

2 Samuel 5-8 • Chapter Study

Ch5

¹ Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, “Indeed we *are* your bone and your flesh.” ² Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the Lord said to you, ‘You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.’” ³ Therefore 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. ⁴ David *was* 30 years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned 40 years. ⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah 7 years and 6 months, and in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years over all Israel and Judah.

The 7-yr civil war between David’s forces & the house of Saul’s family is finally over.

The elders of each of the tribes went to David at his capital at Hebron, asking him to now assume the throne they knew Samuel had anointed him for yrs before.

David was 30 when he ascended the throne of Judah at Hebron.

The civil war lasted 7 yrs.

A few months go by and the 10 northern tribes petition David to lead them as well.

Which he does for another 33 yrs.

When the northern tribes asked him to assume the throne, David knew he had to shift his capital from Hebron in Judah to a more neutral site.

On the border between Judah & the north was a hilly region *Joshua* & the army of Israel had defeated in the original conquest of the Promised Land, but had been ***reclaimed*** by the local Canaanites. [Judges 1:8,21]

The main city that controlled the area was a fortress called ***Jerusalem***.

The Canaanites who reclaimed it were called ***Jebusites***.

Jerusalem was located in a kind of no-man’s land in the center of the tribes; a prime spot for the new capital.

First, it had to be captured.

⁶ And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, “You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you,” thinking, “David cannot come in here.”

The City of that time was a small walled fortress set on already tall, steep valley walls, effectively tripling the height of the walls.

That was the case to the East, West & South.

The only access to the city was from the North where the walls were highest and thickest with the best troops stationed.

The Jebusites believed their position impregnable.

“We don’t even need soldiers to man the walls,” they boast. “Some blind people would be enough.”

What they hadn’t planned for was an attack by less obvious means.

So while they bragged about their defenses, David was figuring out an alternative way into the city.

⁷ Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that *is*, the City of David). ⁸ Now David said on that day, “Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, *who are* hated by David’s soul), *he shall be chief and captain.*” Therefore they say, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.”

Scholars are at a loss in interpreting vs7&8 because they contain archaic Hebrew they’re unsure of.

Some of the words may be loan words from the Jebusites who issued this taunt about the blind & lame.

The point is, their taunt incited David’s anger.

So when he took the city, he blinded & lamed the Jebusites who survived.

David knew a frontal assault on the walls & gate of the city would be suicide, so he devised another strategy for getting in.

Remember; his hometown of Bethlehem was just 4 miles S.

He knew there was no water inside Jerusalem’s walls.

The city’s water was drawn from the Gihon Spring on the W side of the Kidron Valley.

The Jebusites dug a trough along the hillside which channeled the water inside the city walls.

Then covered the spring and trough so no one knew where it was.

The people then lowered buckets via ropes down a long shaft to the water.

David knew this secret water supply system could provide a way into the city.

He gave an incentive to his troops, saying the one who found the shaft would get a promotion.

1Chr11 tells us once the shaft was discovered, Joab led some men in a raid that captured the city.

[Diagrams]

⁹Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the City of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

Archaeologists aren't sure what the Millo was but the general consensus is that it's the system of terraces that line the E slope of the hill the City of David was built on.

There's a deep cut in the ridge the oldest part of the city of David was built on.

They filled it in to enlarge the space to build on.

This meant they had to build several retaining walls, which they then filled with dirt, building it up, layer by layer. [Picture]

¹⁰So David went on and became great, and the Lord God of hosts *was* with him.

He became great **because** God was with him.

¹¹Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters and masons. And they built David a house.

For reasons never explained in Scripture, the relationship btwn David & Hiram was super-solid.

The region of Lebanon N of Israel grew fantastic stands of cedar.

Tyre had master carpenters skilled in the latest forms of architecture & construction.

Hiram sent wood & workers to help in the construction of a palace for David.

¹²So David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted His kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

That's an important statement & marks a turning point in David & Israel's story.

His throne is secure, Israel rises to it's potential as a people blessed by God.

While David was far from perfect, the failure thru pride that ruined Saul wasn't something David struggled with.

Power didn't corrupt David.

His error was a bit more generic. David's weakness was the ladies.

But when it came to power, he understood his role as king was to serve the people.

Rule wasn't **power** to **control** others, it was **position** to **serve** them.

There's a well-worn axiom: "Power corrupts."

There's only one way to avoid that universal truth & avoid the trap of power's corruption.

To hold power with a mindset that sees it as a tool to be used in the benefit of others, not self.

In politics, many live by the credo;

GET Power at all costs // **INCREASE Power** by any means // **PRESERVE Power** from every challenge.

The antidote is to **USE Power** to serve.

If v12 reveals David's success in the *political* arena, v13 highlights his failure in the *domestic* sphere.

¹³And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴Now these *are* the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

11 Children. David was a busy guy.

Oriental custom dictated that a king have a harem.

The more wives & kids, the greater the king's splendor.

Be that as it may, these additional wives & concubines were NOT something God approved of.

5:17-25

We looked at these vs Sunday.

Ch6 = This Sunday

Tells the story of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jrz. Because the Ark **IS** there ...

Ch7

¹Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ²that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." ³Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that *is* in your heart, for the Lord *is*

with you.”

David’s new palace is complete & Israel’s at peace.

The kingdom’s coffers are filling nicely with revenue from the vast trade that passes thru; all those fat caravans travelling btwn Mesopotamia & Egypt.

Also, Israel subdued their neighbors and put them to annual tribute.

David begins to feel uneasy that he’s sitting pretty in a nice new palace while the Ark is sitting in a make-shift tent. That just doesn’t seem right to him.

In conversation with the prophet Nathan one day, he shares his desire to build a **permanent home** for the ark.

Nathan thinks that’s a great idea & gives Dave a thumbs-up, pronouncing blessing on the venture.

But Nathan spoke *presumptuously*.

⁴But it happened that night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, ⁵“Go and tell My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’””

The ark’s been housed in a tent for 400 years. That was the original instructions because Israel moved around during the Exodus.

Even after they settled in the Canaan, the location of the tabernacle changed a couple times.

No one had ever proposed a permanent location and building for the Ark.

God had never suggested it.

While God knew ahead of time David was going to propose building a temple, He communicates through Nathan a note of surprise because it sets up the revealing of God’s plans

⁸Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who *are* on the earth. ¹⁰Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹¹since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house. ¹²“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”” ¹⁷According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

God was blessed by David’s desire to build a temple but it will not be for him to do; his son will.

In v10, God says He’ll make clear **where** the temple’s to be built. We’ll see later **how** God does that.

While David’s desire was to build God a house, God will instead build him one.

His throne will not go to another as Saul’s was. David’s dynasty will be eternal.

David & Nathan both understood this as a prophecy that Messiah would come from his line.

The promise of a Messiah-Savior was first given to Adam & Eve just after the Fall.

In Gen12, it was narrowed to the family of Abraham, then to Isaiah, his son Jacob, & his son Judah.

Now it’s narrowed to the descendants of David.

What God says here about David’s son is a classic example fo how to understand prophecy.

In Scripture, prophecy is almost always short term and long term.

Prophecy isn’t so much a foretelling with some one-time, far-off fulfillment.

Prophecy is more a forecast of the future that sees a progressing fulfillment.

Yes, there is some ultimate, final fulfillment.

But that fulfillment is given shape and affirmed by partial fulfillments along the way.

So the prophecy here of David’s son is fulfilled in part by Solomon, who in some ways points to Jesus as the final, ultimate fulfillment.

Solomon did build a temple. But it was destroyed.

Jesus will build a temple that shall never fall. That temple is the Church of which He is the chief cornerstone.

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the Lord; and he said: “Who *am* I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord GOD; and You have also spoken of Your servant’s house for a great while to come. *Is* this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? David was overwhelmed by God’s goodness. // He goes in before the ark, bows down and worships.

²⁰ Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord GOD, know Your servant. Ever feel like that? I do; all the time.

“God, You know me; what a piece of work I am. Yet You love me and work tirelessly to bless me.” If I knew about ***another person*** what I know about ***me***; I’d call the tip-line & turn them in.

Certainly the FBI or CIA or IRS or somebody needs to know about the evil that lurks inside.

God sees all of that and still loves us & works to bless us.

²¹ For Your word’s sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know *them*.

David knows that in the end, all God’s love & goodness rebounds to **His glory**.

²² Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For *there is* none like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

We need to pause here for a moment to make something clear.

The God of the Bible is utterly unlike the deities proposed by other faiths.

As you’ve heard, there are 3 monotheistic faiths; meaning they believe on 1 God: Judaism, Christianity & Islam. And while Islam claims to be ***linked*** to Judaism and Christianity, Allah is certainly NOT the God of the Bible.

In Islam, Allah is utterly Other, completely unknowable.

There is absolutely no connecting point for a human being to understand Allah, let alone have a personal relationship with.

That’s why in Islamic theology, Allah can do things we’d call evil or immoral.

He can do them and remain Holy because he’s utterly different. His morality isn’t our morality.

That’s not the God of the Bible – who reveals Himself to us in the Person of God the Son who became man precisely so we COULD know what God is like and be restored TO a very personal & intimate relationship with Him.

Islam goes so far as to pronounce the harshest curse on anyone who dares to say God has a Son.

Words to that effect are written in Arabic script on the walls of their mosques.

I say all that because of what David says here in v22

²² Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For *there is* none like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

While God is utterly unique, one of a kind in the fullest sense, He’s not inscrutable, unknowable.

It’s His nature to reveal Himself precisely so we CAN know and enjoy Him.

²³ And who *is* like Your people, like Israel, the 1 nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land—before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? ²⁴ For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, Lord, have become their God. ²⁵ “Now, O Lord God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, establish *it* forever and do as You have said. ²⁶ So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, ‘The Lord of hosts *is* the God over Israel.’ And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁷ For You, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed *this* to Your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house.’ Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You.

David’s prayer was a ***response*** to what God revealed to him.

That’s what prayer ought always to be; an echo of God’s Word; a ***response to & application of*** His revealed will.

²⁸ “And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You, O Lord GOD, have spoken *it*, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed

forever.”

There's some marvelous truth to ponder, to meditate on.

Ch8

The first 14 vs chronicle Israel's domination of 6 of her neighbors who presented a threat.

¹ After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines and subdued them. And David took Metheg Ammah from the hand of the Philistines.

Metheg Ammah means “**Bridle of the Mother City**” – it speaks of control, just as a bridle controls a horse.

IOW, whoever controlled this city controlled the entire region.

In 1 Chr. 18:1 we learn Metheg Ammah was another name for **Gath**, chief city of the Philistines.

From this point on, the Philistines never pose a significant threat to Israel.

² Then he defeated Moab. Forcing them down to the ground, he measured them off with a line. With two lines he measured off those to be put to death, and with one full line those to be kept alive. So the Moabites became David's servants, *and* brought tribute.

Why would David attack **Moab** when his great-grandmother Ruth was from there?

You'll remember he'd sent his mother & father to hide there in the years he was on the run from Saul.

Well, there's some evidence the Moabites made a treaty with Saul & murdered David's parents.

So David conquered Moab & reduced its population by 2/3's, making them a vassal state.

This is a hideous atrocity by modern standards.

But David knew Moab presented a serious threat to the Israelites living along the border.

He didn't have the troops to station there.

By reducing their population to 1/3, they'd be so busy surviving, they'd be unable to stage hostilities.

Vs3-4 relate the conquest of a region called **Zobah** to the N of Israel, in what today is the border btwn Lebanon and Syria.

The king of Zobah was a newly emergent power flexing his muscles by grabbing the land of his neighbors.

David put a stop to it.

In vs5-8, we read of the conquest of a powerhouse to the N, **Syria**.

Israel's defeat of the Syrians was so thorough, he was able to install garrisons in the ancient city and trade center of **Damascus**, from which he extracted massive wealth.

It's from this period the Syrians rise to replace the Philistines as Israel's main enemy in the area.

Vs9-12 describe David's treaty with another Aramean city-state named **Hamath**.

They saw David's swift victories over their neighbors & decided the wise course was to surrender rather than attempt battle.

Vs13-14 narrate the conquest of **Edom** in which David's fame became great throughout the ancient Middle East.

Now we get a list of the officials who ran the kingdom's administration.

¹⁵ So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice to all his people.

¹⁶ Joab the son of Zeruah *was* over the army;

Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* recorder;

¹⁷ Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar *were* the priests;

Seraiah *was* the scribe;

¹⁸ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers.

The Cherethites & Pelethites were Philistines loyal to David.

They most likely joined themselves to him in those days that he was on the run from Saul and had gone to live in **Ziklag**, 1 of the Philistine cities.

These Cherethites & Pelethites were a sub-group of Philistines; late arrivals from the island of Crete.

They weren't accepted by the Philistines who'd already settled a hundred years before and saw them as interlopers.

They were forced to live in separate communities and not allowed to participate in the Philistine economy, so they were poor.

David showed them kindness and protected them from the raids of the nomadic Amalekites.

They became his personal, loyal troops under the command of Benaiah, one of David's mighty men.

They play an important role later in the ascension of Solomon.

In v17, Zadok & Ahimelech are mentioned as priests, meaning the high priest.

Ahimelech was a descendant of Eli, whose line as high priest God said would cease.

As David grew in his knowledge of God's Word, he shifted the office of high priest away from Eli's line, who was a descendant of Aaron's son Ithamar, to his **other** son, Eleazar.

Zadok was from **that** line.

Ch9

¹ Now David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

David made promises to his friend Jonathan he'd look after his descendants.

He moves to make good on that promise now.

² And *there was* a servant of the house of Saul whose name *was* Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" He said, "At your service!" ³ Then the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan *who is lame in his feet.*"

In Ch4 we read how when news of Saul's death reached his home in Gibeah, the nanny keeping Jonathan's 5 yr old son picked him up to flee.

But she dropped him, breaking both legs which never healed properly, leaving him lame.

His name was **Mephibosheth**.

⁴ So the king said to him, "Where *is* he?" And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he *is* in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar." ⁵ Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar. ⁶ Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, "Mephibosheth?" And he answered, "Here is your servant!" ⁷ So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."

After the bloody civil war btwn David and the House of Saul after Saul's death, Mephibosheth thought he was done for because that's what kings do to anyone who poses a threat to their throne & dynasty.

What a surprise when David restored all of his grandfather's property in the region of Gibeah.

That's what the servant Ziba would take charge of while Mephibosheth stayed in David's palace as a permanent guest.

⁸ Then he bowed himself, and said, "What *is* your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?" ⁹ And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "I have given to your master's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. ¹⁰ You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in *the harvest*, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread at my table always." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. ¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do." "As for Mephibosheth," *said the king*, "he shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons." ¹² Mephibosheth had a young son whose name *was* Micha. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³ So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet. There's some interesting intrigue with Ziba & Mephibosheth we'll get to later.

Ch10

¹ It happened after this that the king of the people of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. ² Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me." So David sent by the hand of his servants to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the people of Ammon.

The Ammonites were longtime enemies of Israel.

It was Saul's defeat of their invasion that propelled him into the limelight at the beginning of his reign.

Somehow, David and Nahash, the Ammonite king, had become friends.

When he died, following the convention of the time, David sent a message of condolence via an official embassy to his son.

It was the diplomatic way of saying, "Let's carry on the good feelings and peace."

³ And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Has David not *rather* sent his servants to you to search the city, to

spy it out, and to overthrow it?"

This is a complete misread of David's intentions. These clowns call David's emissaries '*spies*.'

Most likely, they have ulterior motives and **want** to go to war with Israel.

⁴Therefore Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half of their beards, cut off their garments in the middle, at their buttocks, and sent them away.

In that time & culture, the length of one's beard showed age, and the older you were, the more dignity a person possessed because of the added wisdom one supposedly had.

Cutting off half their beard was a grave insult, saying the person was only half as wise as they ought to be for their age.

It was equivalent to calling them **fools**; a serious insult for that time when wisdom was one of the most important virtues a person could possess.

To be **naked** in public was about as shameful a thing as one could endure.

If one got caught in public naked it was the kind of social stigma that would stick with you to the grave.

Hanun utterly humiliated these guys.

⁵When they told David, 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."

News quickly reached David about the way his emissaries were treated.

He sent word back to them as they made their way home to stay at Jericho until their beards grew back.

Of course, the real insult was to David; one that couldn't go unanswered.

⁶When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, the people of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth Rehob and the Syrians of Zoba, 20K foot soldiers; and from the king of Maacah 1K men, and from Ish-Tob 12K men.

When it comes to foreign policy, it's a good idea to think about the ramifications of your actions.

In ch8 = Israel's been whopping everyone lately.

Tweaking David's nose like this wasn't real smart.

You don't wave red in front of a bull unless you're prepared to deal with its horns.

Don't poke a hornets' nest if you don't want to get stung.

The counselors who urged Hanun treat David's embassy the way he had no doubt wanted to provoke something and made arrangements to deal with any force Israel brought.

They were still hurting from the defeat Saul had handed them years before.

So they needed allies and found them with 3 of their neighbors

People David had already defeated and put under tribute.

They were motivated to take Israel down.

⁷Now when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. ⁸Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array at the entrance of the gate. And the Syrians of Zoba, Beth Rehob, Ish-Tob, and Maacah *were* by themselves in the field.

1Chr19 says the battle took place at Medeba, across the Jordan, 12 miles E of the Dead Sea in the heart of Ammonite territory.

⁹When 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. ¹⁰And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, that he might set *them* in battle array against the people of Ammon. ¹¹Then 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 come and help you. ¹²Be 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."

The Syrians allies numbered 33K.

How many the Ammonites fielded isn't mentioned but it's likely Israel was badly outnumbered.

Their superior numbers may have contributed to a fatal mistake; they didn't coordinate their forces.

Joab knew he could use this lack of coordination to his advantage. He split his army in 2.

He led the front facing the Syrians and put his in charge of the front facing the Ammonites.

Once battle was joined, if 1 front began to cave, all they had to do was signal & troops would pull off the other front to bolster their ranks.

¹³So Joab and the people who *were* with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. ¹⁴When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai, and entered

the city. So Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went to Jerusalem.

Ancient battles were usually determined by whoever lost nerve first.

As soon as a few soldiers retreated, it started a rout. Panic spread like lightning on the battlefield.

That's what happened here.

The Syrians only came to help the Ammonites, hoping for a quick victory & easy spoils with their superior numbers.

They weren't defending their own land, homes, or families, so when they saw the battle going against them they turned tail and beat it.

The Ammonites saw their allies fleeing & knew they couldn't stand alone so they fled as well.

They held up at their fortress of Rabbah which Joab knew he didn't have the resources to lay siege to.

¹⁵ When the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered together.

After they got back to their own territory, the Syrians figured by *fleeing* from Israel, they'd shown a weakness Israel would exploit.

So they did what the Ammonites had done, called for allies to come help.

¹⁶ Then Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who *were* beyond the River, and they came to Helam. And Shobach the commander of Hadadezer's army *went* before them. ¹⁷ When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in battle array against David and fought with him. ¹⁸ Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed 700 charioteers and 40K horsemen of the Syrians, and struck Shobach the commander of their army, who died there.

The Syrian king Hadadezer called for all the Aramean city-states to unite.

They then marched S along the eastern side of the Jordan.

When David heard about this huge confederacy maneuvering on Israel's E'n border, he knew it was a crucial moment.

The battle would need his personal leadership, so they marched out to face the Syrians.

Israel's victory was stunning.

¹⁹ And when all the kings *who were* servants to Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Syrians were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

One of the things you'll notice if you compare the chs we've covered tonight with their counterparts in 1Chr is that the numbers given in the battle accounts don't line up.

The reason why is because ancient Hebrew didn't have unique numerals; they used letters and marks to identify numbers, and some of the manuscripts are difficult to discern exactly what number the scribe meant.

So, there are some pretty significant differences in the numbers that are given between 2Sam & 1Chr.

Take away that 1 textual problem and the point of the record becomes clear.

God gave Israel victory over all those nations that had at one time dominated & oppressed her.

The promises of blessing on Israel's obedience God made in the Law of Moses came to pass in a most dramatic way under David's reign.

God said when Israel faithfully followed Him, they'd be the head, not the tail, and would rise among the nations.

Israel's ascension to that place during this time was due to David's whole-hearted devotion to God.

His influence for godliness was dramatic and effected the lives of millions.

We need to pray for *our* leaders.