

2 Samuel 5:17-25 **(Also Psalm 84:5-7, Isaiah 28)**

David Defeats the Philistines at Baalperazim and at the Valley of Rephaim

Once the Jebusites were dislodged from their citadel on Mount Zion, the Promised Land was now wholly possessed by Israel, a process that had begun with Joshua. The "place that the Lord shall choose" was secured to eventually become the settled dwelling place of God in the future Temple.

Two types of Christ are involved in the conquest of the Promised Land - Joshua, whose name "savior, deliverer" was given to Jesus, began the process. David, who was the type of Messiah, the "Son of David" (**Matthew 15:22, Matthew 20:30, Matthew 21:15, Mark 12:35-3, Psalm 110:1**) completed it.

Jesus says in **Revelation 22:16**, "I am the Root and the Offspring of David." That is, He is both the Creator of David and the Descendant of David.

Philistines Invade

2 Samuel 5:17-18 - "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. The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim."

The Philistines were hoping the civil war between David and Ishbosheth would continue and further weaken the people. Now they wanted to strike before David could consolidate his control and strengthen his defenses. David was still their public enemy No. 1 because of his past victories over them. With the Philistine army gathered just over the next ridge, David retreated down to the hold - possibly back to the cave at Adullam.

[This also could be told out of the chronological timeline, after David's anointing but before his taking of Jerusalem]

The Rephaim

Israel fights the Philistines in a valley named for an even older foe.

The valley where the Philistines gathered was named Rephaim, after the *Rephaim* ("giants") - the giants or the Anakim or Zamzummim who were descendants of the Fallen Angels who mated with human women in **Genesis 9** producing the Nephalim. The term Rephaim includes the quality of being dead, extinct or powerless.

- **Numbers 13:33** - "And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Og the king of Bashan was said to be the last of them (**Deuteronomy 3:11**).

It's interesting that the valley of the Rephaim was very close to Jerusalem, connecting to the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) that ran along one side of Mount Moriah and Mount Zion.

It's described by Joshua:

- **Joshua 15:8** - "Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of the giants ("Rephaim") northward."

Isaiah contrasts the dominion of the dead and departed Rephaim as previous rulers over the Promised Land with the dead idols that had dominion over us before we surrendered to Jesus and His kingdom.

- **Isaiah 26:13** - "O LORD our God, other lords besides You have had dominion, but Your name alone do we confess. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased ("Rephaim"), they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish."

The terror of seeing the giants was what caused the spies to give an evil report about the land. These giants had reappeared in the form of Goliath in the service of the Philistines, whom David had killed. Now they were symbolically connected to this current invasion by the Philistines by the name of the place they chose to gather.

Some of the rabbis maintain that when the Philistines came near to Jerusalem, David wrote **Psalms 2**:

- **Psalms 2:1-3** - ""Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

- **Psalms 2:6-8** - "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

2 Samuel 5:19 - "And David enquired 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.'"

From a natural point of view, there wasn't anything to inquire about. They obviously had to fight the Philistines. But David was careful not to take any action without inquiring of

the Lord first. Even in the urgency of a clear and present danger, he was committed to dependance on the direction of God - "Not my will, but Thine be done."

2 Samuel 5:20 - "And David came to Baalperazim, 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 Baalperazim."

(There was a Mount Perazim beside the valley of Rephaim).

Baalperazim means "possessor or Lord of breaches." God had broken through upon the enemy like a breach in a dam, resulting in a flooding or drowning of the enemy, sweeping them away as David's warriors advanced toward them.

Targum - "as one breaks an earthen vessel full of water"

(The Egyptian army was also defeated in a similar way - the Red Sea broke over them, leaving them drowned and washed up on the shore).

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

The Philistines had brought the images of their gods with them, leading them into battle. The images were captured by Israel, and destroyed.

- **Deuteronomy 7:5** - "...tear down their altars, smash their sacred pillars, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn their idols in the fire."

- **Deuteronomy 7:25** - "The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God."

This illustrates the final destiny of all idolatry and enemies of God:

- **Revelation 20:10** - "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

When the Ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, it consumed them (**1 Samuel 4:4-5**). Here the Philistine idols are consumed by fire.

A Second Attack

2 Samuel 5:22-23 - "And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And when David enquired 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."

Josephus (Antiqu. I. 7. c. 4. sect. 1.) says they returned with "an army three times larger than the former"

This time God instructs David to circle around and attack from the rear.

2 Samuel 5:24-25 - "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. And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer."

What were the mulberry trees? They were "*bâcâ*" trees. "*bâcâ*" means weeping, so possibly a balsam tree, which like a weeping willow drops its sap like tears.

- **Psalm 84:5-7** - "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."

The sound of "going" means "marching." The rustling of the wind through the leaves would cover the approach of David's men.

The rabbis go further and attribute the rustling not just to the wind but to the wings of angels sent to attack the Philistines.

Targum: "for then shall go forth the angel of the Lord, to make thee prosperous to slay in the camp of the Philistines"

Rashi - "the sounds of angels treading in the treetops whom I have lent to your aid."

The important point here is that God's blessings come mixed with sorrow and weeping, but that His victory transforms the weeping into a well of life-giving water and refreshment.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit and Isaiah 28

The destruction and blessing connection is clear in Isaiah 28, which directly references our passage:

- **Isaiah 28:21** - "For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act."

- **Isaiah 28:5** - "In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate."

- a reference to the tongues like flames of fire above the heads of the disciples, like crowns.

In contrast to the "the drunkards of Ephraim" (**Isaiah 28:1-2**), the disciples were "not drunken as ye suppose..." (**Acts 2:15**)

Peter speaks of David, who said "of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne," and quotes the psalm "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool." (**Psalms 110:1**)

The two battles gives references to "a marching wind" that seems much like the sound of a mighty rushing wind at Pentecost.

- **Isaiah 28:11** - "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people."

- a reference to speaking in tongues at Pentecost.

Isaiah 28:27 mentions threshing - "For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen."

- Threshing is both a creative and destructive process to separate and release the seed from the chaff. The chaff is burned up in the end, the seed is planted or made into bread.

Pentecost took place in the Temple which was built on a threshing floor purchased by David from Arnon the Jebusite.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost was both the death of the disciples and giving them life. **Isaiah 28:2** - "a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing." Baptism is burial, meaning our death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit washed over them, it broke through the breaches to destroy the enemy - the flesh and the old man Adam - while giving life to Christ in us, our new identity.

Finally, the contrast is also about entering the rest.

- **Isaiah 28:12** - "To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear."

Instead, we prefer our own imagined resting places. But these false resting places will be shown to inadequate:

- **Isaiah 28:20** - "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

David was told to wait until he heard the sound of "marching" in the *baca* trees. Similarly, the disciples were to tarry in Jerusalem "until ye be endued with power from on high." (**Luke 24:49**) which occurred with the sound of a mighty rushing wind.

The story of these battles is told in **1 Chronicles 14**, with the addition of this verse:

- **1 Chronicles 14:17** - "And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations."

God had promised Israel that the nations would fear them:

- **Deuteronomy 2:25** - "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee."

Rahab repeated this to Joshua's spies in Jericho:

- **Joshua 2:8-9** - "Before the spies lay down for the night, Rahab went up on the roof and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given you this land and that the fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who dwell in the land are melting in fear of you."

But now it is said specifically to David, the type of Messiah, concerning all "the nations that are under the whole heaven."

This also resonates with the mention at Pentecost:

- **Acts 2:9-11** - "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

In this way "the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations."

Bottom Line: The *bâcâ* trees and their tears represent the path of victory for us. We first must come to grips with the sorrow of our death with Christ on the cross and the tribulation that accompanies that. Then the tears are turned into well of life-giving water. This is how we circle and go round about the enemy. Instead of confronting the problem head on as our reason would direct us, we go God's way. Then out of that pathway and by our waiting on Him, we hear the sound of marching - which is actually the host of God gathering to give us victory. It is a "mighty rushing wind" caused by the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon us, at once threshing away the chaff of the old man and enlivening the Seed of Christ that is released.

In this way the Valley of the Rephaim, which holds so many of our old fears, becomes the valley of *bâcâ* (Psalm 84) leading to victory.