

1 Chronicles 20 - War with Philistine Giants

II. David prepares to build the temple (1 Chr 10:1—29:30)

(5) David's military victories (1 Chr 18:1—20:8)

(E) Ammon and the Arameans (19:1—20:3)

(F) Philistines (20:4-8)

Philistines

The Ammonites remained in Rabbah until the next spring when Joab once again took up the siege of the city. The Chronicler wrote that David remained in Jerusalem, and in line with his overall design, wrote nothing of David's adulterous and murderous activities (Cf. 2 Sam 11:2—12:25). Chronicles also omitted the report of how David, who took the great crown of gold (weighing ~75 pounds) from the Ammonite king, happened to be at Rabbah. According to 2 Sam 12:26-29, after Joab had taken the city's water supply, he invited David to come and personally lead the attack on the citadel or inner fortification. Having captured the city, David reduced its population to slave labor involving saws, picks, axes, and brick making (Cf. 2 Sam 12:31). Thus the Ammonites also came under David's authority.

1 Chronicles 20

(E) Ammon and the Arameans (19:1—20:3) (Cf. 2 Sam 11:1; 12:26-31)

1 Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out *to battle*, that Joab led out the army and ravaged the land of the sons of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem. And Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it.

1 Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out *to battle*, that Joab led out the army and ravaged the land of the sons of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it.

1 Later the next spring, at the time that kings go out to fight, Joab led out the army, ravaged the territory of the Ammonites, and then went out and attacked Rabbah, while David remained behind in Jerusalem. Joab besieged Rabbah and conquered it.

1 And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

2 David took the crown of their king from his head, and he found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there was a precious stone in it; and it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the spoils of the city, a very great amount.

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2 David confiscated the crown of their king from his head, and found that its weight was a talent in gold. A precious stone had been set in it, and it was placed on David's head. He also confiscated a great amount of war booty that had been plundered from the city,

2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

3 He brought out the people who *were* in it, and put *them to work* at saws, iron picks, and axes. And David did the same to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned *to* Jerusalem.

3 He brought out the people who *were* in it, and cut *them* with saws and with sharp instruments and with axes. And thus David did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned *to* Jerusalem.

3 brought back the people who had lived in it, and put them to conscripted labor with saws, iron picks, and axes. David did this to every Ammonite city, and then David and his entire army returned to Jerusalem.

3 And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

David's Sin with Bathsheba

The Chronicler was not inspired by God to mention David's sin with Bathsheba or his subsequent sins recorded in 2 Sam 11:2—12:23. The adultery and murder occurred at this time, while David stayed in Jerusalem instead of going to battle.

(F) Philistines (20:4-8) (Cf. 2 Sam 21:15-22)

4 Now it came about after this, that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the giants, and they were subdued.

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subdued.

4 Afterwards, war broke out against the Philistines at Gezer, where Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rephaim, defeating the Philistines.

4 And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued.

5 And there was war with the Philistines again, 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.

5 And there was war with the Philistines again, 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.

5 There was also another battle against the Philistines, when Jair's son Elhanan killed Lahmi the Gittite, Goliath's brother, whose spear was as big as a weaver's beam.

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver's beam.

- The Chronicler's record of David's conquests begins and ends with references to wars against the Philistines (18:1; 20:4-8)

— Israel had no more inveterate and persistent foe than the Philistines, and Israel was never able to dominate them completely

— This is why "Palestina" (Latin for Philistines) is the label of the land by Israel's enemies

6 Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of *great* stature who had twenty-four fingers and toes, *six fingers on each hand* and *six toes on each foot*; and he also was descended from the giants.

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6 There was also a battle at Gath, where there was a very tall man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—for a total of 24 digits—who was a descendant of the Rephaim.

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was the son of the giant.

7 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

7 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

7 When he challenged Israel, Shimei's son Jonathan, David's nephew, killed him.

7 But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea David's brother slew him.

8 These were descended from the **giants** in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

8 These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

8 These descendants from the giants in Gath died at the hands of David and his servants.

8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

- "...giants" - *rapha*, Rephaim; old tribe of giants; used 25x in OT, translated as "giant" 17x and Rephaim 8x

- The third Philistine war narrative reveals that a Philistine giant (Rephaim) met death at the hands of David's nephew Jonathan (Cf. 2 Sam 21:20-21)

— There follows a succinct summary of the defeat of the Philistines, epitomized in the deaths of Rephaim

— The Rephaim coexisted with the early Philistines and perhaps even intermarried with them (Cf. Gen 14:5; Deut 2:11,20; 3:11; 1 Chr 20:4)

David's 5 Stones (1 Sam 17:40)

- Goliath — David
- Ishbi-Benob — Abishai (David's life saved by the act)
- Sippai — Sibbechai
- Lahmi — Elhanan
- (Unnamed) — Jonathan, David's nephew (2 Sam 21:18-22)

Samuel refers to David's hand-to-hand fight with the giant Ishbi-Benob (2 Sam 21:15-17), in which David nearly lost his life and was then advised by Abishai not to take part in further combat.

An Enigma

What do the Golan Heights, Hebron, and the Gaza Strip have in common? They were the areas that Joshua failed to exterminate the Rephaim (Deut 20:16-18; Joshua 15:14; Judges, et al.).

