vocabulary for a new practice. The new language and the new practice appear without apology. David is well into the process of sexual politics.'

**Dale Ralph Davis** writes "we must not doctor the data. We must not sweep away evidence that shows his faithfulness less than complete or his practices controlled by human culture rather than by God's law." (Ibid)

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### **F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 2 Samuel 5:13 And David took him more wives out of Jerusalem.**

This is terribly disappointing! **According to the ideas of the surrounding nations, the greatness of a monarch was gauged by the extent of his harem.** But the law of Moses put severe restraint on the multiplication of wives, **'that his heart turn not away'** (Deuteronomy 17:17). It seems as though the soul of David sank into sensual indulgence and luxuriance. It lost much of its early hardihood and strength in consequence; and at this period of his life those seeds were sown, which in after years brought forth such a plentiful and terrible harvest of anguish, murder, and impurity in his family.

Few of us realize how much our character owes to the stern discipline to which God subjects us. The only way to keep us healthy and vigorous is to send us many a nipping frost, many a keen northern blast. The bleak hillside breeds stronger natures than the warm sheltered valley. The difference between Anglo-Saxon and Negro is largely wrought by temperature and soil. The campaign, with its strain on every power of endurance, trains better soldiers than the barracks. As David was a stronger, better man, when hunted like a coney in the rocks of Engedi, so are we braced to a nobler life, when all things seem against us.

Few of us can be trusted with unbroken happiness. God is compelled to withhold what the flesh craves. But where prosperity has shone on your path, be very careful not to abuse it. Consider it as indicating God's loving trust in you. He would rather convey His lesson in sunshine than in storm. But walk carefully and humbly, looking to Him constantly for daily grace, and never relaxing the girdle about the loin.

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### **QUESTION - [Why did God allow polygamy / bigamy in the Bible?](#) ([Watch associated video](#))**

**ANSWER** - The question of polygamy is interesting in that most people today view polygamy as immoral while the Bible nowhere explicitly condemns it. The first instance of polygamy/bigamy in the Bible is that of Lamech in Genesis 4:19: "Lamech married two

women.” Several prominent men in the Old Testament were polygamists. Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, and others all had multiple wives. Solomon had [700 wives and 300 concubines](#) (essentially wives of a lower status), according to 1 Kings 11:3. What are we to make of these instances of polygamy in the Old Testament? There are three questions that need to be answered: 1) Why did God allow polygamy in the Old Testament? 2) How does God view polygamy today? 3) Why did it change?

**1) Why did God allow polygamy in the Old Testament?** The Bible does not specifically say why God allowed polygamy, and we must remember that allowance is not the same as approval. As we speculate about God’s permissive silence, there is at least one key factor to consider. In patriarchal societies, it was nearly impossible for an unmarried woman to provide for herself. Women were often uneducated and untrained. Women relied on their fathers, brothers, and husbands for provision and protection. Unmarried women were often subjected to prostitution and slavery.

So, God may have allowed polygamy to protect and provide for the women who otherwise may have been left destitute. A man would take multiple wives and serve as the provider and protector of all of them. While definitely not ideal, living in a polygamist household was far better than the alternative of prostitution, slavery, or starvation. In addition to the protection/provision factor, polygamy enabled a much faster expansion of humanity, fulfilling God’s command to “be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth” (Genesis 9:7).

**2) How does God view polygamy today?** Even while recording cases of polygamy, the Bible presents [monogamy](#) as the plan that conforms most closely to God’s ideal for marriage. The Bible says that God’s original intention was for one man to be married to only one woman: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife [not wives], and they will become one flesh [not fleshes]” (Genesis 2:24). The consistent use of the singular in this verse should be noted. Later, in Deuteronomy 17:14–20, God says that the kings were not to multiply wives (or horses or gold). While this cannot be interpreted as a command that kings must be monogamous, it does indicate that having multiple wives causes problems. Such problems can be clearly seen in the life of Solomon (1 Kings 11:3–4).

In the New Testament, 1 Timothy 3:2, 12 and Titus 1:6 list being “the husband of one wife” as a qualification for spiritual leadership in the church. The phrase could literally be translated “a one-woman man.” However broadly or narrowly that qualification should be applied, in no sense can a polygamist be considered a “one-woman man.” Is the prohibition of polygamy only for elders and deacons, the “example-setters”? No, the standard of monogamy should apply to all Christians.

Ephesians 5:22–33 speaks of the relationship between husbands and wives. When referring to a husband (singular), the passage always also refers to a wife (singular). “For the husband is the head of the wife [singular]. . . . He who loves his wife [singular] loves himself. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife [singular], and the two will become one flesh. . . . Each one of you also must love his wife [singular] as he loves himself, and the wife [singular] must respect her husband [singular].” Further, if polygamy were allowable, the illustration of Christ’s relationship with [His Body](#) (the Church) falls apart (Ephesians 5:32). In Colossians 3:18–19, Paul refers to husbands and wives in the plural, but in that passage it is clear that he is addressing all the husbands and wives among the Colossian believers.

**3) Why did it change?** It is not so much that God disallowed something He had previously allowed as it is that God restored marriage to His original plan. As seen in Genesis 2, polygamy was not God’s original intent. God seems to have allowed polygamy to solve a problem, but that solution was not the ideal. In most modern societies, there is absolutely no need for polygamy. In most cultures today, women are able to provide for and protect themselves—removing the only “positive” aspect of polygamy. Further, most modern nations outlaw polygamy. According to Romans 13:1–7, we are to obey the laws the government establishes, including laws prohibiting polygamy.

Are there some instances in which the allowance for polygamy would still apply today? Perhaps, but it is unfathomable that there would be no other solution. Due to the [“one flesh”](#) aspect of marriage, the need for oneness and harmony in marriage, and the lack of any real need for polygamy, it is our firm belief that polygamy does not honor God and is not His design for marriage. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 5:14 Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,**

- **the names:** 1Ch 3:5-9 14:4
- **Shammua:** or, Shimea, 1Ch 3:5
- **Nathan:** 2Sa 12:1-7 Lu 2:31
- **Solomon:** 2Sa 12:24,25 Mt 1:6

## Related Passages:

2 Samuel 3:2-5 Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; 3 and his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; 4and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5and the sixth, Ithream, by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David at Hebron.

## NAMES OF DAVID'S CHILDREN

**Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon-** In contrast to 2Sa 3:2-5 we are not given the names of the mothers of each child in 2Sa 5:14-16.

**2 Samuel 5:15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,**

- **Elishua:** 1Ch 3:6 14:5

## FOUR MORE OF DAVID'S CHILDREN

**Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,**

**2 Samuel 5:16 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.**

- **Eliada:** 1Ch 14:7
- **Eliphelet,** 1Ch 3:8

## THREE MORE OF DAVID'S CHILDREN

**Elishama** ("my God has heard" "God of hearing"), **Eliada** ("God knows", "God (is) knowing," "known by God")

**and Eliphelet** ("God is deliverance")

**2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek out David; and when David heard of it, he went down to the stronghold.**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:17 κα̅κουσαν̅ ἅλλ̅ φυλοὶ̅ τι̅ κ̅ χρισται̅ Δαυιδ̅ βασιλε̅ς̅ π̅ Ἰσραηλ̅ κα̅ ν̅ βησαν̅ π̅ ντες̅ ο̅ ἅλλ̅ φυλοὶ̅ ζητε̅ ν̅ τ̅ ν̅ Δαυιδ̅ κα̅̅κουσεν̅ Δαυιδ̅ κα̅̅κατ̅ βη̅ ε̅ς̅ τ̅ ν̅ περιοχ̅ ν̅

LXE 2 Samuel 5:17 And the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel; and all the Philistines went up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the strong hold.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:17 But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.

NET 2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that David had been designated king over Israel, they all went up to search for David. When David heard about it, he went down to the fortress.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they all went in search of David, but he heard about it and went down to the stronghold.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. But David heard of it and went down to the stronghold.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king of Israel, they mobilized all their forces to capture him. But David was told they were coming, so he went into the stronghold.

- **When:** 1Ch 14:8,9 Ps 2:1-5 Rev 11:15-18
- **the stronghold:** 2Sa 23:14 1Ch 11:16

## PHILISTINES MOVE TO ATTACK DAVID

**When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel** - They hear the news and do not like what they hear! Can you imagine what must have gone through the mind of Achish (if he was still alive) of Gath, the city a younger fugitive David had sojourned in twice?

**All the Philistines went up to seek out David** - First note the adjective **all**, which supports a unified effort of all the 5 Philistine city states. And recall the Philistines were still occupying the heartland of Israel as a result of Saul's defeat. So this "seeking" was not to have a peace conference with King David, but to instigate war with him. Presumably, they would have reasoned, "Let's attack him now before he becomes strong (although he was already being prospered by the LORD)." The **NLT** paraphrases it accurately writing that the Philistines "mobilized all their forces to capture him."

**And when David heard of it, he went down to the stronghold**([mesudah](#)) - What (where) is the **stronghold**? Opinions vary between cave of Adullam about 15 miles SE of Jerusalem (1Sa 22:1,4-5; 24:22, 2Sa 23:13-14), or Jerusalem (2Sa 5:7). If it was Jerusalem, it is surprising the text does not say "went up to the stronghold," for references that speak of going to Jerusalem almost always speak of it as ascending or going up because of its elevation. In fact the text says David went down which is language used when one leaves Jerusalem (descending in altitude).

**Matthew Henry** - Verses 17-25. The Philistines considered not that David had the presence of God with him, which Saul had forfeited and lost. The kingdom of the Messiah, as soon as it was set up in the world, was thus attacked by the powers of darkness. The heathen raged, and the kings of the earth set themselves to oppose it; but all in vain, etc. The destruction will turn, as this did, upon Satan's own kingdom. David owns dependence on God for victory; and refers himself to the good pleasure of God, Wilt thou do it? The assurance God has given us of victory over our spiritual enemies, should encourage us in our spiritual conflicts. David waited till God moved; he stirred then, but not till then. He was trained up in dependence on God and his providence. God performed his promise, and David failed not to improve his advantages. When the kingdom of the Messiah was to be set up, the apostles, who were to beat down the devil's kingdom, must not attempt any thing till they received the promise of the Spirit; who came with a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, Acts 2:2.

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### 2 Samuel 5:17-25 Two Victories

David inquired of the Lord. —2 Samuel 5:19

King David was up against a familiar foe. Years before as a young shepherd boy, he had faced down Goliath, the top Philistine warrior, by killing him with a well-placed stone (1 Sam. 17). Now David was king of Israel, and here come the Philistines again! They heard he was king, and they decided to attack (2 Sam. 5:17).

What do we do first when trouble is on the way? We could panic. We could plan. Or we could first do what David did—pray. "David inquired of the Lord" (v.19), and God guided the king.

David had to fight two battles with the Philistines—one at Baal Perazim and one at the Valley of Rephaim. It was a good thing he consulted God, because in these two battles there were two different strategies. In the first one, God won the battle with His power alone: "The Lord has broken through," David recorded (v.20). For the next one, God gave David an action plan, and when he carried it out, the Israelites won (vv.23-25).

Each day we face many challenges. Although there is no one-size-fits-all answer, our first action should always be to consult God. As He guides us, we can have confidence in Him. Then, whether the victory comes through His miraculous intervention or through His guidance, all the glory goes to God.— by Dave Branon

[Not to the strong is the battle.](#)

Not to the swift is the race;

Yet to the true and the faithful

Victory is promised through grace.

—Crosby

To stand up to any challenge, spend time on your knees.

## 2 Samuel 5:18 Now the Philistines came and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.

BGT 2 Samuel 5:18 κα ο λλ φυλοι παραγ νονται κα συν πεσαν ε ς τ ν κοιλ δα τ ν πιτ νων

LXE 2 Samuel 5:18 And the Philistines came, and assembled in the valley of the giants.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

NET 2 Samuel 5:18 Now the Philistines had arrived and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:18 So the Philistines came and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim;

NLT 2 Samuel 5:18 The Philistines arrived and spread out across the valley of Rephaim.

- **the valley:** 2Sa 23:13 Ge 14:5 Jos 15:8 1Ch 11:15 Isa 17:5

### PHILISTINES MUSTER IN VALLEY OF REPHAIM

**Now the Philistines came and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim**- The valley of Rephaim (see map above and map [below](#)) is close to Jerusalem lying on the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (cf. Josh. 15:8; 18:16), and does not refer to the Baqa Valley, which was known by the same name but was far to the north on the east side of Jordan. The valley of Rephaim was the most direct approach to Jerusalem from Philistia. This valley is a battleground between David and the Philistines on more than one occasion (2Sa 5:18, 22; 2Sa 23:13; 1Ch 11:15; 14:9) probably because of its direct approach to Jerusalem.

**Walton on Valley of Rephaim** ([SEE ALSO WIKIPEDIA](#)) - As the Sorek Valley moves eastward out of the Shephelah near Beth Shemesh, it breaks into several passes into the hills around Jerusalem. The Sorek Valley at one point turns northeast toward Gibeon, while the **Valley of Rephaim** turns east-southeast toward the area between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. It joins the north-south road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem and then heads northeast into Jerusalem. This would be a strategic location for the Philistines to cut David off from potential reinforcements from Judah. (See page 329 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

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#### NAVE'S on VALLEY OF REPHAIM -

- A fertile valley between Judah and Benjamin, Josh. 15:8; 18:16.
- Battle ground of David and the Philistines, 2Sa 5:18, 22; 23:13; 1Ch 11:15; 14:9.
- Productiveness of, Isa. 17:5.

**EASTON'S DICTIONARY - VALLEY OF REPHAIM** - (Josh. 15:8; 18:16, R.V.). When David became king over all Israel, the Philistines, judging that he would now become their uncompromising enemy, made a sudden attack upon Hebron, compelling David to retire from it. He sought refuge in "the hold" at Adullam (2 Sam. 5:17-22), and the Philistines took up their position in the valley of Rephaim, on the west and south-west of Jerusalem. Thus all communication between Bethlehem and Jerusalem was intercepted. While David and his army were encamped here, there occurred that incident narrated in 2 Sam. 23:15-17. Having obtained divine direction, David led his army against the Philistines, and gained a complete victory over them. The scene of this victory was afterwards called [Baal-perazim](#) (q.v.).

A second time, however, the Philistines rallied their forces in this valley (2 Sam. 5:22). Again warned by a divine oracle, David led his army to Gibeon, and attacked the Philistines from the south, inflicting on them another severe defeat, and chasing them with great slaughter to Gezer (q.v.). There David kept in check these enemies of Israel. This valley is now called el-Bukei'a.

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**Wycliffe Bible Commentary** has a **good summary of chapters in First Chronicles which parallel chapters 5-10 in Second Samuel** writing that "2Sa 5-10 - 1 Chronicles 11:1-20:3 thus parallels and amplifies 2Sa 5-10 (omitting ch. 9, David's personal kindness to Mephibosheth). It describes his capture of Jerusalem, to become "the city of David," his political capital, together with his military supporters (1Chr 11:1-47, 1Chr 12:1-40). It recounts his winning of independence from the Philistines (1Chr 14:1-17) and his centralizing of worship by his installation of the ark in Jerusalem, which thus became Israel's religious capital as well (1Chr 13:1-14; 1Chr 15:1-29; 1Chr 16:1-43). It records the advance of his, armies, victorious in every direction (1Chr 18:1-17, 1Chr 19:1-19; 1Chr 20:1-8). The climax appears in God's prophecy through Nathan (1Chr 17:1-27): "I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and... I will subdue all thine enemies" (1Ch 17:8, 10). For this message of hope applies not only to David, but to "My people Israel.... for a great while to come" (1Chr 17:9, 17); to the struggling community of Ezra; to the church of that greater Son of David, of whom God said, "He shall be my Son" (1Chr 17:13); and to the kingdom, which is yet to be consummated, of the Messiah, whose "throne shall be established for evermore" (1Chr 17:14).

**2 Samuel 5:19 Then David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand."**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:19 κα ρησεν Δαυιδ δι κυρ ου λγων ε ναβ πρς το ς λοφλους κα παραδσεις ατο ς ε ς τ ς χερ ς μου κα επεν κριος πρ ς Δαυιδ νβαινε τι παραδιδο ς παραδσω το ς λοφλους ε ς τ ς χερ ς σου

LXE 2 Samuel 5:19 And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into my hands? and the Lord said to David, Go up, for I will surely deliver the Philistines into thine hands.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:19 And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

NET 2 Samuel 5:19 So David asked the LORD, "Should I march up against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD said to David, "March up, for I will indeed hand the Philistines over to you."

CSB 2 Samuel 5:19 Then David inquired of the LORD: "Should I go to war against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD replied to David, "Go, for I will certainly hand the Philistines over to you."

ESV 2 Samuel 5:19 And David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand."

NIV 2 Samuel 5:19 so David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD answered him, "Go, for I will surely hand the Philistines over to you."

NLT 2 Samuel 5:19 So David asked the LORD, "Should I go out to fight the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The LORD replied to David, "Yes, go ahead. I will certainly hand them over to you."

- **inquired:** 2Sa 2:1 1Sa 23:2,4 1Sa 30:7,8 Jas 4:15
- **And the Lord:** 2Sa 5:23 Jdg 20:28 1Sa 28:6 30:8 1Ki 22:6,15-23 Pr 3:6

#### **Related Passages:**

2 Samuel 2:1+ Then it came about afterwards that **David inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?" And the LORD said to him, "Go up." So David said, "Where shall I go up?" And He said, "To Hebron."

1 Samuel 23:2; 4+ **So David inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and deliver Keilah." 4 Then David inquired of the LORD once more. And the LORD answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand."

1 Samuel 30:7; 8+ Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. 8 **David inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?" And He said to him, "Pursue, for you will surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue all."

## DAVID INQUIRED OF JEHOVAH

**Then** - A crucial time phrase marking progression in this story. Enemy mustering stimulates David to communicate with the LORD of the armies (Sabaoth). Note the contrast with Saul when the Philistines gathered to attack (1Sa 28:6-7,15+)

**David inquired of the LORD** - How? The text does not say but recall he had previously called for the priest Abiathar to bring the ephod (1Sa 30:7-8+) and it is reasonable to assume that this may be how he inquired in this passage. What does David's seeking Yahweh show about David? Clearly it demonstrates that he is acknowledging that he is dependent on the LORD and is willing to humble himself and seek him instead of relying on his own clever plans. Again David gives us a great pattern to imitate when the Philistines are mustering against us! One is reminded of those great words in Zechariah 4:6 "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts (armies, Sabaoth)."

**Spurgeon** - Christian, if thou wouldst know the path of duty, take God for thy compass; if thou wouldst steer thy ship through the dark billows, put the tiller into the hand of the Almighty. Many a rock might be escaped if we would let our Father take the helm; many a shoal or quicksand we might well avoid if we would leave it to His sovereign will to choose and to command. The Puritan said, "As sure as ever a Christian carves for himself he'll cut his own fingers." "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go" (Ps 32:8) is God's promise to His people. Let us, then, take all our perplexities to Him and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Leave not thy chamber this morning without inquiring of the Lord.

**Saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them into my hand?"**- The Philistines were a formidable enemy, so instead of relying on his military skills, he seeks to rely on the LORD sage advice!

**THOUGHT** - David presents a good pattern for all of God's children to imitate, because we are always in spiritual warfare, and sometimes that warfare is especially intense and our adversary seems formidable and unconquerable! It is at times like that, that we need to run into the Strong Tower of our great God and seek His word and wisdom for what (and when) we are to do (cf Pr 18:10+). I love David's "song" in 1Ch 16:11 which has become my goto verse in times of trial or affliction - "Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face continually."

**And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand** - God's Word clearly answered both of David's questions with two verbs, "**go**" and "**give**." To **give** into one's **hand** is the idiomatic way of saying God was going to **give** the Philistines into the power of Israel. Note that "**will**" often conveys a prophetic word as in this case and if God promises it, that settles it. It is as if the future tense verb could be translated as past tense because the outcome is absolutely certain. This is our sovereign, omnipotent God, beloved! Note once again the juxtaposition of God's power and David's responsibility, his "Let God, let's go" mindset!

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**Hand (03027) yad** meaning literally a hand and figuratively power or strength (translated "power" 44x, "strength" - 5x - both in NASB). The hand symbolized "power" or "strength" (Dt. 8:17). Dt. 32:36 described Israel's loss of power by saying "their hands were gone." Moses' hand was poignantly used to portray power in the plagues against Egypt (Exodus 10:12-25). The most notable use of this metaphor is its conveyance of God's power. 1Ch 29:12 declares that in Yahweh's hand is power and might (cf. Psalm 89:13). His hand is not "short" (or "weak") (Isaiah 59:1), but mighty. A predominant demonstration of his power was his deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 13:3-16; Numbers 33:3).

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**ILLUSTRATION** - The text, however, does not stress the diversity but the fact of Yahweh's guidance, primarily in its protective capacity. Nor is its vigilance limited to new kings and nascent kingdoms, for legions of kingdom servants remember being placed behind this protective shield. About 1545 in Montrose, Scotland, George Wishart, the mentor of John Knox, received a letter alleging to come from an intimate friend who had become suddenly ill and earnestly desired Wishart's presence at his death-bed. Wishart set out with a few friends but had scarcely gone a quarter of a mile before he stopped and abruptly announced, 'I am forbidden of God to go on this journey; will some of you be pleased to ride to yonder place [he pointed to a little hill], and see what you find, for I apprehend there is a plot laid against my life.' His scouts checked the hill and discovered some sixty horsemen concealed behind it, ready to seize Wishart. The 'friend's' letter had been a forgery of his eminence, the most bloody, treacherous Cardinal Beaton. In multiple ways Yahweh's guidance never ceases to secure his cause and his people. (Dale Ralph Davis - Ibid)

**2 Samuel 5:20** So David came to Baal-perazim and defeated them there; and he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters." Therefore he named that place Baal-perazim.

BGT 2 Samuel 5:20 κα λθεν Δαυιδ κ τ ν π ν ω διακοπ ν κα κοψεν το ς λλοφ λους κε κα επεν Δαυιδ δι κοψεν κ ριο ς το ς χθρο ς μου το ς λλοφ λους ν πιον μο ς διακ πτεται δατα δι το το κλ θη τ νομα το τ που κε νου π ν ω διακοπ ν

LXE 2 Samuel 5:20 And David came from Upper Breaches, and smote the Philistines there: and David said, The Lord has destroyed the hostile Philistines before me, as water is dispersed; therefore the name of that place was called Over Breaches.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:20 And David came to Baalperazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baalperazim.

NET 2 Samuel 5:20 So David marched against Baal Perazim and defeated them there. Then he said, "The LORD has burst out against my enemies like water bursts out." So he called the name of that place Baal Perazim.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:20 So David went to Baal-perazim and defeated them there and said, "Like a bursting flood, the LORD has burst out against my enemies before me." Therefore, he named that place the Lord Bursts Out.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:20 And David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. And he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like a breaking flood." Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-perazim.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:20 So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, the LORD has broken out against my enemies before me." So that place was called Baal Perazim.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:20 So David went to Baal-perazim and defeated the Philistines there. "The LORD did it!" David exclaimed. "He burst through my enemies like a raging flood!" So he named that place Baal-perazim (which means "the Lord who bursts through").

- **Baal perazim:** Isa 28:21

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 14:11 So they came up to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there; and David said, "God has broken through my enemies by my hand, like the breakthrough of waters." Therefore they named that place Baal-perazim.

## **LORD OF ARMIES BREAKS FORTH**

**So** - For this reason. What reason? For the reason that he had just clearly been directed by Yahweh. We see David's unhesitating obedience, a good pattern to [emulate](#).

**David came to [Baal-perazim](#)** (remember "Baal" first means "lord" and only secondarily a Canaanite idol) **and defeated them there; and he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters."** - Note the juxtaposition of Man's responsibility ("David...defeated them.") and the LORD'S sovereignty ("The LORD has broken through.") Let God, let's go. God's part, our part. (See NT parallel = [Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)) David gives the glory to the LORD, not to his military maneuvering or expertise, another good pattern to [emulate](#)!

**Therefore he named that place Baal-perazim** - Which means "Lord of the outbursts" or "the Lord of breaking forth." The name conveys the picture of flooding waters breaking through a dam, as David's troops broke through the Philistine assault.

**Dale Ralph Davis** - 'Baal-perazim' means 'lord of burstings out', commemorating the way Yahweh had broken down the Philistines. David compared Yahweh's activity to the way a massive torrent of water breaks down everything in its path. Just so Yahweh levels the opposition, and David names the site Smasherton. Micah 2:13+ refers to 'the Breaker' (happōrēs) who will lead his remnant in breaking out of confinement into deliverance/freedom. I think the term refers to the Messiah. (Ibid) (**ED: I THINK DAVIS IS CORRECT -- SEE STUDY OF [Christ The Breaker](#)**)

**2 Samuel 5:21 They abandoned their idols there, so David and his men carried them away.**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:21 κα καταλιμπ νουσιν κε το ς θεο ς α τ ν κα λ βοσαν α το ς Δαυιδ κα ο νδρες ο μετ α το

LXE 2 Samuel 5:21 And they leave there their gods, and David and his men with him took them.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:21 And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them.

NET 2 Samuel 5:21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men picked them up.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:21 And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:21 The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:21 The Philistines had abandoned their idols there, so David and his men confiscated them.

- **David:** De 7:5,25 1Sa 5:2-6 1Ch 14:11,12 Isa 37:19
- **carried them away.** Isa 46:1,2 Jer 43:12

## FUTILITY & FATE OF IDOLS

**They abandoned their idols there, so David and his men carried them away** - Apparently the Philistines took their idols (cf. 1Sa 31:9+) into battle thinking this would give them power over the Israelites, (cf Israelites had done same thing with ark 1Sa 4:3-4+), but they discovered that their lifeless idols were powerless and of no assistance in war with David and His God, so they left them behind and the Hebrews "confiscated them" (NLT). This passage leaves a false impression that they might have taken them back home to place them in their trophy case, but the parallel passage in 1Ch 14:12 says "They abandoned their gods there; **so David gave the order and they were burned with fire.**" With these orders David is fulfilling the commands in Deut. 7:5,25+ and Deut 12:3+.

**THOUGHT** - There is an implied principle in David's orders regarding the confiscated idols - burn them! Does this not apply to those idols with which the world seeks to ensnare us? If we are not careful those things we think we possess may end up possessing us. If we sense that is happening with anything that is beginning to replace God in our heart, we need to "burn them," (in some way remove them from our heart, which may look different for different idols).

**Spurgeon** - The Philistines brought their gods with them, in the hope of being thereby defended; but "David and his men burned them." That was the very best thing to do with them. What a pity they did not save them for aesthetic purposes! Thus do men with fine old works of art, like pictures of the Virgin Mary. No, no, burn them; for that is the very best thing to do with anything that ever has been worshipped of mortal man. If they have ever been set up in the place of God, they are cursed from that moment, let them be burned, or dashed in pieces, or in some way destroyed. "There they left their images, and David and his men burned them."

**Walton** has an interesting background note on **abandoned their idols** - s. Nearly every army in the ancient Near East included priests and diviners (as seen in the Mari texts), prophets (2 Kings 3) and portable sacred objects (Assyrian Annals of Shalmaneser III [858-824 B.C.]). In this way, the god(s) could be consulted on the battlefield or invoked to lead the soldiers to victory. In the divine warrior motif, the deity is fighting the battles and defeating the deities of the enemy. In most situations prayers would be made and omens asked to assure the god's presence. The idols would only be abandoned under the most critical circumstances. There are several cases in the ancient world of statues of a god being carried off as trophies of war. For examples see comment on 1 Samuel 5:2. (See page 329 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

### 2 Samuel 5:22 Now the Philistines came up once again and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.

BGT 2 Samuel 5:22 κα προσ θεντο τι λλ φυλοι το ναβ ναι κα συν πεσαν ν τ κοιλ δι τ ν τιτ νων

LXE 2 Samuel 5:22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and assembled in the valley of Giants.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

NET 2 Samuel 5:22 The Philistines again came up and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:22 The Philistines came up again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:22 And the Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:22 Once more the Philistines came up and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim;

NLT 2 Samuel 5:22 But after a while the Philistines returned and again spread out across the valley of Rephaim.

- came up: 1Ki 20:22 1Ch 14:13

Valley of Rephaim

## PHILISTINES SECOND MUSTERING IN VALLEY OF REPHAIM

**Now the Philistines came up once again and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim-** If at first you don't succeed try again. One wonders if they brought different idols with them this time?!

**2 Samuel 5:23 When David inquired of the LORD, He said, "You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees.**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:23 κα πηρ τησεν Δαυιδ δι κυρ ου κα επεν κριος ο κ ναβ σει ε ς συν ντησιν α τ ν ποστρ φου π α τ ν κα παρ σει α το ς πλησ ον το κλαυθμ νος

LXE 2 Samuel 5:23 And David enquired of the Lord: and the Lord said, Thou shalt not go up to meet them: turn from them, and thou shalt meet them near the place of weeping.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:23 And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

NET 2 Samuel 5:23 So David asked the LORD what he should do. This time the LORD said to him, "Don't march straight up. Instead, circle around behind them and come against them opposite the trees.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:23 So David inquired of the LORD, and He answered, "Do not make a frontal assault. Circle around behind them and attack them opposite the balsam trees.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:23 And when David inquired of the LORD, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come against them opposite the balsam trees.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:23 so David inquired of the LORD, and he answered, "Do not go straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:23 And again David asked the LORD what to do. "Do not attack them straight on," the LORD replied. "Instead, circle around behind and attack them near the poplar trees.

- **inquired:** 2Sa 5:19
- **fetch:** Jos 8:2,7 1Ch 14:14 Mt 9:29,30 8:23-25 Joh 9:6,7

## DAVID CONSULTS HIS COMMANDING OFFICER

**When David inquired of the LORD** - In war good communication is essential, and cutting an enemies lines of communication can be the key to victory. Praise God that the lines of communication can never be cut between us and our commanding Officer, the LORD Almighty.

**He said, "You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees-** The LORD gives what might seem like an unusual strategy, but David obeys. Notice this answer is not a "Yes" or "No" reply from the LORD, but is a specific set of instructions. This would suggest that this was not obtained by use of the ephod, but by some other means, either dreams or a prophet.

**NET NOTE** - Some translate as "balsam trees" (cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV, NJB, NLT); cf. KJV, NKJV, ASV "mulberry trees"; NAB "mastic trees"; NEB, REB "aspens." The exact identification of the type of tree or plant is uncertain.

**John Calvin** - There was a reason why God commanded David to go behind his enemies and not to attack them directly. For our

faith must be proved in various ways, and if David had always conquered his enemies in one way, he would not have been so keenly aware of the help of God. There was another benefit in David's recognizing that God could smite his enemies both from the back and from the front. He could punish them one way now, and another way later, thereby cleverly surprising them. When one means fails us, God has more than a million more in his hand to offer us. That is what David recognized. Likewise, let us carefully recognize that when God uses different methods that we do not understand with our own minds, we must humble ourselves and adore his wisdom. When he is hidden from us and we cannot see the reason why he acts as he does, we must turn everything over to him and accept as good everything that he declares to be his will. This is how the foolishness of God overcomes the wisdom of the world (1 Cor. 1:25). When we cannot understand why God does something, we show arrogance in our nature when we presume to be his judges and boldly condemn him. Men have tried all sorts of trickery to find ways to contradict God, but they only remain confounded. Well, then, that is the point: God takes care of his people in such strange ways that we cannot understand why he uses various approaches. But when God's way seems foolish to us, let us learn to receive with deep sobriety and reverence what we know has proceeded from him.

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### Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "And David enquired of the Lord." —2 Samuel 5:23

When David made this enquiry he had just fought the Philistines, and gained a signal victory. The Philistines came up in great hosts, but, by the help of God, David had easily put them to flight. Note, however, that when they came a second time, David did not go up to fight them without enquiring of the Lord. Once he had been victorious, and he might have said, as many have in other cases, "I shall be victorious again; I may rest quite sure that if I have conquered once I shall triumph yet again. Wherefore should I tarry to seek at the Lord's hands?" Not so, David. He had gained one battle by the strength of the Lord; he would not venture upon another until he had ensured the same. He enquired, "Shall I go up against them?" He waited until God's sign was given. Learn from David to take no step without God. Christian, if thou wouldst know the path of duty, take God for thy compass; if thou wouldst steer thy ship through the dark billows, put the tiller into the hand of the Almighty. Many a rock might be escaped, if we would let our Father take the helm; many a shoal or quicksand we might well avoid, if we would leave to his sovereign will to choose and to command. The Puritan said, "As sure as ever a Christian carves for himself, he'll cut his own fingers;" this is a great truth. Said another old divine, "He that goes before the cloud of God's providence goes on a fool's errand;" and so he does. We must mark God's providence leading us; and if providence tarries, tarry till providence comes. He who goes before providence, will be very glad to run back again. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go," is God's promise to his people. Let us, then, take all our perplexities to him, and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Leave not thy chamber this morning without enquiring of the Lord.

**2 Samuel 5:24 "It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the LORD will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines."**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:24 κα σται ν τ κο σα σε τ ν φων ν το συγκλεισμο το λσους το κλαυθμ νος τ τε καταβ σει πρ ς α το ς τι τ τε ξελε σεται κ ριος μπροσθ ν σου κ ππειν ν τ πολ μ τ ν λλοφ λων

LXE 2 Samuel 5:24 And it shall come to pass when thou hearest the sound of a clashing together from the grove of weeping, then thou shalt go down to them, for then the Lord shall go forth before thee to make havoc in the battle with the Philistines.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:24 And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

NET 2 Samuel 5:24 When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, act decisively. For at that moment the LORD is going before you to strike down the army of the Philistines."

CSB 2 Samuel 5:24 When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, act decisively, for then the LORD will have marched out ahead of you to attack the camp of the Philistines."

ESV 2 Samuel 5:24 And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then rouse yourself, for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines."

NIV 2 Samuel 5:24 As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move quickly, because that will mean the LORD has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army."

NLT 2 Samuel 5:24 When you hear a sound like marching feet in the tops of the poplar trees, be on the alert! That will be the signal that the LORD is moving ahead of you to strike down the Philistine army."



- **sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees** 2Ki 7:6
- thou shalt bestir:Jdg 4:14 7:15 1Sa 14:9-12 1Ch 14:15 Php 2:11,12

## LISTEN FOR THE SUPERNATURAL SOUND

**It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees- NET** = "When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, act decisively." Davis = "When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you must spring into action, for then Yahweh shall have gone out before you to strike down the Philistine army" **NLT** = "When you hear a sound like marching feet." What a beautiful metaphorical description, depicting the tops of balsam trees as marching. It is as if God has His army anywhere and everywhere, ever ready to spring into action to aid his saints.

**THOUGHT** - God's sending help when David cried out reminds me of Hebrews 2:18- which says "since He Himself (JESUS) was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is ([dunamai](#) in present tense - continually) able to **come to the aid** of those who are (present tense - continually being) tempted (TESTED)." A critical part of this verse is the verb **come to the aid**, the Greek verb [boetheo](#), which means to run to give aid upon hearing the cry or call for help! Can you see the implication? When the temptation (test) is attacking us, we need to cry out to Jesus, Who continually has the supernatural ability (able [dunamai](#) in present tense) to run to our aid! So....**Cry out!**

**Another THOUGHT** - "There was a place for waiting, but a place also for action." (Baldwin) Today every believer in Christ must wait for and then obey the moving of the Holy Spirit with vigor. Do I have ears to hear and a heart to obey when I hear the Lord's **the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees?** [See Henry Blackaby on joining God](#) when He is moving.

"When you hear and see evidence of God moving out, rouse yourself, and join Him. One of my prayers for 2023 is that God would open up my ears to hear the sound of His marching so that I can join him. For most of my life, I've done the opposite. I've assumed it's my responsibility to fix everything, and seek his help. No, that's his job. My job is to join him in what he's doing. At the end of the day, your greatest Strategy for Success = Submission." ([J D Greear](#))

[Guzik](#) makes a good point - After the first victory over the Philistines, David was wise enough to wait on the LORD before the second battle. It is easy for many in the same situation to say, "I've fought this battle before. I know how to win. This will be easy." *David always triumphed when he sought and obeyed God.* In his commentary on this passage, Adam Clarke noted the remarkable guidance of God in David's life and asked a good question. "*How is it that such supernatural directions and assistances are not communicated now? Because they are not asked for; and they are not asked for because they are not expected; and they are not expected because men have not faith; and they have not faith because they are under a refined spirit of atheism, and have no spiritual intercourse with their Maker.*"

**Spurgeon on sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees** - "As the Rabbis have it, and it is a very pretty conceit if it be true, the footsteps of angels walking along the tops of the mulberry trees make them rustle; that was the sign for them to fight, when God's cherubim were going with them, when they should come, who can walk through the clouds and fly through the air, led by the great Captain himself, walking along the mulberry trees, and so make a rustle by their celestial footsteps."

**Then** - This time phrase always begs the question "**When?**" Sometimes the answer is very obvious as in this passage, but it is still worth pausing to ponder. The answer is **when** you hear the supernatural sound.

**You shall act promptly** - When God gives this sign to move out, you need to move out immediately!

[Guzik](#) on **act promptly** - At the signal that the LORD was at work, David and his troops rushed forward to victory. This principle is true in our every-day walk with God. When we sense that the Lord is at work, we must **advance quickly**, and we will see a great victory won. "We must also, in the spiritual warfare, observe and obey the motions of the Spirit, when He setteth up His standard; for those are the sounds of God's goings, the footsteps of his anointed." (Trapp) There is something wonderful about the King James Version translation of 2 Samuel 5:24: *When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself.* When you hear the work of God happening, *bestir thyself—advance quickly.* **Spurgeon** liked to point out that it said *bestir thyself*— often we think we must stir others up. That often just becomes hype and emotionalism. Instead, stir yourself.. When we see the work of God happening around us, it is like the sound in the mulberry trees – the rustling sound should awaken us to prayer and devotion. A time of crisis or tragedy is also like the sound in the mulberry trees – the rustling sound should awaken us to confession and repentance. "Now, what should I do? The first thing I will do is, I will bestir myself. But how shall I do it? Why, I will go home this day, and I will wrestle in prayer more earnestly than I have been wont to do that God will bless the minister, and

multiply the church." (Spurgeon)

**for then** (term of explanation - explaining why you need to move fast) **the LORD will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines - Will have gone out** is past tense (ESV = "has gone out"), so sure is His going out to strike the enemy. So the tops of the balsam trees may have been marching, but ultimately it was Yahweh Himself Who led the strike against the Philistines!

**THOUGHT** - Note the juxtaposition of God's part (in this verse) and man's part (described in the next verse). This pattern is repeated throughout the Scripture and describes God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. It is not the aberrant teaching in the popular phrase "Let go, let God," but is more accurately (as David discovered), "Let God, let's go!" Yes, the battle is the Lord's, but He calls His people to fight. No passive soldiers in the LORD'S army!

**Dale Ralph Davis** on the LORD gone out (*yasa/yatsa*) - The verb 'to go out/forth' (*yāšā'*) is a very common one but frequently refers to going into or leading into battle (see 2Sa 5:2). (Preuss, TDOT, 6:229, claims it is used more than 120 times in this sense.) For example, when Deborah ordered Barak into battle against Sisera's hordes she exclaimed, 'Has not Yahweh gone out (*yāšā'*) before you?' (Jdg 4:14). That is, the divine captain had entered combat and his people had only to follow. So here in verse 24 Yahweh styles Himself as the Warrior Who plunges into battle and knocks off the Philistines. Note what vigorous images the text gives us of Yahweh's power: the Leveler and the Warrior. Contemporary Christians must not tone these down, for the text means to impress us with the fact that we do not have a namby-pamby godlet who is house-broken in line with our canon of conceivability. (People abandon gods like that, and they're carried off to the landfill, v. 21). No, Yahweh's people have a God who is a smasher and a fighter, a God 'mighty in battle' (Ps. 24:8), who can therefore defend his sheep and restrain and conquer all his and our enemies.

Hence 2 Samuel 5 leads us straight into eschatology, that is, last things, for if this is our God who protects his kingdom under David, then his people never need fear, for this God is more than able to always lead us in triumph (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14) and to impose his kingdom at the last in all its power and glory. There can be no doubt. After all, he is the Leveler and Warrior. (Ibid)

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**Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook** - THERE are signs of the Lord's moving which should move us. The Spirit of God blows where he listeth, and we hear the sound thereof. Then is the time for us to be more than ever astir. **We must seize the golden opportunity, and make the most we can of it.** It is ours to fight the Philistines at all times; but when the Lord himself goes out before us, then we should be specially valiant in the war. The breeze stirred the tops of the trees, and David and his men took this for the signal for an onslaught, and at their advance the Lord, himself, smote the Philistines. Oh, that this day the Lord may give us an opening to speak for him with many of our friends! Let us be on the watch to avail ourselves of the hopeful opening when it comes. Who knows but this may be a day of good tidings; a season of soul-winning. Let us keep our ear open to hear the rustle of the wind, and our minds ready to obey the signal. Is not this promise "then shall the Lord go out before thee," a sufficient encouragement to play the man? Since the Lord goes before us, we dare not hold back.

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**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - The members of Christ's Church should be very prayerful, always seeking the unction of the Holy One to rest upon their hearts, that the kingdom of Christ may come, and that his "will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven;" but there are times when God seems especially to favour Zion, such seasons ought to be to them like "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." We ought then to be doubly prayerful, doubly earnest, wrestling more at the throne than we have been wont to do. Action should then be prompt and vigorous. The tide is flowing—now let us pull manfully for the shore. O for Pentecostal outpourings and Pentecostal labours. Christian, in yourself there are times "when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." You have a peculiar power in prayer; the Spirit of God gives you joy and gladness; the Scripture is open to you; the promises are applied; you walk in the light of God's countenance; you have peculiar freedom and liberty in devotion, and more closeness of communion with Christ than was your wont. Now, at such joyous periods when you hear the "sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," is the time to bestir yourself; now is the time to get rid of any evil habit, while God the Spirit helpeth your infirmities. Spread your sail; but remember what you sometimes sing—

"I can only spread the sail;  
Thou! Thou! must breathe the auspicious gale."

Only be sure you have the sail up. Do not miss the gale for want of preparation for it. Seek help of God, that you may be more earnest in duty when made more strong in faith; that you may be more constant in prayer when you have more liberty at the throne; that you may be more holy in your conversation whilst you live more closely with Christ.

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**Spurgeon - Act Promptly** when you hear **The sound in the mulberry trees** - If any of your acquaintance have been in the house of God, if you have induced them to go there, and you think there is some little good doing but you do not know, take care of that little. It may be God has used us as a foster mother to bring up his child, so that this little one may be brought up in the faith, and this newly converted soul may be strengthened and edified. But I'll tell you, many of you Christians do a deal of mischief, by what

you say when going home. **A man once said that when he was a lad he heard a certain sermon from a minister, and felt deeply impressed under it. Tears stole down his cheeks, and he thought within himself, "I will go home to pray."** On the road home he fell into the company of two members of the church. One of them began saying, "Well, how did you enjoy the sermon?" The other said, "I do not think he was quite sound on such a point." "Well," said the other, "I thought he was rather off his guard," or something of that sort; and one pulled one part of the minister's sermon to pieces, and another the other, until, said the young man, before I had gone many yards with them, I had forgotten all about it; and all the good I thought I had received seemed swept away by those two men, who seemed afraid lest I should get any hope, for they were just pulling that sermon to pieces which would have brought me to my knees. How often have we done the same! People will say, "What did you think of that sermon?" I gently tell them nothing at all, and if there is any fault in it—and very likely there is, it is better not to speak of it, for some may get good from it.

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**THOUGHT** - The [preceding comments](#) by Guzik remind me of the seven realities in Henry Blackaby's [Experiencing God](#).

1. God is always at work around you.
2. God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.
3. God invites you to become involved with Him in His work. (**ED: WHEN YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF MARCHING...**)
4. God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes and His ways.
5. God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.
6. You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing.
7. You come to know God by experience as you obey Him and He accomplishes His work through you.

**Borrow** [Experiencing God : knowing and doing the will of God](#) By: Blackaby, Henry T

**2 Samuel 5:25 Then David did so, just as the LORD had commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.**

BGT 2 Samuel 5:25 κα π ο ησεν Δαυιδ καθ ς νετε λατο α τ κ ριος κα π ταξεν το ς λοφ λους π Γαβαων ως τ ς γ ς Γαζηρα

LXE 2 Samuel 5:25 And David did as the Lord commanded him, and smote the Philistines from Gabaon as far as the land of Gazera.

KJV 2 Samuel 5:25 And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.

NET 2 Samuel 5:25 David did just as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines from Gibeon all the way to Gezer.

CSB 2 Samuel 5:25 So David did exactly as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Geba to Gezer.

ESV 2 Samuel 5:25 And David did as the LORD commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.

NIV 2 Samuel 5:25 So David did as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.

NLT 2 Samuel 5:25 So David did what the LORD commanded, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.

- **Geba:** 1Ch 14:16, Gibeon
- **Gezer:** Jos 16:10

**Related Passage:**

1 Chronicles 14:16 David did just as God had commanded him, and they struck down the army of the Philistines from Gibeon even as far as Gezer.

## DAVID'S UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE TO UNUSUAL INSTRUCTIONS

**Then David did so, just as the LORD had commanded him** - As the title implies, Yahweh's instructions were not in the handbook of conventional ancient warfare and yet he did not question but fully obeyed, always the best policy!

I hope that may be said of you and me all our lives long.

-- Spurgeon

**And struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer** ([see map](#)). - Victory over the strong enemy was the result of David's obedience.

**THOUGHT** - Christians are engaged in continual spiritual warfare against a strong, invisible enemy and yet the LORD has given us His Word by which we can experience victory against such powerful forces. Ephesians 6:10-18+ would be a great passage to commit to memory as it begins with a clear command to "be strong in the LORD and in the strength of His might." Paul is not saying "Let go, let God," but more like "Let God, let's go!" Be strong in HIS power which implies we need to jettison our self-reliance, our clever reasonings to foil the enemy, etc and depend wholly on the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit and then stand firm (our responsibility enabled by the Spirit's power). Paul gives 4 commands in Eph 6:10-14+ ("**be strong,**" "**put on...**," "**take up...**," and "**stand firm.**" - see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) We need to imitate David and obey, walking (fighting) not by sight but by faith (2Co 5:7+, cf 2Co 4:18+), and He will win the victory just as He did for David.

**Life Application Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) - David fought his battles the way God instructed him. In each instance he (1) asked if he should fight or not, (2) followed instructions carefully, and (3) gave God the glory. We can err in our "battles" by ignoring these steps and instead (1) do what we want without considering God's will, (2) do things our way and ignore advice in the Bible or from other wise people, and (3) take the glory ourselves or give it to someone else with out acknowledging the help we received from God. All these responses are sinful.