

## 2 Samuel Chapter 5

Verses 1-5: The death of Saul's son brings the submission of all "Israel" to "David." David's third anointing takes place in "Hebron", as had his second (see the notes on 1 Samuel 16:13-14 and 1 Chronicles 11:1-3; 12:38).

"All the tribes of Israel": The term "all" is used 3 times (verses 1, 3, 5), to emphasize that the kingdom established under King David was truly a united monarchy. The "elders" of Israel (verse 3), representing the "tribes" (verse 1), came to David at Hebron with the express purpose of submitting to his rule.

Beginning with this chapter and continuing (to the end of 2 Samuel), many of the events told here have parallel accounts in (1 Chronicles). Representatives from the 12 tribes accepted David's leadership because:

- (1) He was an Israelite;
- (2) He had successful military campaigns; and
- (3) God had anointed him.

"Shepherd" was a metaphor used to describe God Himself and the human rulers of Israel (Gen. 48:15; Psalm 23:1; Ezek. 34:1-10).

**2 Samuel 5:1 "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we [are] thy bone and thy flesh."**

All the rest of the tribes, except the tribe of Judah, who had made him king over them in Hebron seven years ago. These were ambassadors sent in the name of the several tribes to him, quickly after the deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth. From having any hand in which David had sufficiently cleared himself, and which had tended to reconcile the minds of the people of Israel to him.

"And spake, saying, we are thy bone and thy flesh": For though he was of the tribe of Judah, yet as all the tribes sprung from one man, they were all one bone, flesh, and blood. All nearly related to each other, all of the same general family of which David was; and so, according to their law, a fit person to be their king (Deut. 16:18). And from whom they might expect clemency and tenderness, being so near akin to them.

This does not mean that every single person came, but means that large numbers of them came. Some believe the number that came were into the hundreds of thousands. This happened, probably, quite a time after the death of Ish-bosheth. This large gathering to see David is possibly, to remind him that they are the same nationality that he is. Their common enemy is the Philistines. They are all Israelites descended from Jacob.

**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."**

To wit, by Samuel (1 Sam. 16:11-13). For though the words may vary, still the meaning of them is the same.

"Thou shalt feed my people Israel": I.e. rule them, and take care of them, as a shepherd doth of his sheep (Psalm 78:70-71). This expression he used to admonish David, that he was not made a king to advance his own glory and interest, but for the good and benefit of his people; and that he ought to rule them with all tenderness, and to watch over them with all diligence.

This is recognition of David, as being the anointed king of Israel. David was highly respected as a mighty military leader. This however, is recognizing him as a leader in domestic affairs as well.

**2 Samuel 5:3 "So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel."**

"King David made a league": David bound himself formally to certain obligations toward the Israelites, including their rights and responsibilities to one another and to the Lord (2 Kings 11:17). As good as this covenant was, it did not end the underlying sense of separate identity felt by Israel and Judah as the revolt of Sheba (20:1), and the dissolution of the united kingdom under Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:16), would later demonstrate.

"They anoint David": David's third anointing (2:4; 1 Sam. 16:13), resulted in the unification of the 12 tribes under his kinship.

David had ruled over Judah because they elevated him to that position, but the northern tribes recognized his rule by a treaty or covenant. Years later, they would not renew this treaty with David's grandson Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:1-16). The covenant ceremony ended with a third anointing for David from the leaders of northern Israel, David now reigned over all of Israel.

Israel had never been governed by an earthly king, until Saul. We see, in this verse above, that all of Israel had decided they want David to rule over them. They have unanimously agreed that he should be their king, so they anoint him for that office. They all travelled to anoint him in Hebron. He had already ruled locally in Hebron for seven and a half years.

**2 Samuel 5:4"David [was] thirty years old when he began to reign, [and] he reigned forty years."**

This statement of the age and of the length of the reign of David (which is repeated in 1 Chron. 29:26-27), at the end of the history of David's life, shows us approximately the length of time since the combat with Goliath as some ten or twelve years. It also proves that the greater part of Saul's reign is treated very briefly (in 1 Samuel), and further shows that David was seventy years old at his death.

He was thirty when he began his reign in Hebron. Not at the time they made him king of all Israel. He was 70 years old when he died.

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

“Israel and Judah”: The united kingdom was still known by its two component parts.

“Jerusalem” was the sacred city and well-known capital of Palestine during Bible times. The earliest known name for the city was Urushalem. Salem, of which Melchizedek was king (Gen. 14:18), was a natural abbreviation for Jerusalem (Psalms 76:2). Thus, the city appears as early as the time of Abraham. Jerusalem is mentioned directly in the Bible for the first time (in Joshua 10:1-4). David united the kingdom after Saul’s reign and quickly made Jerusalem the political and religious capital of the kingdom (1 Chron. 11:4-9). Jerusalem was chosen as the place for the capital because it was centrally located between the northern and southern tribes and because the topography of the city made it easy to defend. David gave the city the name Jerusalem, and it is also referred to as the “city of David.” He built a palace in the highest section of the city, frequently referred to as Mount Zion. David also moved the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. There Solomon would build the temple of which David had dreamed (2 Chronicles 3 and 4).

Now, we see that the 40 year reign included the seven and a half years he reigned over just Judah.

Verses 6-10 (see 1 Chronicles 11:4-9).

Verses 6-8: The Jebusites claimed that their city was so strong that even “blind and lame” men could defend it, but David turned this taunt around and called the Jebusites “blind and lame”, saying they would not be allowed in David’s court.

**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."**

“Jerusalem”: This city is mentioned in the Bible more than any other (from Gen. 14:18 to Rev. 21:10). The city was located in the territory of Benjamin, near the northern border of Judah and was excellently fortified because of its elevation and the surrounding deep valleys, which made it naturally defensible on 3 sides. In addition, it had a good water supply, the Gihon spring, and was close to travel routes for trade. The city had earlier been conquered by Judah (Judges 1:8), but neither Judah nor Benjamin had been successful in permanently dislodging the Jebusite inhabitants (Joshua 15:33; Judges 1:21). By taking Jerusalem, David was able to eliminate the foreign wedge between the northern and southern tribes and to establish his capital.

“Jebusite”: A people of Canaanite descent (Gen. 10:16-18). Since the earlier inhabitants of Jerusalem were Amorites (Joshua 10:5), it seems that the Jebusites took control of Jerusalem after the time of the Israelite conquest.

“The blind and the lame”: The Jebusites taunted the Israelites and mocked the power of David by boasting that the blind and the lame could defend Jerusalem against him.

Hebron had been associated as the capital of Judah. These other tribes did not want to become part of Judah. They just wanted David to rule over them as a united Israel. They would have to seek a new capital. The Jebusites had been defeated a number of times, but always seemed to come back strong. At this time mentioned here, they seemed to have control of Jerusalem, known as Jebus. Shalom was added to the name, because it meant peace. This signified that Jerusalem was a city of peace. These Jebusites were proud, obstinate people, who thought they could not be overthrown. They thought of David and his men as helpless against them, as the blind and lame.

**2 Samuel 5:7 "Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same [is] the city of David."**

“Strong hold of Zion”: This is the first occurrence of “Zion” in the Bible and the only one (in 1 and 2 Samuel). Referring here to the Jebusite citadel on the southeastern hill, the name was also later used of the temple mount (Isa. 10:12), and of the entire city of Jerusalem (Isa. 28:16).

“City of David”: Both Bethlehem, David’s birthplace (Luke 2:4), and Jerusalem, David’s place of reign, were called by this title.

All of their powerful boasting was to no avail. David took Zion. Zion was the hill on the southwest corner. It is also, the place the LORD chose for the site of the temple later. The city of David is Jerusalem.

**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."**

This was a water tunnel that channeled the city’s water supply from the Gihon spring outside the city walls on the east side into the citadel.

Some understand the word translated “gutter” to mean a water course; others, a grappling hook used by siege forces in assaulting the walls of a town. Still others suggest that the word refers to some bodily part such as the throat or windpipe. The mentioning of “the lame and the blind” is probably an ancient play on words. The Jebusite defenders had such confidence in their fortress-like city that they boasted that the lame and blind could defend such a town. “David” calls them all lame and blind. The whole episode gave birth to a proverb reflecting social customs of gaining access to the royal quarters. David had anticipated a return to Jerusalem long beforehand (1 Sam. 17:54). For added details on the capture of Jerusalem (see 1 Chronicles Chapter 11).

The city was thought of as impossible to penetrate. They had overlooked the water system, and possibly, some of David's men went in through the gutter, spoken of above, into the city. They would have had to wade in water, probably, shoulder deep to get in that way. The brave men, who would slip into the city this way, would be given the high positions of chief and captain. It appears that Joab was one of the volunteers who went in and then he regained his position in

David's army. They speak of weak people as the lame and the blind; those who are unable to help themselves.

**2 Samuel 5:9 "So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward."**

“Millo”: Stone-filled terraces were built to serve as part of Jerusalem’s northern defenses, since the city was most open to attack from that direction.

Millo means “The Filling.” Whatever its precise identification was, it served as part of the defensive system (1 Kings 9:15, 24).

This is speaking of a fort on Mount Zion. This is where David stationed himself, until the whole city could be taken. This fort at Millo became known as the Citadel.

Verses 10-12: both the author of the Book of Samuel and David himself acknowledge that God Himself promoted David “for the sake of His people Israel.”

**2 Samuel 5:10 "And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts [was] with him."**

In honor and wealth, in fame and reputation, in subduing his enemies, obtaining conquests over them, and enlarging his dominions.

"And the Lord God of hosts”: Of armies above and below.

"Was with him": To whom all his prosperity and success was owing. The Targum is, "the Word of the Lord God of hosts was for his help, or his helper”.

We know the LORD had been with David from the very beginning. It was the strength of the LORD in David that made him win over the giant Goliath. This victory over Goliath threw him into prominence. We also know that the LORD protected David from the jealousy of Saul. The LORD had Samuel to anoint David as king, many years before he became king. The LORD protected him over and over. God was with him in every battle. God will set up the city of Jerusalem as David's city. It will be known as the city of God. At first, only Samuel, David, and David's family knew that the LORD had Samuel to anoint him king. Soon, it became apparent to everyone that the LORD wanted David to be the king over all Israel.

**2 Samuel 5:11 "And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house."**

“Hiram king of Tyre”: Tyre was a Phoenician port city about 35 miles north of Mt. Carmel and 25 miles south of Sidon. During the latter part of David’s reign and much of Solomon’s, the friendly Hiram traded building materials for agricultural products. He also provided craftsmen to

build David's palace, indicating how the long war had brought the nation to a low place where there were few good artisans. (Psalm 30), could possibly refer to the dedication of this house or to the temporary shelter for the Ark in Jerusalem (6:17).

King "Hiram" was the first international king to recognize David as the leader of Israel. Tyre was dependent on Israel for much of its food and for its inland trade routes. Later on, Hiram (possibly the son of the Hiram), supplied cedar for building the temple (1 Kings 5:1-18).

Hiram's supplying of the "cedar" and builders for David's new "house" was a mark of international recognition (1 Chron. 14:1-7).

Cedar trees have strength and durability that makes houses built of them last a very long time. Perhaps, this gesture from the king of Tyre was to let David know he wanted to be friends with him. He did not want to have war with a man such as David, who was so blessed of God. David's men were not as skilled in the fine arts as the men of Tyre. The men of Tyre were artisans at building and decorating. David's men were men of war.

**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."**

"The Lord had established him king": Witnessing God's evident blessing on his life, David recognized the Lord's role in establishing his kingship.

We know from reading the Psalms, that David had some very sad times in his life, when he was not sure of being king over all Israel. The first few years, when Saul was chasing him to kill him, were certainly uncertain. The fact that he was recognized by the king of Tyre and built a home to live in, helps him realize that he is truly king of all Israel. David was aware that the LORD did this to help all of Israel. The LORD had a special love for David because David loved and obeyed the LORD with all his heart.

Verses 13-15: David's additional marriages may reflect the ancient international protocol by which treaty arrangements were sealed by the marriage of the royal princess of one nation to the other nation's king or his son (1 Kings 11:1-3). Also, the size of a king's harem was a matter of great prestige. Although this procedure may have helped cement David's prominence in Jerusalem and his relationship to the Jerusalemites, it was nevertheless a violation of the Mosaic Law (Deut. 17:17).

**2 Samuel 5:13 "And David took [him] more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David."**

"More concubines and wives": The multiplication of David's wives and concubines was in direct violation of (Deut. 17:17). These marriages probably (2 Sam. 3:3), reflected David's involvement in international treaties and alliances that were sealed by the marriage of a king's daughter to other participants in the treaty. This cultural intuition accounted for some of David's

and many of Solomon's wives (see 1 Kings 11:1-3). In each case of polygamy in Scripture, the law of God was violated and the consequences were negative, if not disastrous.

One indication of the greatness of a king was the number of wives that he had. It appears that, each person on this earth has a weakness in some area. We would have to say that David's weakness was women. David would have a very large family by all these wives and concubines.

**2 Samuel 5:14 "And these [be] the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,"**

The names of his sons, for his daughters are not mentioned, and these seem to be such only those who were born of his wives (see 1 Chron. 3:9).

"Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon": These four were by Bath-sheba; the first of these is called Shimea (1 Chronicles 3:5).

Solomon, of course is the one who stands out in this. He would follow his father on the throne as king of Israel. He was the son of David by Bath-sheba. Shammuah was, also, the son of Bath-sheba and David. The name "Shobab" means backsliding or rebellious. He was also the son of Bath-sheba. Nathan seems to have not been involved in the politics of government. He, too, was a son of David by Bath-sheba. The genealogy of Jesus from the book of Luke, which leads to Mary, shows Nathan as her ancestor.

**2 Samuel 5:15 "Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,"**

Elishua is called Elishama (1 Chron. 3:6).

**2 Samuel 5:16 "And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet."**

Seven more by some other wife or wives; nine are mentioned in 1 Chronicles 3:6; there being in that account two Eliphalet, and another called Nogah; which two, one of the Eliphalets, and Nogah, might die without sons, as Kimchi thinks, and so are not mentioned here.

These are all sons born of the wives of David. There seem to be no listing of children by concubines. There are two more names listed in Chronicles that are not listed here. Perhaps, they were children who died in their youth. Very little is known of the sons mentioned above.

Verses 5:17 – 8:18: This section is bracketed by the descriptions of David's military victories (5:17-25; 8:1-14). In between (6:1 – 7:29), David's concern for the Ark of the Covenant and a suitable building to house it, are recounted.

5:17-23 (see 1 Chronicles 14:8-17).

**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."**

“Philistines”: The Philistines had remained quiet neighbors during the long civil war between the house of Saul and David, but jealous of the king who has consolidated the nation, they resolved to attack before his government was fully established. Realizing that David was no longer their vassal, they took decisive military action against his new capital of Jerusalem.

The “Philistines” became concerned when David’s reign extended beyond Judah. David most likely fled to the areas he had hidden in when he was a fugitive from Saul.

Verse 17 is not in chronological order. The children were not born, before this happened. This happens soon after David was anointed king of all Israel. This hold was, probably, a cave that David was in. The Philistines wasted no time coming against David. The fact that all of Israel is united under David would cause great concern to the Philistines. They could easily fight a fragmented army by individual families, but it would be much more difficult to come against all Israel. This would be especially true with a strong leader like David.

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

“The valley of Rephaim”: Literally “the valley of the giants.” It was a plain located southwest of Jerusalem on the border between Judah and Benjamin (Joshua 15:1, 8; 18:11, 16), where fertile land produced grain that provided food for Jerusalem and also attracted raiding armies.

The valley of Rephaim is about three miles long by two miles wide. "Rephaim" means giants. Og was a good example of the great size of the earlier people of Rephaim. The Philistines were here to attack David's army. They prefer to starve them out and make them come to them, instead of going in to attack.

**2 Samuel 5:19 "And David inquired 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."**

David once again “inquired of the Lord.” He could have chosen to fight the battle on his own, but instead he chose to seek God’s will first. God’s way was the only way he could secure victory (2:1; 1 Sam. 23:2).

The one thing that I truly admire about David is the fact that he prays to the LORD before making a military attack. In this case, when he prays to the LORD, the LORD tells David that He will give these Philistines to him. David will go against them and David will win.

**2 Samuel 5:20 "And David came to Baal-perazim, 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 Baal-perazim."**

“Baal-perazim”: The image seen in this name was that of flooding waters breaking through a dam as David’s troops had broken through the Philistine assault.

"Baal-perazim" means possessor of breeches. It was the LORD who went before David, and caused the victory here. When David is in the will of God, there is no way for him to lose.

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

This event mirrors the Israelites’ loss of the Ark of the Covenant, when they carried it into battle for good luck (1 Sam. chapter 4). The Philistines had carried their idols (“images”), into battle to protect them, only to leave them behind once they fled. In the parallel account of this battle (in 1 Chron. 14:12), the Israelites burned the idols as they were instructed (in Deut. 7:5).

These were images of false gods; they had brought to bless them in battle. Idols and images have no power at all. That is pretty obvious here, since David's men gathered them and burned them. It appears that, the Philistines had run in defeat, here.

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

And, as Josephus says, with an army three times larger than the former.

"And spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim": in the same place where they were before (2 Sam. 5:20).

We find that the first battle had not killed a large number of the Philistines; they had just driven them off. They have re-grouped, and have come back to fight against David's army. David's army is small, but the LORD is with them.

Verses 23-25: This account of heaven’s armies fighting for David echoes the accounts of Joshua’s victories (Joshua 6:2-5; 8:1-12; 11:6), as God once again supernaturally helped Israel conquer the Promised Land (1 Chron. 14:14-16). The “sound of marching” may have been camouflaged by the sound of the wind in the “trees,” enabling the Israelites to sneak up on the Philistines.

**2 Samuel 5:23 "And when David inquired 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."**

The enemy, on the same battle-expound, would have prepared for attack from the same direction as before. Consequently David is directed to go round them and attack them unexpectedly from the opposite quarter.

Notice, David did not rely upon the message that he had in the past from the LORD. He asked for guidance in this battle, as well. The LORD has another plan this time. The Philistines would

be expecting a frontal attack, since that is the way David's men attacked the first time. The compass means they slipped around to the rear of their army, and used the mulberry trees for cover to get in close.

**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."**

“The sound of a going in”: The leaves of this tree would rustle at the slightest movement of air, much of which would be generated by a large army marching.

The LORD will even give the sound of attack, when the mulberry trees begin to rustle. If David follows the exact commands of the LORD, the LORD will go before them and defeat the Philistines for them.

**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."**

“Geba ... Gazer”: Geba was located about 5 miles north of Jerusalem and Gezer was about 20 miles west of Geba. David drove the Philistines out of the hill country back to the coastal plain.

This just means that they killed the Philistines, who were in wait to come into the battle, as well as those in the valley of Rephaim. This was a large army, and it seemed to take a fairly long time to destroy them. They were spread out over many miles. Victory for David, and for us, comes, when we are in the perfect will of God. Had David varied from the instructions the LORD gave him, he would have been defeated. He followed the commands of the LORD to the utmost, and won a very difficult battle.

## **2 Samuel Chapter 5 Questions**

1. Where did all the tribes come to speak with David?
2. What did they say to him?
3. Their common enemy is the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What is the message in verse 2?
5. The elders of Israel anointed David \_\_\_\_\_ over Israel.
6. How long had David ruled in Hebron, before he was anointed king over all Israel?
7. How old was David, when he began to reign?
8. How many years did he reign?

9. Who held Jerusalem at this time?
10. Why did they not make Hebron the capital of the Israelites?
11. What was another name used first for Jerusalem?
12. What does "Shalom" mean?
13. Where was Zion?
14. What honor would David show those, who slip into the city and smite the Jebusites?
15. It appears one of the volunteers is \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The fort at Millo became known as the \_\_\_\_\_.
17. How do we know the LORD protected David?
18. Who sent cedar trees, carpenters, and masons to build David a house?
19. Why did the LORD have a special love for David?
20. Whose sons are the names in verse 14?
21. Which of these sons succeeds David on the throne?
22. What does "Shobab" mean?
23. What special name is associated with Nathan?
24. Who are the sons in verses 15 and 16?
25. What did the Philistines do, when they heard David was anointed king?
26. Where did David go for protection?
27. Where did the Philistines set up camp?
28. What is one thing the author really admires David for?
29. What does "Baal-perazim" mean?
30. What did David's men do with the Philistine images?
31. When the Philistines re-grouped, what did they do?
32. What did the LORD tell David to do this time?
33. What were the results?