

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

After the events of chapter 7, we are told that David fought against and subdued the Philistines, specifically taking control of Methegammah. Easton's Dictionary describes this name as a "figurative name for a chief city." Some commentators connect this name to Gath.

2Samuel 8:2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

David also fought to victory with Moab. It seems that he had the people lie on the ground to determine who would die and who would live. The CJB explains it as follows: "...he measured them with a length of cord; for every two lengths to be put to death he designated one length to be kept alive." Those who were allowed to live became his subjects and paid him tribute.

JFB offered possible insight on this verse: "This war usage was not, perhaps, usually practised by the people of God; but Jewish writers assert that the cause of this particular severity against this people was their having massacred David's parents and family, whom he had, during his exile, committed to the king of Moab."

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

2Samuel 8:4 And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots.

Desiring to extend his border to the Euphrates as had been promised to Israel by the LORD...

Genesis 15:18 "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:"

...David fought with Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, the king of Zobah.

Easton's Dictionary defines Zobah as "a Syrian province or kingdom... extending from the eastern slopes of Lebanon north and east toward the Euphrates."

David took a lot of loot from this battle, including 1000 chariots, 700 horsemen and 20,000 footmen. He kept enough horses for 100 chariots and hamstringed the rest (cutting a tendon that made them unable to walk). The fact that he kept any seems to fall into the area of compromise and disobedience by letting human

reasoning override God's specific instructions to Moses regarding Israel's future king.

Deuteronomy 17:16 "But he shall not multiply horses to himself...."

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

2Samuel 8:6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

Hadadezer had some faithful allies who tried to come to his rescue, the Syrians of Damascus. David killed 22,000 of those troops and put garrisons in that kingdom. They also became subject to David and paid him tribute.

THE reason for David's great success—"The LORD preserved David wherever he went."

2Samuel 8:7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

2Samuel 8:8 And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.

David also took great loot from these battles, including the shields of gold carried by the servants of Hadadezer and a great quantity of brass from the cities of Betah and Berothai.

2Samuel 8:9 ¶ When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

2Samuel 8:10 Then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And *Joram* brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass:

2Samuel 8:11 Which also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

2Samuel 8:12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

News of David's victories began to spread and reached the ears of Toi, the king of Hamath. He sent his son Joram with good wishes and congratulations for his success. He was happy to see Hadadezer defeated so soundly because he had been at war Hadadezer. Joram also brought gifts to David of silver, gold and brass. David dedicated these gifts to the LORD along with the silver and gold that he had gotten from the other nations he had subdued. Those nations included Syria, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Amalek and the spoil from his defeat of Hadadezer.

By dedicating this treasure to the LORD, I believe that David wanted to make

provision for the temple that Solomon would build.

2Samuel 8:13 And David gat *him* a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, *being eighteen thousand men.*

2Samuel 8:14 And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

David's name as a powerful king in the region was assured after he returned from defeating the Syrians, an army 18,000 strong, in the valley of salt. He established military outposts throughout Edom, and the people of those lands became his subjects.

Again we are told that it was the LORD that preserved David wherever he went.

2Samuel 8:15 ¶ And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

2Samuel 8:16 And Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* recorder;

2Samuel 8:17 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and Seraiah *was* the scribe;

2Samuel 8:18 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.

David's rule extended over the whole of Israel, and he ruled using judgment and justice (implied, according to God's laws). Leaders serving under him included:

- Joab, his nephew - military commander
- Jehoshaphat, son of Ahilud - recorder or historian and record keeper
- Zadok, son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech, son of Abiathar – priests
We are told in Chronicles that Zadok was appointed to serve at the tabernacle in Gibeon; so I assume that Ahimelech served at the tabernacle of David in Jerusalem.
1 Chronicles 16:39 "And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that was at Gibeon...."
- Seraiah – scribe or secretary
- Benaiah, son of Jehoiada - overseer of the Cherethites and Pelethites
Some commentators identify these groups as David's bodyguards. David Guzik offers this in a quote from Baldwin in support of this thought: "These were hired soldiers from Crete. By employing foreign guards to ensure the safety of the king, David would minimize the possibility of becoming the victim of inter-tribal rivalries; these men from Crete could give whole-hearted allegiance to him." Adam Clarke, however, offers the following: "But the Targum translates these two names thus, the archers and the slingers; and this is by far the most likely. It is not at all probable that David was without a company both of archers and slingers."
- David's sons – chief rulers