

### David's Victories Over His Enemies

#### 1 Chronicles 18-20

**1 Chronicles 16** - *"After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines, subdued them, and took Gath and its towns from the hand of the Philistines. <sup>2</sup> Then he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought tribute. <sup>3</sup> And David defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah as far as Hamath, as he went to establish his power by the River Euphrates. <sup>4</sup> David took from him 1000 chariots, seven thousand horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. Also David hamstringed all the chariot horses, except that he spared enough of them for 100 chariots. <sup>5</sup> When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 Syrians. <sup>6</sup> Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought tribute. So the Lord preserved David wherever he went. <sup>7</sup> And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> Also from Tibhath and Chun, cities of Hadadezer, David brought a large amount of bronze, with which Solomon made the bronze Sea, the pillars, and the articles of bronze.*

*<sup>9</sup> Now when Tou king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, <sup>10</sup> he sent Hadoram his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Tou); and Hadoram brought with him all kinds of articles of gold, silver, and bronze. <sup>11</sup> King David dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had brought from all these nations - from Edom, from Moab, from Ammon, from the Philistines, and from Amalek. <sup>12</sup> Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. <sup>13</sup> He put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went.*

*<sup>14</sup> So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people. <sup>15</sup> Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>16</sup> Zadok the son of Ahitub and Abimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Shavsha was the scribe; <sup>17</sup> Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites. And David's sons were chief ministers at the king's side."*

#### Background Notes

1 Chronicles 17 describes the unconditional covenant that God made with David. It states that the dynasty and throne of David will continue forever. The Davidic Covenant is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who is in the family line of David. When the Lord returns to earth and establishes His glorious 1000-year earthly kingdom, His literal throne will be in literal Jerusalem.

In our Talk on 1 Chronicles 1, we mentioned that this book was written relatively late in Old Testament history, by Ezra the scribe. This record of the Davidic Covenant would have been very encouraging to the original audience - the Jewish

people who had been captives in Babylon, and had returned to Jerusalem. There was a lot to discourage them in

those days. The glory days of Israel were long past. Their rebuilt Temple was small and insignificant compared to the grandeur of Solomon's Temple that had been destroyed. Life was hard. The future did not look bright. So hearing about the enduring covenant the Lord had made with King David would have been encouraging to the Jews of Ezra's day.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. David's victories proved God's promises.

When we compare some of the details of 1 Chronicles 18 with the parallel account in 2 Samuel 7, we'll find a few differences in the numbers and details of the battles. As the original texts were copied, some **minor** scribal mistakes got into some copies. But where there are differences, ancient manuscripts of Samuel support the details given in Chronicles. For example, verse 12 gives Abishai credit for the victory, whereas 2 Samuel 8:13 gives David the credit. But that's no problem! Abishai and his brother Joab fought under King David.

All David's victories over his enemies prove God's promises. When God made the Davidic Covenant He said: *"I will subdue all your enemies"* (17:10). That promise is fulfilled in chapter 18. And under the Abrahamic Covenant, God promised Abraham and his descendants all the land from the River of Egypt in the south to the Euphrates River in the north (Genesis 15:18). In 1 Chronicles 18 we see God fulfilling that promise. *"David defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah as far as Hamath, as he went to establish his power by the River Euphrates"* (18:3).

And God's promise of all that land to the Jewish people is still valid today. Israel has a biblical right to the Land, and a prior claim to the Land. All God's promises to David proved true - and all of God's promises to us will prove true as well! David's victories prove God's promises.

### 2. David's victories picture spiritual warfare.

**1 Chronicles 19** - *"It happened after this that Nahash the king of the people of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his place. <sup>2</sup> Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him about his father. David's servants came to Hanun in the land of Ammon to comfort him. <sup>3</sup> And the princes of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Did his servants not come to you to search and to spy out and overthrow the land?" <sup>4</sup> Therefore Hanun took David's servants, shaved them, and cut off their garments in the middle, at their buttocks, and sent them away. <sup>5</sup> Then someone told David about his men; and he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return." <sup>6</sup> When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, Hanun and the people of Ammon sent 1000 talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from Mesopotamia, from Syrian Maacah, and from Zobah. <sup>7</sup> So they hired for 32,000 chariots, with the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba. Also the people of Ammon gathered together from their cities, and came to battle.*

<sup>8</sup> Now when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. <sup>9</sup> Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array before the gate of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the field. <sup>10</sup> When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best and put them in battle array against the Syrians. <sup>11</sup> And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, and they set themselves in battle array against the people of Ammon. <sup>12</sup> Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you. <sup>13</sup> Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight." <sup>14</sup> So Joab and the people who were with him drew near for the battle, the Syrians fled before him. <sup>15</sup> When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai his brother, and entered the city. So Joab returned to Jerusalem. <sup>16</sup> Now when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought the Syrians who were beyond the River, and Shophach the commander of Hadadezer's army went before them. <sup>17</sup> When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan and came upon them, and set up in battle array against them, and fought with him. <sup>18</sup> Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed 7,000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers of the Syrians, and killed Shophach the commander of the army. <sup>19</sup> And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that Israel had defeated them, they made peace with David and became his servants. So the Syrians were no longer willing to help the people of Ammon."

In chapters 18-20, the Holy Spirit has chosen to include many details about the battles David fought. Why? Not only do these details emphasize that these events really took place in history, but they illustrate spiritual warfare for us.

Ephesians 6 leaves no doubt that we are involved in spiritual warfare, and Satan uses many tactics and schemes to trip us up. All the enemy tactics in Old Testament warfare picture the strategy and tactics of Satan, and all the methods of victory between God's people and Israel's many enemies picture the divine principles of victory on the other. All the enemies David faced in 1 Chronicles 18-20 picture all the evil principalities and powers of Satan and his demonic hosts. And there are many, as illustrated in the large numbers in these chapters.

Several principles of victory in spiritual warfare are illustrated here. The Lord helped David, and gave him victory wherever he went (18:6) - and the Lord will help us and give us victory in spiritual warfare if we rely on Him and use the principles He has given us to fight our spiritual battles. We don't fight in our own strength!

David dedicated the enemy's silver and gold to the Lord. We can take the money and material things of this world, and give them to the Lord for His work.

In chapter 19, David's men used creative strategy to win certain battles. We should be creative in the way we fight spiritual battles. For example, a Christian teacher in a secular high school had the students do a "Creation vs. Evolution" debate. This resulted in Christian students studying and researching good creationist material and literature! Courage is a principle for victory in spiritual warfare: "Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God" (v13). David's victories picture spiritual warfare.

### **3. David's victories predict Christ's kingdom.**

**1 Chronicles 20** - *"It happened in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out to battle, that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it. <sup>2</sup> Then David took their king's crown from his head. It weighed a talent of gold, and precious stones were in it. And it was set on David's head. He also brought spoil out of the city in great abundance. <sup>3</sup> And he brought out the people, and put them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all his people returned to Jerusalem.*

*<sup>4</sup> Now it happened afterward that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Sippai, who was one of the sons of the giant, and they were subdued. <sup>5</sup> Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.*

*<sup>6</sup> Yet again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, with twenty-four fingers and toes, six on each hand and six on each foot; and he also was born to the giant. <sup>7</sup> So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him. <sup>8</sup> These were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants."*

The Bible teaches that when Christ returns to earth, all enemies will be subdued. Every knee will bow and every tongue will own that Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords! All other kingdoms will vanish when Christ sets up His earthly kingdom. This is prophetically portrayed in David's victories. What a prediction is seen in the glorious crown that was placed on David's head! Maybe Christ's victory over the Roman Beast of the End Times (known as 666) is portrayed in the great giant who defied Israel. David's victories predict Christ's kingdom.

### **Practical Application**

#### **You can conquer all the giants!**

Are there any enemy giants in your life? Giant problems, giant losses, giant defeats? With God's help, David conquered and removed all the enemy's giants. And so can we! In faith, with God's help, and using biblical principles for victory, we can conquer all the giants!