



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## The Wars of David

Our visit to the treasury of the Word of God begins this month in 2 Samuel, chapter 8. We will examine David's military exploits as king and learn how this applies to us. This chapter cites David's victories over seven other nations: the Philistines, the Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians (also known as the Arameans), the Zobahites, Edomites, and Amalekites.

Some of these wars are allotted only one verse in the Holy Writ. Yet, these were not trifling skirmishes. These were no doubt significant, and in some cases, extended wars. But this chapter gives us only a summary. And whereas the historical annals of other nations devote considerable space to the great martial victories of their leaders, this is not so with the great warrior-king David of Israel. Long histories of David's wars would only play to the pride of the Israel people—which would not be beneficial.

Israel is set apart from all other nations in many ways, but it is set apart also in this area; meaning, that the accounts of these seven major wars of David's 40-year reign are all concluded in one single chapter of only 18 verses. Compare that to the chapter of 23 verses which described the events surrounding the procession of bringing the ark of the covenant up to Jerusalem. A parade gets 23 verses and seven major wars are allotted only 18 verses! This emphasizes the pivotal importance placed upon the ark, the spiritual focus of the nation.

It has been rightly said that if the Holy Writ had described the wars of David in the typical manner, that even the secular history books would place David on the level of a Julius Caesar or Alexander the Great as

one of the premier military leaders of the ancient world. But the focus in the Bible is not primarily on the *warfare* but on the *worship* of the Creator.

David went to war to secure the nation of Israel from being swallowed up by its bloodthirsty neighbors. God had promised Abraham real estate all the way to the Euphrates river but He had given no command to exterminate or drive out the inhabitants thereof as He had concerning the inhabitants of Canaanland. Therefore David sought only to make them tributaries to his kingdom.

With the wars of David, we find Israel being transformed from a weak, fledgling nation, which was struggling to drive out the Canaanites, to an empire of great power, wealth and prestige in the world of that era.

Even today—especially today—neither Bible students nor scholars appreciate the extent to which David and Solomon's empire reached literally around the world. Fortunately, there is now a recently-completed series of books, four volumes in all, by Steven M. Collins, which provides tremendous research and details about that. The volumes are titled: *The Origins and Empire of Ancient Israel*, *Israel's Lost Empires*, *Parthia*, and *Israel's Tribes Today*. They should be read sequentially. All are available from Stone Kingdom Ministries. Now to the wars of David.

**2 Samuel 8:1 And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Methegammah out of the hand of the Philistines.**

Methegammah literally means this was the mother city (capital). It stood for the entire nation. Thus, in one verse, the subjugation of the Philistines is recorded. One war down; six to go.

**2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.**

Here David renders especially harsh treatment on the Moabites. After the war, all the male Moabite combatants are made to lie on the ground. Having been sorted by using ropes, two-thirds of the Moabite soldiers are executed while one-third are allowed to live. Yes, this is relatively cruel treatment, but we do not know what provoked David to order these executions. Jewish commentators claim that in the days when David was fleeing from Saul, that he sent his parents to the king of Moab for safekeeping, but that in the course of time, his parents were put to death. That speculation comes from the Jewish Talmud, and you can put whatever credence in it that you wish. The fact is that we have nothing in the Holy Scriptures to indicate *why* David ordered these executions.

What I find most interesting is the silence of the Christian preachers on this incident. In all my years of attending various denominational churches, and in all my years of hearing Bible teachers and preachers on Christian radio, I have often heard them mention "Ruth the Moabitess." Thereby they imply, and often claim openly, that Ruth was descended from the Moabites. Occasionally, I have heard them mention that this was why David sent his parents over to the Moabites when he was fleeing Saul. After all, they claim, the Moabites were David's kinfolk, because Ruth was his great-grandmother. True, she was his great-grandmother, but the fact that David sent his parents for safekeeping with the Moabites no more proves they were his kinfolk than does the fact that when David himself went and lived with the Philistines prove that he was kinfolk with the Philistines!

It could simply have been a fee-for-service arrangement that David made with the Moabites. He could have bargained with them to safeguard his parents for a certain sum of money or goods. That is the simplest explanation. Now, whether the Moabites later double-crossed David and executed his parents, who knows? The fact is that Ruth was not descended from

the Moabites, and I am confident that my video lecture called *Ruth the Israelite* proves it. I use chronological calculations, charts and maps in conjunction with the Scriptures to make the case that she was an Israelite. It is most likely that she was of the tribe of Reuben, who happened to live in what was formerly *the land of the Moabites*. That lecture is one hour and 35 minutes long and is still available from us in DVD format (\$19 ppd.) or VHS format (\$15 ppd.)

So in all my years of hearing the preachers talk about Ruth the Moabitess, I have never heard one of them try to explain David's action here. Why would a man who allegedly has Moabite blood in his veins, kill two-thirds of the men who are supposedly his relatives? This was more harsh than David had treated even the Philistines. The silence of the Christian preachers here is noteworthy. Two wars down, and five to go. The third war listed was against the Zoba-hites.

**2 Samuel 8:3 David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.**

Here we see the fulfillment of God's promised of real estate extending to the river Euphrates.

**4 And David took from him a thousand *chariots*, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them *for an hundred chariots*.**

Notice the word "chariots" there is in italics, meaning that the translators supplied it. And with good reason, for if we turn to the parallel passage we find that word there. Let's read it for another reason also.

**4 And David took from him a thousand *chariots*, and seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.**

Here is another one of those alleged Bible discrepancies. Was it 700 horsemen or 7,000? Aside from it being a copyist's error, which some scholars believe it was, another possibility is that the 700 refers to 700 companies of chariots, there being ten in a company, with a commander over each company.

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Then it goes on to say that David “houghed” all the chariot horses. That’s an old English word, now obsolete. Pronounced “hocked,” it means that the sinews of their rear legs were cut so that they were rendered useless for military purposes. Why did he do that? Why didn’t David just keep all the chariot horses for his armies? One possibility is that he remembered the law of God which forbade the king from accumulating horses to himself, so he might have decided that keeping 100 out of 700 or 7,000 chariot horses was within the spirit of the law.

We have mentioned in a previous teaching that David may also have been guilty of violating a similar law which stated that the king shall not multiply wives to himself (cf. Deuteronomy 17:17). The Zobahites must have had an alliance with the Syrians because they came running to help the Zobahites.

**2 Samuel 8:5 And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.**

**6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And YHWH preserved David whithersoever he went.**

**7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.**

I would surmise that these shields were ceremonial and not functional. Gold is very heavy, about as heavy as lead. Can you imagine a soldier trying to hoist this shield in battle? Later on in his life, David was told that because he was a man of war, that he would not be permitted to build the temple for Yahweh. However, David did make preparations for his son to carry out the work. David had the “plans and specs” drawn up and he collected much of the raw material for the project. Do you think that perhaps the gold from these shields was set aside for the construction of the temple? We will return to this thought later.

**8 And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.**

Thus David has more material for the temple. David’s defeat of Hadadezer and the Zobahites, along with their allies, the Syrians, led to a side benefit for

David’s kingdom, as we see next.

**9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,**

**10 Then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi.**

We’ll pause in the middle of that verse. The side benefit is that David gains a submissive ally without a fight. This stranger wants to be on David’s side. Here is the old principle often employed in political games, that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend.” Toi was enemy to Hadadezer, so he came to David and said “let’s be friends,” and recognizing David’s superior power, Toi brought with him a significant amount of treasure as a recognition of the superior position of David’s kingdom.

**10 (cont’d) And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:**

Next are two verses which contain some very important lessons and revelations:

**11 Which also king David did dedicate unto YHWH, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;**

**12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.**

Only six nations of the seven nations are mentioned there, but Edom is referred to in the next several verses, and also in the parallel passage ...

**1 Chronicles 18: 11 Them also king David dedicated unto YHWH, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek.**

Back to 2 Samuel. We will look at this passage on several levels. First, on the literal level, we note the word “also” in verse 11, which leads me to connect this dedication of the precious metals to the Lord with the golden shields of verse 7. In other words, I think we can safely assume that David *did* in fact set aside those golden shields as part of the raw materials to be

used later for the construction of the temple. Now again to...

**1 Chronicles 18: 7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer [Hadadezer], and brought them to Jerusalem.**

**8 Likewise from Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer** [those are the same cities which are called Betah, and Berothai in the account in 2 Samuel. From those cities, it says...] **brought David very much brass, wherewith Solomon made the brasen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.**

So, indeed, there is the confirmation that these metals being dedicated to the Lord were being set aside for use in His temple. That is important to keep in mind. Materials being dedicated to Yahweh means that they will be used in his temple. Now let us look at this symbolically. Remember that the types and shadows can apply to us personally as well as nationally and corporately. David is a type of Christ in numerous ways, but here we see him as Christ the conqueror. We have noted that there are *seven* nations mentioned in this chapter over whom David is victorious in warfare—which reminds us of this verse.

**Deuteronomy 7:1 When YHWH thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;**

We know that the Israelites never did succeed in *fully* driving out or exterminating these seven nations, but from a type and shadow standpoint, they did. How can I say that? First, we must understand that the reason they could not fully accomplish the job is because they were laboring under a Passover anointing. By 33 A.D., the church in the New Testament was given a Pentecost anointing. However, the past two millennia have proved that the Pentecost anointing is also insufficient for perfection. Now notice that in Acts 13 Paul and Barnabas are teaching in Antioch and Paul is recounting Israel history.

**Acts 13:19 And when he [Yahweh] had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.**

So, from a *typical* (types and shadows) standpoint, the seven nations inside the Promised Land *were* destroyed. Then later, David came along and subdued seven *other* nations which were outside the Promised Land. What this foreshadows is both personal and corporate. Personally, our Promised Land is our glorified body.

I love the FBI, because our glorified body is our Full Body Inheritance. But we don't get our FBI the moment we become Christians. We first experience our Passover, and that is by faith in the blood of Jesus. That is our justification in the Outer Court. It is the event where God now accounts us as righteous (even though we're not). It is an imputation. That is what Acts 13:19 is. God accounted them as having accomplished the work on the seven Canaanite nations, even though it was not perfect.

Then, we move on into the Holy Place where we experience our Pentecostal anointing and we are in our sanctification phase. Here we struggle to overcome "enemies both foreign and domestic," that is to say, enemies both within ourselves and outside. But the complete victory does not come until we inherit our glorified bodies at the resurrection, which is the Tabernacles experience. Salvation is a progression: from justification to sanctification to glorification; from Passover to Pentecost to Tabernacles.

All this is portrayed symbolically in the progression from Outer Court, to Holy Place to the Holy of Holies. (See FMS #11 through 17 for greater detail.) Let's not build a house (permanent home), even as others do, in the Outer Court, the Passover stage. Neither let us build a house and be stuck in the Pentecost stage. We must continuously be growing in holiness and in our understanding of the Word. The process is often painful because it means we must sometimes leave behind the denominational walls those who do not see what Father has given us to see. Let us therefore embrace the vision of Tabernacles and press on towards perfection. For that is our permanent home. Hallelujah!

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