

1 Chronicles 20 Commentary

PREVIOUS

CLICK VERSE
To go directly to that verse

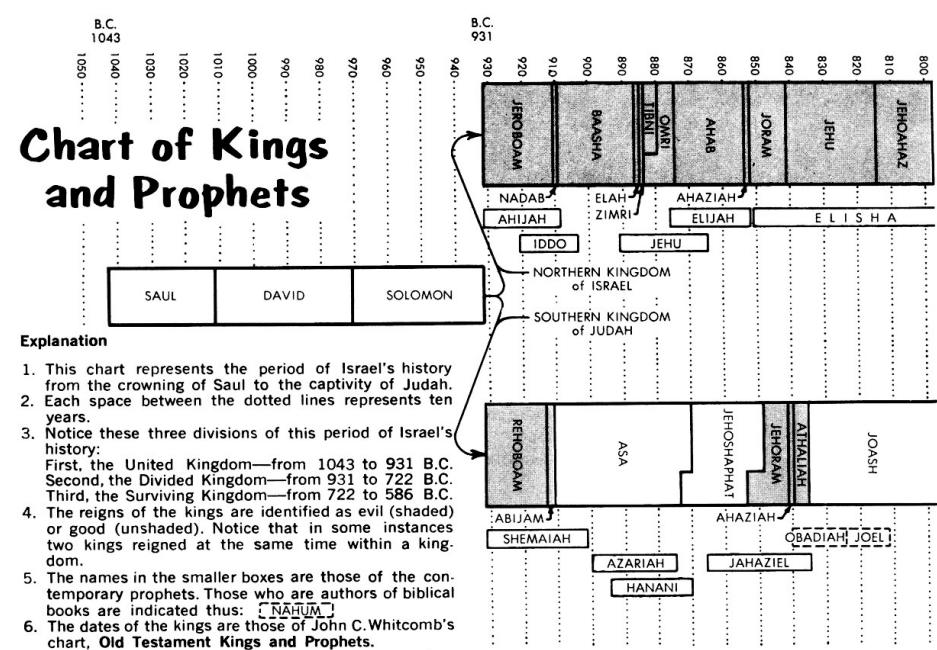
NEXT

- 1 Chronicles 20:1
- 1 Chronicles 20:2
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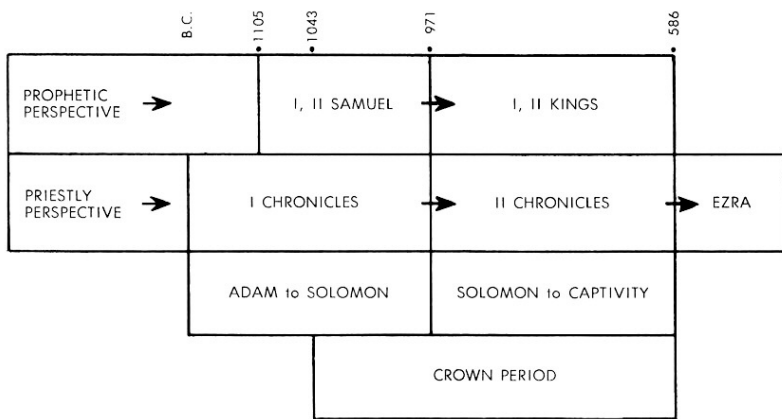
TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES								
1107	1011				971	931	853	722 586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings	
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25
1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19		1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36	

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931 BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931 BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

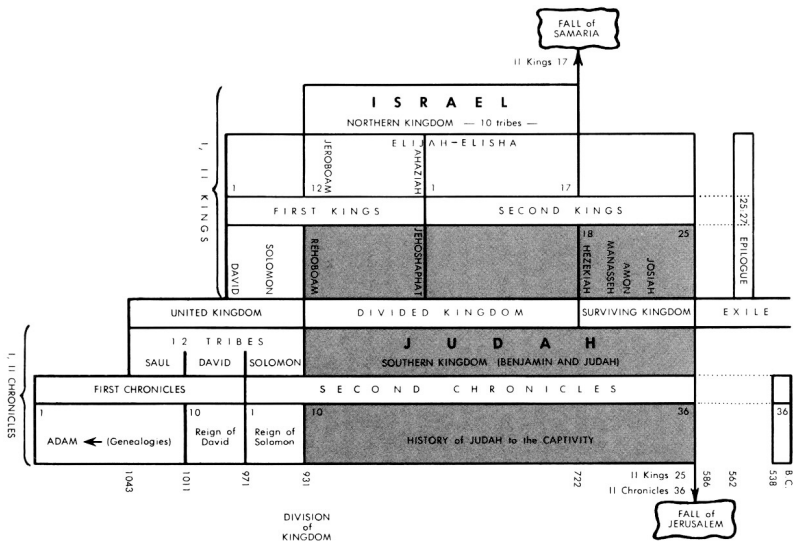
THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL



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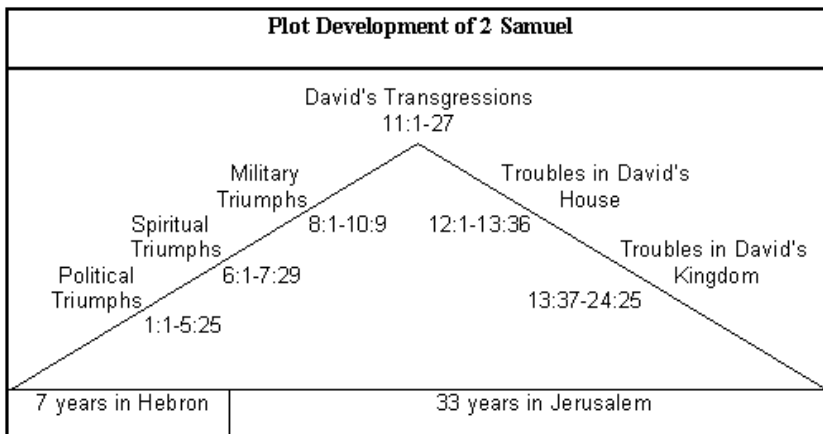
Comparison of 1 Samuel thru 2 Chronicles

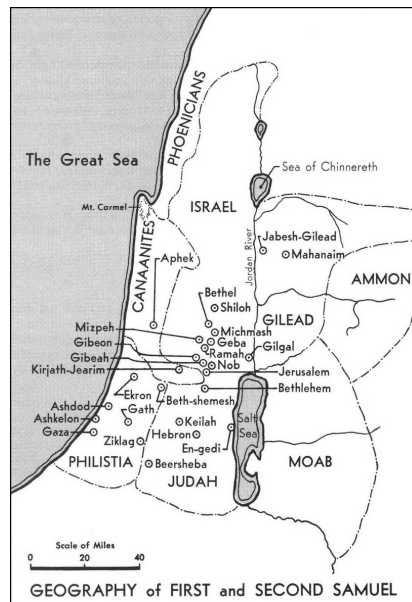


FIRST CHRONICLES SUMMARY CHART

1 Chronicles 1-9:44	1 Chronicles 10:1-39:30
Royal Line of David	Reign of David
12 Tribes of David's Reign	Highlights of David's Reign
Genealogies	History
Ancestry	Activity
1000's of Years	Circa 33 Years

Plot Development of 2 Samuel





Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel

1 Chronicles 20:1 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.

- And it came: 2Sa 11:1
- after the year was expired: Heb. at the return of the year, 1Ki 20:22,26 2Ki 13:20
- wasted: Isa 6:11 54:16
- Rabbah: De 3:11 2Sa 12:26 17:27 Jer 49:2,3 Eze 21:20 25:5 Am 1:14
- Joab smote: 2Sa 11:16-25 12:26-31

IT JUST HAPPENED TO HAPPEN

[Utley](#) writes "1 Chronicles 18-20 deals with David's military victories which were accomplished by YHWH's power (cf. 1 Chr. 17:10). These chapters seem to be out of chronological order. They follow, to some extent, the parallels in 2 Samuel 11-12. The final defeat of the Ammonites was summarized in 1 Chr. 18:11, continued in 1 Chronicles 19, and finalized in 1 Chr. 20:1-3. The account of David's sin with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah are omitted (cf. 2 Samuel 11-12). This is characteristic of the Chronicler's literary purposes of magnifying David and his dynasty. The last literary unit of this chapter documents a victory over the giants. This would demonstrate God's power and promise through David and by association, his military.

Then it happened in the spring, (cf Joseph - Ge 39:11-13 "now it happened") - Literally = "at the return of the year." or "Heb "it was at the time of the turning of the year, at the time of the going out of kings." The spring was the usual the time for military activities because the rainy season had just passed (1Ki 20:22,26; 1 Chr. 20:1). And remember since God is sovereign and in control of everything, including the events in time, nothing "just happens" by accident. This was a providential happening, one that would change the trajectory of David's life (see [diagram above](#)). Prior to this "happening" David's life and been marked primarily by TRIUMPH, but hereafter it would be marked often by TROUBLE.

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 - David's armies marched 40+ miles to the NE of Jerusalem, across the Jordan River, laid siege to [Rabbah](#) the capital city of the Ammonites. It was located at the same site as modern [Amman in Jordan](#). Recall that in 2Sa 10:14+ "When the sons of Ammon saw that the Arameans fled, they also fled before Abishai and entered the city." The Ammonites had fled to the walled city of [Rabbah](#) but Joab laid siege to the city. .

TECHNICAL NOTE on "kings" - [Utley](#) writes "the NOUN "kings" is not in the Masoretic Text but the spelling of a similar term, "messengers." king – מַלְאֲכַי messenger – מַלְאֲכִי. Although the Masoretic Text has "messengers," the Masoretic scholars suggested it be read as "kings" (*Qere*). The Septuagint has "Kings." **NET NOTE** adds "Codex Leningrad (B19A), on which BHS (Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia) is based, has here "messengers" (הַמַּלְאֲכִים, hammal'khim), probably as the result of contamination from the occurrence of that word in 2Sa 11:4. The present translation (NET Bible) follows most Hebrew Manuscripts and the

ancient versions, which read "kings" (הַמֶּלֶךְ אִים, hammela'kim)."

But ([Term of contrast](#)) **But** is a **hinge word**, a small word that can open big doors and none would be bigger than this one for King David! In fact this is undoubtedly one of the most strategic **terms of contrast** in David's life. Remember that "**but**" marks a change of direction, an "about face" if you will, and this "**but**" (as alluded to above) would mark a change of direction that would affect the remainder of David's life.

Small moments can have momentous consequences!

The hinge word BUT in this context opened the door for David to a dusty, dirty road. **Henry Ward Beecher** said "If you are idle, you are on the road to ruin, and there are few stopping-places upon it. It is rather a precipice than a road."

David stayed at Jerusalem - I like the nuance of the KJV rendering which says '**David tarried still at Jerusalem.**' To [tarry](#) means to be late or tardy in beginning or doing anything. If you review the last section of the previous chapter in which there were several military battles, note that in the last battle with the Arameans we read "Now when it was told David, **he** gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Arameans arrayed themselves **to meet David** and fought against **him**." (2Sa 10:17+) So clearly at that time David had personally led his forces, but this time it just **happened** that he stayed at Jerusalem which was very unusual, for David was expected to accompany his troops.

Idle hands are the devil's playground!

The devil finds work of idle hands!

-- [Cambridge Dictionary](#)

This led to his seeing Bathsheba, lusting for her (adultery in his mind), committing physical adultery and then killing her husband Uriah. **Hertsberg** points out, "It is significant that Chronicles, which follows the text of Samuel chapter by chapter throughout, omits this incident almost certainly because of the serious blemish which it leaves on David's reputation."

Chuck Swindoll writes that David is "like a seawall standing against a pounding sea of temptation. And the water is about to pour through his weakest points. His failure can be traced to three breaches- (1) **Polygamy and Lust** - David make have been following the cultural norm for monarchs in his day, but by accumulating wives and concubines, he was violating God's higher standard. In Dt 17:17+ God said that Israel's king should not "multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away."..**As his harem grew, so did his lust. The more a person indulges the sexual appetite, the more it increases** (ED: WOE! MEN YOU MAY WANT TO READ THAT SENTENCE AGAIN!) For David, this meant that even a houseful of women was not enough to keep his eyes from wandering. (2) **Vulnerability** - David's military prowess had expanded his scope of power from the Euphrates River to the Red Sea. No enemy could stand against his mighty hand (ED: WITH ONE EXCEPTION - THE ENEMY WITHIN! OUR FALLEN FLESH - cf 1Pe 2:11+, Ro 6:12-13+), for "the LORD helped David wherever he went." (2Sa 8:6, 14+). [Vassal](#) kings brought him tribute, with money and honor flowing in like a river of gold. Success, however, can be deceptively dangerous, particularly when we credit ourselves for it and get a swollen head. Never are we more vulnerable to the temptations of pride, self-indulgence, and unaccountability (ED: JONATHAN, HIS KINDRED SPIRIT WAS DEAD - 1Sa 18:3+) than when we have it all, and David was no exception. (3) **Indulgence** - When his troops marched off to war, David did not share the hardships of battle with them but remained at Jerusalem (2Sa 11:1)....While most kings were fighting alongside their men in battle, David cushioned himself in his palace, savoring the sweet wine of success. **Susceptibility to lust, vulnerability to pride, and idleness. A dangerous combination--one that primed David for disaster.**" (Bolding added - Borrow [David - Man of A Passion, Man of Destiny](#)).

Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.

- Isaac Watts

If you are idle, be not solitary,

if you are solitary, be not idle.

-- Samuel Johnson

Warren Wiersbe - Chronologists calculate that David **was about fifty years old at this time**. (ED: AND HAD BEEN THE KING FOR ABOUT 20 YEARS - IS THIS A "MIDDLE AGED" CRISIS?). It's true that David had been advised by his leaders not to engage actively in warfare (2 Sam. 21:15-17), but he could have been with his troops to help develop the strategy and give moral leadership. Whatever the cause, good or bad, that kept David in Jerusalem, this much is true: "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do."2 Idleness isn't just the absence of activity, for all of us need regular rest; idleness is also activity to no purpose. When David was finished with his afternoon nap, he should have immediately moved into some kingdom duty that would have occupied his mind and body, or, if he wanted to take a walk, he should have invited someone to walk with him. "If you are idle, be not solitary," wrote Samuel Johnson; "if you are solitary, be not idle." When David laid aside his armor, he took the first step toward moral defeat, and the same principle applies to believers today (Eph. 6:10-18+). Without the **helmet of salvation** (Eph 6:17+), we don't think like saved people; and without the **breastplate of righteousness** (Eph 6:14+), we have nothing to protect the

heart. Lacking the **girdle of truth** (Eph 6:14⁺), we easily believe lies ("We can get away with this!"), and without **the sword of the Word** (Eph 6:17⁺) and the **shield of faith** (Eph 6:16⁺), we are helpless before the Enemy (ED: ALL THREE ENEMIES! the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#)). Without prayer we have no power (Eph 6:18⁺). As for the shoes of peace, David walked in the midst of battles for the rest of his life. **He was safer on the battlefield than on the [battlement](#) of his house!** ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#))

Gene Getz points out, "Though David was certainly subject to the same routine mistakes all human beings make, for 20 years (AS KING OF UNITED ISRAEL) he had lived a Godly life, relatively free from serious mistakes such as he had made in the past. As king of Israel he had brought security and safety to his people. At no time in history had Israel demonstrated so well, to the outside world, their commitment to God and to each other. This dynamic, in Israel, was definitely a reflection of David's leadership. It was following this significant period of success in his brilliant career as king of Israel, demonstrating wisdom, justice, and righteousness, that David committed the most unwise, unjust and unrighteous act of his life." (Borrow [David: God's Man in Faith and Failure](#))

Walton - Military campaigns, while seldom officially declared, came predictably in the ancient Near East with the end of the winter rains. A period of several months was then available during the spring season, prior to the harvest, when every able-bodied man was needed to work in the fields. Many of the Assyrian and Babylonian royal annals include the notation that a military campaign began in either the first month (Nisannu) or the second month (Aiaru) of the year (the period from March-May). ([IVP Background Commentary](#))

Warren Wiersbe - You start on the path to sin when you neglect duty. David was in **more danger in Jerusalem** than with his army on the battlefield. He laid aside his armor (Eph. 6:10ff.⁺), allowed his eyes to wander, and lust took over (James 1:14–15⁺). (Borrow [With the Word](#))

John Davis adds, "The greatest victories are sometimes annulled by foolish mistakes. David's unparalleled success had made it possible for him to enjoy all the comforts of royal life. No longer did he need to be in the field of combat since capable leadership was provided by Joab, and there were no more immediate serious threats to the kingdom. It was in these circumstances that David's greatest failure occurred. It was tragic in this manner. However, it is well known that Satan is most effective in his approaches when the believer is comfortable and successful."

Warren Wiersbe - It is easy to see how David got into this sin: (1) he was self-confident, after enjoying victories and prosperity; (2) he was disobedient, staying home when he should have been on the battlefield; (3) he was idle, lying in bed in the evening; (4) he was self-indulgent, giving freedom to his desires when he should have been disciplining himself; and (5) he was careless, allowing his eyes to wander and yielding to the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16). The Christian soldier must never lay aside the armor (Eph. 6:10ff). (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament](#))

And Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it. Rabbah was the chief city of the Ammonites, now called Amman, the capital of Jordan. The parallel passage is different than first Chronicles because it stops in 2Sa 11:1 with this word - **and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah**. Do you see the difference in 1Ch 20:1? In 2Sa 11, the "but David..." is followed by the sordid story of sin, then confession and repentance in 2Sa 12. It is not until after David confessed and repented of his sins that we read that David "went to Rabbah, fought against it and captured it." (2Sa 12:29). Can you see the principle? When David sinned and covered up, neither he nor Israel prospered (Pr 28:13), and all general Joab could do was besiege the city of Rabbah. David's coverup was evil in the eyes of the LORD and He could not bless him, until he confessed.

THOUGHT - We all have "cities like Rabbah" (so to speak) in our life, enemies that we have fought against and "besieged," for some time, but which we have never fully conquered. Could one of the reasons we have not been able to defeat our "city of Rabbah" be that we are concealing unconfessed sins which are quenching (or grieving) the Holy Spirit and short-circuiting the flow of His supernatural power which is necessary to defeat the enemies?

F B Meyer - 1 Chronicles 20:1 The time when Kings go out to battle.... But David tarried at Jerusalem.

There are times and tides in the affairs of men. Favorable moments for doing and daring, for attempting and achieving. Hours when the ship must be launched, or it will have to wait for another spring tide (See related topic Redeem the Time). Days when the seed must be sown, or it will have to tarry till another autumn. Royal natures show their quality by taking advantage of times like these, when God and circumstances favor a great attempt.

Alas, if long-continued prosperity has robbed the kingly soul of its desire or power to use its sacred opportunity! Once missed, it may never recur; and the soul that has missed it contemns itself, and loses heart, and surrenders itself to lower and ever lower depths of temptation.

Beware of moments and hours of ease. It is in these that we most easily fall into the power of Satan. The sultriest summer days are most laden with blight. There is no such guard against temptation— next to the keeping power of Jesus, which is all-sufficient—as occupation to the full measure of time and capacity. If we cannot fill our days with our own matters, there is always plenty to be done for others. You think that no one has hired you, but it is not so; the Master has sent you into His vineyard. If you cannot do one thing, you can another. There is the ministry of intercession for those who are in the field. There is the exercise of worship, in which you take your place amongst the priests. There is the ministry of comfort to some of the sad hearts within your own circle. Redeem the time, because the days are evil. Watch and pray in days of vacation and ease, even more than at other times.

1 Chronicles 20:2 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 spoil of the city, a very great amount.

- and he brought: 1Ch 18:11 2Sa 8:11,12

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 12:27-30+ - Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against Rabbah, I have even captured the city of waters. 28"Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together and camp against the city and capture it, or I will capture the city myself and it will be named after me." 29 So David gathered all the people and went to Rabbah, fought against it and captured it. 30 Then he took the crown of their king from his head; and its weight was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the spoil of the city in great amounts.

DAVID TAKES THE CROWN CROWN OF AMMONITE KING

[Guzik](#) - 2 Samuel 12:29 tells us, David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah. This was the final phase of David's restoration. He went back to doing what he should have done all along – leading Israel out to battle, instead of remaining in Jerusalem. This means that David was in victory once again. His sin did not condemn him to a life of failure and defeat. There was chastisement for David's sin, but it did not mean that his life was ruined.

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 spoil of the city, a very great amount. Heb "and its weight [was] a talent of gold." The weight of this ornamental crown was approximately 75 lbs (34 kg). The writer of Chronicles adds that David "brought out the spoil of the city, a very great amount." This is the only record of a crown David took to himself. Utley notes that "David gave the spoils of his earlier victories to the temple treasury for the building of the future temple of YHWH, but this spoil he apparently retained for himself."

[SPECIAL TOPIC: ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN WEIGHTS AND VOLUMES](#)

Ron Daniel on **David took the crown of their king from his head** - Although David is beginning to slip as a righteous leader, Joab doesn't take the opportunity to rebel against him. He remains committed to him, even to the point of bringing David up for the final victory. We read in 2 Samuel 12 that once the city was nearly defeated, Joab was actually concerned that if he led the final capture of it, then he would be taking the glory away from David (2Sam. 12:28). So he sent for David to come and at least make a ceremonial showing that this was his victory. This level of loyalty and submission is practically unheard of today. Oh, it's not difficult to find a man who claims loyalty. But as soon as you slip up, look out, because odds are he's going to use your back as a stepladder to move himself up. As soon as he sees that he can take the city without you, he will. God describes men like this in Hosea, saying, Hos. 6:4 ...your loyalty is like a morning cloud and like the dew which goes away early.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown agrees with Daniel writing "Joab could have added points to his own honor by capturing the city, but instead, he invited David to lead the final assault in order to receive the credit. Joab may have felt that David needed a boost of morale after the affair with Bathsheba. But this we are not told."

[Guzik](#) - David's sin didn't take away his crown. Had David refused the voice of Nathan the prophet it might have. Because David responded with confession and repentance, there was still a crown for **David's head**.

Rich Cathers: Approximately 75 pounds of gold. One heavy crown!

August Konkell: The Hebrew (mlkm) should be read as the name of their god Milkem, rather than their king (cf. 1 Kings 11:5, 7, 33).

As the crown of the deity, its weight is reasonable. A talent was about the weight that a man could carry, around seventy pounds. The crown was taken from the head of the idol, but the narrator relates it as if it were from the head of the god himself. The biblical writers delight in satire on the religions of idols.

Omanson - "The weight of this crown lends support to the belief that it was not taken from the head of a human being who would have had difficulty bearing such a weight for any length of time, but removed from the head of an idol....While the Hebrew word for stone is singular, some versions take it as a collective noun, saying "precious stones" (NIV, NAB, NJPSV, SPCL, NVI) or "gems" (NLT; similarly NCV).....Scholars differ on whether the pronoun it refers to the crown or the jewel. For some versions this pronoun refers to the crown; for example, ICB renders this whole clause as "The crown was put on David's head" (similarly NIV, NLT, NJPSV, SPCL, NVI). Logically, it seems difficult to imagine David wearing a 34 kilogram or 75 pound crown on his head for any length of time. If the reference is to the jewel, then the intended meaning is probably that David later or eventually had the jewel made a part of his crown. FRCL makes this clear by rendering this clause and the previous one as "and it contained a precious stone, which was placed on the royal crown of David" (similarly GNT, BRCL, Peregrino). GNT similarly says "In it there was a jewel, which David took and put in his own crown" (similarly CEV, BRCL). NJB seems to say that David wore just the jewel: "and in it was set a precious stone which went on David's head instead" (similarly NAB, Maredsous, Osty)." ([Omanson - A Handbook on 1-2 Chronicles](#))

TSK Note - the weight: If this talent was only **seven pounds**, as Whiston says, David might have carried it on his head with little difficulty; but this weight, according to common computation, would amount to nearly 114 pounds! Some, therefore, think, that {mishkelah} should be taken for its value, not weight; which renders it perfectly plain, as the worth of the crown will be about 5,074#. 15s. 7d. sterling. **The ancients mention several such large crowns, made more for sight than use.** Atheneus describes a crown of gold that was 24 feet in circumference; and mentions others that were two, some four, and others five feet deep. Pliny takes notice of some that were no less than eight pounds weight. Besides the crown usually worn, it was customary for kings, in some nations, to have such large ones as described, either hung or supported over the throne, where they sat at their coronation or other solemn occasions.

Thompson has an interesting comment on the passage in 1 Chronicles 20:3 writing "He took the crown from their king (or their god; see NIV text note) and took a great deal of booty. The god of the Ammonites is given as Milkom ("Molech," NIV) in 1 Kgs 11:5; 2 Kgs 23:13, having the same consonants as the word malkam, here translated "their king." The term malkam at times must be translated "their king" (Ps 149:2; Jer 30:9; Hos 3:5), but in other places it appears to be an alternative designation for the Ammonite god (Jer 49:1, 3; Zeph 1:5; and probably Amos 1:15). In this verse it could be either, but the weight of the crown would suggest that it refers to the god." (New American Commentary - 1,2 Chronicles)

Selman has this note related to the **crown** mentioned here in 2 Samuel and in 1 Chronicles 20:2 - The crown (2Ch 20:2) belonged either to the Ammonite king (NIV), NRSV, RSV) or, with some of the VSS (LXX, Vulg.), to the chief Ammonite deity 'Milcom' (GNB, REB, NEB). Its chief features were (a) distinctive precious stone(s) and its weight (c. 30 kg). Hebrew syntax suggests that the crown rather than the jewel (against GNB, REB, NEB) was placed on David's head, though its heaviness must have made any act of coronation quite brief! (Borrow [1 Chronicles : an introduction and commentary](#))

NET NOTE - Part of the Greek tradition wrongly understands Hebrew מַלְכָּם (malkam, "their king") as a proper name ("Milcom"). Some English versions follow the Greek here, rendering the phrase "the crown of Milcom" (so NRSV; cf. also NAB, CEV). TEV takes this as a reference not to the Ammonite king but to "the idol of the Ammonite god Molech."

1 Chronicles 20:3 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.

BGT 1 Chronicles 20:3 καὶ τὴν λαὸν τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ ἔγαγεν καὶ διέπρισεν πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἐν σκεπῆρσι σιδηροῦ καὶ ὀτῶσι πορσεὶν Δαυὶδ τοὺς παῖδας τοῦ Ἀμμων καὶ ἐστρέψεν Δαυὶδ καὶ πᾶς λαὸς αὐτοῦ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ

LXE 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought out the people that were in it, and sawed them asunder with saws, and cut them with iron axes, and with harrows: and thus David did to all the children of Ammon. And David and all his people returned to Jerusalem.

KJV 1 Chronicles 20:3 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.

NET 1 Chronicles 20:3 He removed the city's residents and made them do hard labor with saws, iron picks, and axes. This was his policy with all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.

CSB 1 Chronicles 20:3 He brought out the people who were in it and put them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes. David did the same to all the Ammonite cities. Then he and all his troops returned to Jerusalem.

ESV 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought out the people who were in it and set them to labor with saws and iron picks and axes. And thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

NIV 1 Chronicles 20:3 and brought out the people who were there, consigning them to labor with saws and with iron picks and axes. David did this to all the Ammonite towns. Then David and his entire army returned to Jerusalem.

NLT 1 Chronicles 20:3 He also made slaves of the people of Rabbah and forced them to labor with saws, iron picks, and iron axes. That is how David dealt with the people of all the Ammonite towns. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.

NRS 1 Chronicles 20:3 He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and axes. Thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

NJB 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he expelled its inhabitants, setting them to work with saws, iron picks and axes. David treated all the Ammonite towns in the same way. David and all the people then returned to Jerusalem.

NAB 1 Chronicles 20:3 He deported the people of the city and set them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes. Thus David dealt with all the cities of the Ammonites. Then he and his whole army returned to Jerusalem.

YLT 1 Chronicles 20:3 and the people who are in it he hath brought out, and setteth to the saw, and to cutting instruments of iron, and to axes; and thus doth David to all cities of the sons of Ammon, and David turneth back, and all the people, to Jerusalem.

GWN 1 Chronicles 20:3 He brought out the troops who were there and put them to work with saws, hoes, and axes. He did the same to all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the troops returned to Jerusalem.

BBE 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he took the people out of the town and put them to work with wood-cutting instruments, and iron grain-crushers, and axes. And this he did to all the towns of the children of Ammon. Then David and all the people went back to Jerusalem.

RSV 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought forth the people who were in it, and set them to labor with saws and iron picks and axes; and thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

NKJ 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

ASV 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought forth the people that were therein, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. And thus did David unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

DBY 1 Chronicles 20:3 And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with the saw, and with harrows of iron, and with saws. And so David did to all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

- **He:** 1Ch 19:2-5 Ps 21:8,9
- **with saws:** Ex 1:14 Jos 9:23 Jdg 8:6,7,16,17 1Ki 9:21

Related Passage:

2 Samuel 12:31+ He also brought out the people who were in it, and set them under saws, sharp iron instruments, and iron axes, and made them pass through the brickkiln. And thus he did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

He brought out the people who were in it, and cut them with saws and with sharp instruments and with axes- The Septuagint says "sawed them asunder with saws, and cut them with iron axes." **NET** has "made them do hard labor with saws, iron picks, and axes." Most of the translations follow the pattern of the **NET** Bible which emphasizes that instead of killing them, he put

them to work. This verse literally says "and he sawed [them] with the saw and with the iron picks and with the saws." While some interpret this as David's killing them, most commentaries and translations interpret this as David making them his laborers. Thus the **ESV** says "he brought out the people who were in it and set them to labor with saws." See Omanson's [lengthy note below](#).

Charles Ryrie - set them under saws. Lit., put them to the saw. There are two views as to the meaning of this verse: (1) David imposed hard labor on the captives. However, this requires a change from "pass through" (KJV and NASB) to "toil at" (NIV, "work at"). (2) David had them killed in accordance with cruel Ammonite ways (cf. 1Sa 11:2; Amos 1:13). (Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#))

[Utley](#) - Ancient warfare was terrible and vindictive. Whole populations were killed in shocking ways or were taken into slavery (cf. 2 Sam. 12:31). It is possible that 2 Sam. 12:31 really refers to "putting them to work" in construction. But this is conjecture

J.A. Thompson: The citizens of Rabbah were brought out and consigned to forced labor with saws, iron picks, and axes (cf. 2 Sam 12:31). One more kingdom was thus added to David's jurisdiction, and his prestige was further enhanced.

Rich Cathers: But others (me included) tend to think it means what it says in the King James and NASB versions, that David slaughtered these prisoners. (**ED:** IF THIS IS TRUE THEN HE DID THE SAME TO ALL THE AMMONITE CITIES. THIS WAS WHAT ISRAEL WAS SUPPOSED TO DO WHEN THEY ENTERED THE PROMISED LAND, BUT THERE WERE NOT INSTRUCTED TO ANNIHILATE OTHER PEOPLES THAT THEY DEFEATED.)

MacArthur - David imposed hard labor on the Ammonites. But these verses can also be translated with the sense that the Ammonites were cut with saws, indicating that David imposed cruel death on the captives in accordance with Ammonite ways (cf. 1Sa 11:2; Am 1:13). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

[Wycliffe Bible Commentary \(borrow\)](#) - Hebrew, way-yā'sar. This word should be corrected to a form very similar to it in the original, way-yā'sem. Read, "And he put (them to work) with saws," etc. David could be ruthless (cf. 2 Sam 8:2), but he was not cruel.

Some like **Rod Mattoon** favor that David in fact did afflict the Ammonites with cruel deaths - The Ammonites were brutal. Now they reap the consequences of their sin. The word "cut" means "to reduce to pieces." In the worship of Molech, a brazen idol was heated. The belly was stocked with a fire and the extended arms of the idol were heated till they were red hot. Children were then laid on top of the glowing arms. Cymbals and drums would drown out the screams of the children as they died. David made the Ammonites pass through the furnaces of the brick kilns. The Ammonites confronted the coffin without God. Will you?

And thus David did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon - Either he put them all to work or he killed them (see above). I favor the former interpretation.

Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem - The enemy was defeated so David returns to his throne.

Iain Duguid makes a good point - The example of God's grace, continuing to give victory with much spoil to David after his horrific sins, would have spoken powerfully to post-exilic hearers who were only too conscious of the nation's sin that had led to the destruction of Jerusalem and to exile.

Omanson on meaning of **cut them with saws** as stated in the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 20:3 - The main difficulty in translating this verse lies in deciding what David did to the people of the city of Rabbah. Did he torture them, or did he force them to do hard labor with tools? This verse as it stands in the MT most likely should be understood as meaning that David tortured the Ammonites with the tools mentioned here. KJV, for example, says that David "cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes" (similarly NASB, NJPSV). ITCL also follows the MT, saying "and tortured them with saws, iron picks and axes."

Since the MT does not have an object after the verb "sawed," it is also possible to understand the object to be the fortified places in the conquered city. A translation reflecting this interpretation reads "and he ripped the city apart with saws, and iron cutting tools, and axes" (Klein).

However, most interpreters correct the MT to agree with the parallel text of 2 Sam 12:31 and understand this clause to mean that David forced the people to do different kinds of work, using these tools for that work (so RSV, GNT, and nearly all modern versions, including even NKJV). They change the Hebrew verb wayyasar ("and he sawed") to read wayyasem ("and he put [to work]"). Despite this decision of most modern versions, CTAT gives an {A} rating to the MT and recommends that translators not change the text to agree with the parallel in 2 Sam 12:31.

If the reading of most versions is followed, it is not clear whether the conquered people were forced to further destroy their own city, whether they were forced to rebuild it, or whether they were forced to do work for King David's city. Forced labor of a defeated army was not unusual in Old Testament times (see Deut 20:11; Josh 16:10; Jdg 1:28–35).

The Hebrew word for saws is megerah. It now seems probable that translations have been inaccurate in rendering this word as “saw[s].” Archaeology knows of no use of saws either to quarry or to shape stones in the time period described. Many building stones have been found which were finely smoothed, but these stones show none of the marks that would have been left by a saw. It has been proposed that the megerah was a heavy metal instrument with a wide rough surface, like that of a file. This instrument was pushed and pulled across the surface of the stone until it was quite smooth. For a good description of the megerah, see WTH, pages 68–69.

The Hebrew word for picks (charits) occurs also in the parallel text of 2 Sam 12:31. It comes from a verb meaning “to cut” and refers to a “cutting thing” or “sharp instrument.” The same word is used for “cuts of milk” or “cheeses” in 1 Sam 17:18, but this should not affect the translation here. Peregrino says “chisels,” and SEM reads “harrows.” NJPSV and SPCL translate “threshing boards,” apparently reading the Hebrew word charuts.

Instead of axes, the MT has “saws” (megeroth, which is the plural of megerah in Hebrew). CTAT gives a {C} rating to the MT here. However, RSV follows the parallel text in 2 Sam 12:31, which has the Hebrew word magzeroth. The word magzeroth is found only there in all the Old Testament, but most scholars are agreed that it refers to a blade or cutting instrument. If translators follow the parallel in 2 Samuel as RSV has done, in some languages the picks and axes may have to be translated by a single term since there may not be equivalents to distinguish the two terms. However, many languages do have different words for “hoes” and “axes” and these may be used here. For the three tools REB has “saws and other iron tools, sharp and toothed.” ([Omanson - A Handbook on 1-2 Chronicles](#))

Norman Geisler - 2 SAMUEL 12:31—How can we justify David’s cruelty to his enemies? ([When Critics Ask](#))

PROBLEM: This passage implies that David tortured his enemies, since he “put them under saws, and under axes or iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln” (KJV). But torture is wrong, and Jesus said “love your enemies” (Luke 6:35).

SOLUTION: Several things should be observed in response to this criticism. First, the KJV translation is open to this misinterpretation here. More recent translations clear up the difficulty. The NKJV correctly renders it, David “put them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, and made them cross over to the brick works.” Likewise, the NIV says, David “brought out the people who were there, consigning them to labor with saws and with iron picks and axes, and he made them work at brick-making.”

Second, the writer is merely relating these events here—he is not necessarily placing his stamp of approval on them. As noted earlier (see Introduction), not everything recorded in the Bible is condoned by the Bible.

Third, the punishment of forced labor given to these vicious enemies of God’s people is not extreme. Considering the cruelties they unleashed on the children of Israel (cf. 1 Sam. 11:2; Amos 1:13), by comparison, their treatment was humane (Borrow [When critics ask : a popular handbook on Bible difficulties](#))

1 Chronicles 20:4 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.

- **Now it came about after this.** 2Sa 21:15
- **Gezer:** or, Gob, Jos 12:12 16:3 2Sa 21:18-22
- **Sibbechai:** 1Ch 11:29
- **Sippai:** 2Sa 21:18, Saph

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 21:18-22 (**PARALLELS 1 CHRONICLES 20:4-8**) Now it came about after this that there was war again with the Philistines at Gob; then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph (AKA **Sippai**), who was among the descendants of the giant. 19 There was war with the Philistines again at Gob, and Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam. 20 There was war at Gath again, where there was a man of great stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also had been born to the giant. 21 When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David’s brother, struck him down. 22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.



PHILISTINE WARS

J A Thompson - To conclude his survey of David's wars, the Chronicler returns to further victories over the Philistines. His material is based on 2 Sam 21:18–22. Three episodes are mentioned in these verses, but there doubtless were many skirmishes during the early part of David's reign. One by one David subdued centers of trouble. Each of the three incidents mentioned in these verses features the "giants" of the area. (1,2 Chronicles - New American Commentary)

Martin Selman - The account of David's wars is completed by three cameos taken from the Philistine wars. All three incidents are probably associated with David's assault on Gath (1Ch 18:1), since two of his three opponents came from that city (vv. 5, 6, 8). The Philistine warriors are also all called 'Rephaite' (RSV) or descendants of Rapha ('giants', NRSV), who were one of the pre-Israelite groups in Canaan (e.g. Gen. 15:20) and famous for their size (cf. 1Ch 20:6). These people were known elsewhere as the '[Avvites](#)' (or Avvim), whom the first Philistines had driven out (Deut. 2:23, where Caphtorites, i.e. Cretans, certainly = Philistines), and as the 'Anakites' (or Anakim), who had also presumably been overrun by the Philistines since Joshua removed them from all but three Philistine towns, including Gath (Josh. 11:22). (Borrow [TOTC 1,2 Chronicles - page 198](#))

Frederick Mabie: These brief summaries of battles with the Philistines underscore David's continued dominance over even the formidable champions of the Philistine city-states. Each of these champions is directly or indirectly associated with the Rephaites (descendants of Rapha), an ethnic group noted for their massive physical size. Recall that Goliath was over nine feet tall, while the bed of King Og (who was "left of the remnant of the Rephaites" [Dt 3:11]) was thirteen feet long and six feet wide. While God is not specifically mentioned in these short vignettes, nor is David the one defeating these champions, the victory of David's men nonetheless reflects the Chronicler's earlier note that "the LORD gave David victory everywhere he went" (1Ch 18:6). Thus to oppose David or Israel was to oppose God (cf. Dt 20:4)

Now it came about after this, that war broke out at Gezer (called [Gob](#) in 2Sa 21:8) **with the Philistines** - In 2Sa 5:25+ David had struck down the Philistines from [Geba](#) (Gibeon in the map above) to **Gezer**.

Then Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the giants, and they were subdued. - **Sibbekai** (2Sa 21:18; 1Ch 11:29, 20:4, 27:11) was one of David's heroes (1Ch 11:29), general of the eighth division of the army (1Ch 27:11). He slew the giant Saph in the battle of Gob (2Sa. 21:18).

August Konkell: The first battle was at Gezer, located at the entrance to the Aijalon Valley in the Shephelah, to the west of Gibeon [Shephelah, p. 467]. This may have served as the Philistine boundary. Sibbekai the Hushathite was one of the valiant warriors who came to be in charge of one of the military divisions (1Ch 11:29; 27:11). Elhanan is also one of David's valiant warriors (1Ch 11:26), who killed the brother of Goliath (1Ch 20:5).

Utley on giants - There are several references to the "giants." "giants," 1Ch 20:4, Rephaim; "brother of Goliath," 1 Chr. 20:5 (cf. 1Sa 17:4-7; 2Sa 21:16,19), "giants," 1Ch 20:6 – a different descendant of Raphah, "giant," 1Ch 20:8 – a race of tall, powerful men from Gath. This is the type of people that the ten spies, sent by Moses, feared in Num. 13:28 (i.e., sons of Anak; also note Deut. 1:26-28; 2:10-11,20).

1 Chronicles 20:5 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.

- **Jair**: 2Sa 21:19, Jaare-oregim
- **Goliath**: 1Sa 17:4 21:9 22:10 2Sa 21:19

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 21:19 (**PARALLELS 1 CHRONICLES 20**) There was war with the Philistines again at Gob, and

Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

And there was war with the Philistines again - This is an additional war distinct from 1Chr 20:4.

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

Thompson - This verse presents some textual problems. According to 2 Sam 21:19, Elhanan slew Goliath. The text of 2 Sam 21:19 names the father of Elhanan as Jaareoregim. The word oregim is identical in the Hebrew text to the last word of the verse, "weavers," in the phrase "like a rod of weavers."⁴⁹ Furthermore, in 2 Sam 21:19 Elhanan's father is called a Bethlehemite, written bêt hallahmî, which easily could be confused with the name lahmî ("Lahmi"). All this suggests the verse has suffered transcriptional difficulties. We do not know the exact reading of the original, but it likely is to have been closer to this text in Chronicles (note the NIV translation of 2 Sam 21:19).

NET Note - The Hebrew text reads, "Elchanan son of Jair killed Lachmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite." But it is likely that the accusative marker in front of לַחְמִי (lakhmi, "Lachmi") was originally בֵּית (bet), and that אֶת־לַחְמִי ('et lakhmi) should be emended to בֵּית הַלַּחְמִי (bet hallakhmi, "the Bethlehemite"). See [long note](#) on 2 Sam 21:19 = The Hebrew text as it stands reads, "Elhanan son of Jaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite." Who killed Goliath the Gittite? According to 1 Sam 17:4-58 it was David who killed Goliath, but according to the MT of 2 Sam 21:19 it was Elhanan who killed him. Many scholars believe that the two passages are hopelessly at variance with one another. Others have proposed various solutions to the difficulty, such as identifying David with Elhanan or positing the existence of two Goliaths. But in all likelihood the problem is the result of difficulties in the textual transmission of the Samuel passage. The parallel passage in 1 Chr 20:5 reads, "Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath." Both versions are textually suspect. The Chronicles text appears to have misread "Bethlehemite" (בֵּית הַלַּחְמִי, bet hallakhmi) as the accusative sign followed by a proper name אֶת לַחְמִי ('et lakhmi). (See the note at 1 Chr 20:5.) The Samuel text appears to have misread the word for "brother" (אֶחָא, 'akh) as the accusative sign (אֶת, 'et), thereby giving the impression that Elhanan, not David, killed Goliath. Thus in all probability the original text read, "Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath."

1 Chronicles 20:6 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.

- **of great stature:** Heb. of measure, 2Sa 21:20

Related Passage:

2 Samuel 21:20 (**PARALLELS 1 CHRONICLES 20**) There was war at Gath again, where there was a man of great stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also had been born to the giant. 21 When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. 22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

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 (rapha)

Giants ([07498](#)) (see more detailed discussion of rapha) refers to a Philistine whose descendants warred with the Israelites in the time of David (1 Chr. 20:6, 8). Rapha is usually translated as "the giant," but "Rapha" is may be the family name. Rapha was a descendant of Benjamin (1 Chr. 8:2) ISBE says "(1) In the Revised Version margin these names are substituted for "the giant" in 1 Ch 20:4,6,8 and in 2 Sam 21:16,18,20,22. The latter passage states that certain champions of the Philistines who were slain by David's warriors had been born to the raphah in Gath. The text is corrupt; Raphah is probably an eponym. Originally the name of one of the Philistines who was of the body "Rephaite" stood in the text. The plural of this word, or at least a plural of this stem, is [REPHAIM](#). (2) Raphah (the King James Version "Rapha"), a descendant of Saul (1 Ch 8:37) (See also [Rephaite in Wikipedia](#))

Rapha - 7v - giant(4), giants(3). 2 Sam. 21:16; 2 Sam. 21:18; 2 Sam. 21:20; 2 Sam. 21:22; 1 Chr. 20:4; 1 Chr. 20:6; 1 Chr. 20:8

Giants ([07498](#))(**rapha** from **raphah** = sink, relax) is a proper noun designating Rapha. The father of several giants among David's enemies (2Sa 21:16, 18, 20, 22; 1 Chr. 20:6, 8). giant(4), giants(3).

RAPHA, RAPHAH - ra'-fa (rapha'): (1) In the Revised Version margin these names are substituted for "the giant" in 1 Ch 20:4,6,8 and in 2 Sam 21:16,18,20,22. The latter passage states that certain champions of the Philistines who were slain by David's warriors had been born to the raphah in Gath. The text is corrupt; Raphah is probably an eponym. Originally the name of one of the Philistines who was of the body "Rephaites" stood in the text. The plural of this word, or at least a plural of this stem, is REPHAIM (which see).

Bob Utley - SPECIAL TOPIC: TERMS USED FOR TALL/POWERFUL WARRIORS OR PEOPLE GROUPS (GIANTS)

These large/tall/powerful people are called by several names.

1. *Nephilim* (giants, BDB 658, KB 709) – Gen. 6:4 (see [SPECIAL TOPIC: Sons of God in Genesis 6](#)); Num. 13:33. LXX translates it as "giants" (cf. 1 Enoch 6-19) See also [SPECIAL TOPIC: NEPHILIM](#)
2. *Rephaim* (giants, BDB 952 II, KB 1274) – Gen. 14:5; 15:20; Deut. 2:11,20; 3:11,13; Josh. 12:4; 13:12; 2 Sam. 21:16,18,20,22; 1 Chr. 20:4,6,8 See also [SPECIAL TOPIC: REPHAIM](#)
3. *Zamzummin* (BDB 273, KB 266), – Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:20 [Who were the Zamzummin? | GotQuestions.org](#)
4. *Emim* (BDB 34), ancient inhabitants of Moab. The name may be related to the Hebrew root (BDB 33), "terror" – Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:10-11
5. *Anakim* (sons of Anak, the long-necked ones, BDB 778 I, KB 859 II) – Num. 13:33; Deut. 1:28; 2:10-11,21; 9:2; Jos. 11:21-22; 14:12,15; 15:14; Jdgs. 1:20 See also [SPECIAL TOPIC: ANAKIM](#)

Notice how Gen. 14:5 mentions three of these groups of large men (cf. LXX, Vulgate). The term *Rephaim* is also used of those living in *Sheol* (cf. Job 26:5; Ps. 88:10-11; Isa. 26:14,19).

Related Resources:

- [Was Goliath one of the Nephilim? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who / what were the Nephilim? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Are there descendants of the Nephilim in the world today? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Are the demons the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Rephaim? | GotQuestions.org](#)

1 Chronicles 20:7 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

- **he taunted**, 1Sa 17:10,26,36 Isa 37:23
- **Shimea**: 1Ch 2:13, Shimma, 1Sa 16:9, Shammah

Related Passage:

1 Samuel 17:10; 26; 36 Again the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together."....26 Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?"....36 "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

2 Samuel 21:21 (**PARALLELS 1 CHRONICLES 20**) When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. 22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

When he taunted ([charaph](#); Lxx - [oneidizo](#)) **Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him - Shimea** was the third son of Jesse, indicating that at least some of his brothers fought with him.

Taunted (reproached, reviled, scorned) ([02778](#)) [charaph](#) means to reproach or to agitate someone about something, especially to cast blame or scorn on them. It refers to sarcastic challenge in a mocking or insulting manner. It suggests a jeeringly provoking insult or challenge. As explained below this word actually has 3 senses. Vine says the idea "to say sharp things, reproach." The root with the meaning "to be sharp" is found in Northwest and South Semitic languages. In Hebrew the verb refers to a manner of speech, i.e., to reproach someone. The word appears about 50 times in the Old Testament, once in Psa. 42:10: "As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" Charaph is more than mere rude talk, this

strong verb denotes demeaning something or someone by complete devaluation, defiance, or despising. Baker explains that charaph has 3 different meanings - (1). (ED: BY FAR THE MOST COMMON MEANING) A verb meaning to reproach. It means to taunt or agitate someone about something (Ps. 119:42), e.g., the psalmist was the object of taunting from his enemies. Nehemiah is the object of reproaches from his enemies (Neh. 6:13). Israel as a whole was taunted and reproached by the Philistine, Goliath. God is the object of His enemies' reproaches or revilings (2 Ki 19:4, 16, 22, 23; Ps. 79:12) and by the enemies of His people. To reproach one's own life (soul) is to stake one's faith or trust in something and support it (Jdg. 5:18; 1Sa 17:10, 25, 26; Ps. 89:51).

1 Chronicles 20:8 These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

- **they fell:** Jos 14:12 Ec 9:11 Jer 9:23 Ro 8:31

GIANTS WERE NOT TOO BIG FOR DAVID AND HIS MEN

These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants(soldiers)
- One point would seem to be that big men are no match for men with a big God!

David Guzik: This description of victory over Philistine giants shows that Israel could slay giants without David. Sibbechai.... Elhanan.... Jonathan: These men accomplished heroic deeds when David was finished fighting giants. God will continue to raise up leaders when the leaders of the previous generation pass from the scene. David's legacy lay not only in what he accomplished but in what he left behind – a people prepared for victory. David's triumphs were meaningful not only for himself but for others who learned victory through his teaching and example. . . The defeat of these four giants is rightly credited to the hand of David and the hand of his servants. David had a role in this through his example, guidance, and influence.

Iain Duguid agrees with Guzik - The concluding "They fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants" serves well as a summary not only of 1Ch 20:4–8 but of the overview of victories in 1Ch 18:1–20:3. It is a reminder of the interplay between leaders and people. David has not been named in 1Ch 20:4–7, but the three heroes were "servants," acting as representatives on behalf of their king and his army for the good of the whole; previously Joab led when David was absent (1Ch 20:1). David as king may provide strategic leadership, but he is powerless without his men, and as king his rule is for the sake of "all his people" (1Ch 18:14). Each of the battles recounted in 1Ch 18–20 illustrates in varying ways the dynamic relationship between king, key individuals, and the people as a whole—there is mutual dependency. Further, the victories result from God's keeping his word that "I will subdue all your enemies" (1Ch 17:10; cf. 1Ch 18:1; 20:4). David's willing submission as the Lord's "servant" (1Ch 17:17–27 [10x]) has resulted not only in individual Israelites as "his servants" (19:2; 20:8) but also in other peoples' changing from threatening enemies to his "servants" (1Ch 18:2, 6, 13; 19:19). . .