

2 Samuel 8:1-18, and Psalm 60

David's Victories

As we said in the previous chapter, the Temple represented the peace and security and tranquility of God's kingdom under His complete control. If it was to be truly a picture of God's sovereignty and a resting place for the Lord, then it would be built only when God had fulfilled His promise of planting Israel safely in the Promised Land, all enemies subdued and a secession of bloodshed.

David, a warrior and a man who was famous for shedding the blood of Israel's enemies - beginning with Goliath - would not be the one to build the Temple (**1 Chronicles 20:8; 28:3**). That would be done by his son Solomon, at a time when there would be complete peace, as part of a promised everlasting dynasty and house.

This promise included Solomon, but ultimately was fulfilled in Christ.

(Interestingly, the rejection of David is similar to Moses being denied entry into the Promised Land, though he viewed it from Mt. Pisgah. Joshua was chosen to lead Israel there instead).

For Israel to be fully settled in the Promised Land, they would have to occupy the coast.

The Boundaries of the Promised Land

- **Genesis 15:18-21** - "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates — the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.'"

The "river of Egypt" could mean the Nile, but more probably was the "Wadi El-Arish" (brook of Egypt), which is a familiar landmark for Canaan's southwestern border near the Sinai desert (mentioned in **Joshua 15:4; Ezekiel 48:28; Numbers 34:5**)
One of the battles described in this chapter extended David's kingdom to the River Euphrates (see **verse 3**).

- **Genesis 17:8** - "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

- **Numbers 34:6** - "And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border."

The Philistines Subdued

2 Samuel 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."

Methegammah means "taking the command or supremacy" (comp. **Job 30:11**) "the bridles of the mother" refers to Gath the principle city, of which the other four cities were "daughters."

In **2 Samuel 8**, David first subdues the Philistines. They had harassed Israel continually. Now David - who had once defeated Goliath and defeated them in numerous battles previously - is said to have "subdued" them.

'Subduing' the Flesh

The Philistines were positioned along the Mediterranean coast in five cities - Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza - founded by the "five lords of the Philistines."

Spiritually these may refer to the five senses, which the Messiah must subdue within us for His rule to be complete.

- **Ephesians 2:2-5** - "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:)"

Submission to God means subduing our senses, the "desires of the flesh and of the mind" which in turn are directed by our "evil inclination," our personal ego and will which is trying to be "Lord" instead of Christ. How do we do this?

- **1 Corinthians 9:27** - "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."

The "discipline" is taking self to the cross and "reckon ourselves as dead":

- **Galatians 5:24-25** - "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"

- **Colossians 3:1-5** - "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

Mortify is "*nekroō*" and means to put to death, to deprive of power, destroy the strength of.

The way God takes away the "bridle" or the command or supremacy of the flesh is through the cross. We can't just decide to be nice and behave or do the right thing. On our own, we're incapable of that. We have to accept our death. We reckon ourselves

dead (**Romans 6:11**). Then we are "subdued."

Once the five senses are subdued, they are *transformed* into a type of the five gates of the Temple, to serve the purposes of God.

The Five Temple Gates

"Five gates led to the [Temple Mount]: One from the west, one from the east, one from the north, and two from the south." (Beit Habechirah - Chapter 4:2)

- The west gate - Middot 1:3 relates that this gate was called Kaiphonus. The Shiltei Giborim explains that this means 'garden' in Greek. The name was given because a rose was planted outside this gate.

- The east gate - This gate was called the Gate of Shushan, and the image of the city of Shushan was engraved upon it. This was done at the command of King Cyrus of Persia, who gave permission for the Temple to be rebuilt. It was through this gate that the scapegoat was taken away to the wilderness on Yom Kippur. In **Ezekiel 43:1-5**, Ezekiel saw the glory of God returning to the Temple "through the gate facing east." Also called the Golden or Beautiful Gate, it was where Peter and John healed the lame man (**Acts 3:1-8**).

Ezekiel also saw the eastern gate sealed shut: "This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it." (**Ezekiel 44:5**)

- The north gate - It was called the Tadi gate, meaning 'hiddenness.' This gate was used when someone was forced to leave the Temple, but he did not want to publicize the circumstances (Middot 1:9, 2:2). Its construction differed from that of the other gates. Rather than have an ordinary lintel, it had two stones leaning against each other (ibid.:3).

- The two south gates - These were the gates most frequently used to enter the Temple Mount. They were named after the prophetess Chuldah. In the time of the First Temple, she stood before these gates and urged the people to repent.

The tractate Sofrim 19:12 relates that there were two additional, special gates to the Temple Mount: one for mourners and one for grooms. The Jewish people would sit between these two gates waiting to console the mourners and join in the celebration of the grooms. The Kaftor ViPerach states that these gates were on the east, to the north of the gate of Shushan. They were called the 'gates of mercy.' Today, the term is used to refer to the two gates on the east side of the Temple Mount, which can be seen from the Mount of Olives and are permanently shut.

The Five Tribes

We see the same thing in the transformation of the five non-Israelite tribes left in the

land:

In **Exodus 13:5**, five occupants of the Promised Land are mentioned (although elsewhere 10 or even 12 peoples are listed):

"And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month."

Later, King Solomon conscripted the descendants of the five remaining Canaanite nations: Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (**1 Kings 9:20**). It says he levied on them "a tribute of bondservice unto this day," and so they were transformed into being of value to his kingdom.

The listing of these battles of David in Chapter 8 ties up some prophetic "loose ends" and shows God's faithfulness. Specifically, Balaam's predictions as he blessed Israel back in **Numbers 24**

The Moabites (2 Samuel 8:3-6)

In **Numbers 24** the Moabite king hires Balaam to curse Israel. Instead, Balaam predicts defeat for the Amalekites, Moabites, Edomites, and the Kenites as well as Asshur (the Assyrians) and "Eber" or the "land beyond the river" - which can refer either to areas on the east or west side of the Euphrates.

Later, David fled from Saul to seek refuge with the Moabite king (**1 Samuel 22**), possibly because of his Moabite heritage through Ruth. He even committed his parents to the protection of the king of Moab. But whatever friendship had existed was gone now.

[Much later (**2 Kings 3:4-27**) we see the Moabite king offers up his son as a human sacrifice before a battle, which horrifies the Israelite army.]

Moab represents false religion - in this case idolatry. Recall that in **Numbers 25**, "Moabitish women" seduced Israelites into worshipping Baal using sexual temptations in the wilderness.

- **Numbers 25:1-2** - "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods."

This was stopped when Phinehas speared one couple in the midst of having sex in their tent.

False religion includes everything from Cain's "will worship" to the groves of Ashtoroth to the altars of Baal. It means mixing in human ideas and philosophies that draw us away

from God's word. Watering down the gospel. Placing anything as more important than God.

Again, the solution isn't to "be real careful." It means going to the cross and accepting our death.

2 Samuel 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."

After David defeated the Moabites, a terrible punishment was inflicted. The surviving Moabite soldiers were made to lie down, then two-thirds of them, measured by a line or rope, were executed, and only one third were left alive.

Today this would be considered a war crime. Some speculate that the Moabites must have killed or mistreated David's parents when he left them in their care years before, or committed some other act of treachery to elicit this kind of response.

Rashi - because they had killed his father, mother, and brothers. For it states, "And he led them before the king of Moab" (**1 Samuel 22:4**) and we do not find mention of their departure from there.

The Syrians

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

"to recover his border at the river Euphrates" - See **Genesis 15:18-21** above.

After the victory, David had to hamstring most of the enemy horses, to prevent the Syrians from using them again against Israel. David added only some to his force, recalling **Deuteronomy 17:15-16** warning against a king "multiplying horses" to himself - and not to "trust in chariots and horses." (**Psalms 20:7**)

The Edomites

The Edomites were confederates with the Syrians (**1 Chronicles 18:12**, and in the title of **Psalms 60:1**), and were defeated along with them. Spiritually, Edom is the world, or the old man, or the flesh in contrast with the Spirit. "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated" (**Malachi 1:1-3**, **Romans 9:13**). Esau despised his birthright and sold it for a bowl of porridge. He was unable to repent except with the "sorrow of the world" that leads to death.

This victory also fulfilled a prophecy of Isaac and an oracle of Rebekah:

- **Genesis 25:23** - "And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be

stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

2 Samuel 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."

These defeated nations became tributary to Israel, sending it "gifts" or taxes -

The lesson here is that we, once subdued, we can be used by God. These nations continued to exist, but were now buffers on Israel's borders, garrisoned and watched over by David's troops and by governors he placed there to rule.

Spiritually, when Christ subdues our flesh, He garrisons the land by the presence of His Spirit to instantly respond to any rebellion on our part or attacks from outside enemies.

The Ammonites

This war with the Ammonites is briefly mentioned here but recounted later in detail in **2 Samuel 10-11** because it involves the story of Bathsheba and David's murder of Uriah.

Plunder of gold, silver and brass

2 Samuel 8:7-8,11 -

David also recovered a load of plunder from these military expeditions "from all the nations which he subdued." David did not keep for his own enrichment, but returned to Jerusalem and dedicated it all for use in the Temple his son would build.

Like the Israelites who "spoiled" the Egyptians as they left, and which valuables later were used in the making of the Tabernacle furnishings.

- **1 Chronicles 18:8** - "wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the layers, and all the vessels."

The spiritual meaning is that our lives, talents and treasure which previously served self and our idols, have now been dedicated for the use of God, once we have been "subdued" and submit to Him

This is reflected spiritually in Paul's words "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:11) We are subdued, and then transformed by His resurrection life to become of value to God.

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

As a type of Messiah -

- **Isaiah 11:3-5** - "And He will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what His eyes see, and He will not decide by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and with equity He will decide for the lowly of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and slay the wicked with the breath of His lips. Righteousness will be the belt around His hips, and faithfulness the sash around His waist."

There is no list of accountable overseers from Saul's reign. But here we see David's court was ordered and structured so that justice could not be perverted and righteousness would be carried out.

The Cherethites and the Pelethites were a personal bodyguard drawn from the island of Crete. Kings would often enlist foreign mercenaries, who they supposed could not be drawn into local cliques, court intrigues or palace rebellions.

Psalm 60

This psalm was written by David to commemorate these victories described in 2 Samuel 8.

The first four verses don't seem to fit the situation described. They might refer to previous troubles Israel had passed through, but more likely are a prophetic vision given to David of Israel's national rejection of Messiah, leading to God's rejection of them, even describing the earthquake at His crucifixion, ending with a cry to save the remnant of faithful Israel.

The Jews related Edom to the Romans, who ruled their world (and who in Jesus' day had installed the half-Edomite Herod as king).

In fact, Rashi notes regarding these verses: "When Edom fell by (David's) hand, he foresaw, by the Holy Ghost, that the Romans would rule over Israel, and decree hard decrees concerning them." He stood up and begged for mercy on account of the subjugation of the exile. "We suffered many troubles in the time of the Judges from the enemies around us."

Introduction: "To the chief Musician upon Shushaneduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand."

Rashi - **2 Samuel 8:13** says eighteen thousand: Now in the book of Psalms 60 it states, "twelve thousand." From here it must be concluded that there were two battles. Abishai slew six thousand the first time, and Joab slew twelve thousand when he returned from battling Aram.

"Shushaneduth" - an unknown word. Possibly "a lasting memorial" of the victory obtained over the Syrians and Edomites.

Psalm 60:1-4 - "O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment. Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah."

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee" -

"Banner" = *nec* - Again, this is the word for the pole or flagstaff that a banner attaches to; "something lifted up, a token to be seen from far off."

We've seen this before in comparing Moses' serpent of brass and Jesus reference to it, relating it to his crucifixion. **John 12:32** - "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

"*nec*" is the basis for the name Jehovah-Nissi, "The Lord is my Banner."

The many uses of ensign (*nec*) in Isaiah usually refer to the Days of Messiah:

- **Isaiah 11:10** - "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign (*nec*) of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.."

- **Isaiah 3:13** - "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high."

Rabbi Tanhum, referring to the Talmud (Yalkut Shimoni par. 2. fol. 53) on **Isaiah 3:13**, says, "This is the king Messiah, who shall be greatly extolled and elevated: He shall be elevated above Abraham; shall be more eminent than Moses; and be more exalted than the ministering angels."

Strangely, the modern Jewish translation of Psalm 60:4, following Rashi, doesn't mention the banner. INstead , "banner" becomes "trials":

"You have given those who fear You trials with which to be tested, in order to beautify [Your behavior] forever."

Now the Psalm turns to David's victory

Psalm 60:5 - "That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and hear me."

See **Psalm 118:16** - "the right hand of the Lord exalts, the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!" This is Christ, who is seen as sitting at God's right hand:

- **Mark 16:19** - "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God."

See also **Deuteronomy 33:2** - "from his right hand went a fiery law for them."

Psalm 60:6 - "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth."

Targum: God has spoken "in the house of the sanctuary"

Rashi - God spoke in His Sanctuary: that He would gather the exiles and his [David's] seed would rule over them. Shechem and Succoth were at the edge of the Promised Land.

"I will measure": Rashi - I measure their form, as is written (**2 Samuel 8:2**): "two cord-lengths to put to death and one full cord-length to keep alive."

David then delivers an expanding list of Israel's neighboring enemies that he has or hopes to defeat.

Psalm 60:7-9 - "Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me. Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?"

"Judah is my lawgiver" - **Genesis 49:10** - "The scepter will not turn away from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet."

"over Edom will I cast out my shoe" -

Targum: "upon the joint of the neck of the mighty men of Edom I have cast my shoe."
Rashi translates it differently - on Edom I will throw my "lock" (of imprisonment)

The subjection of Edom/Adam is analogous to Christ overcoming our flesh, the natural man, to be cast off and so we can put on the New Man. It is described as a "strong city."

- **Ephesians 4:22-24** - "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

The Old Man is locked up and no longer controls us. The New Man is our new life in Christ.

"Philistia, triumph thou because of me" - or more probably "Cry victory over Philistia" (David defeated Gath and also Gaza, which became submitted to him)

Psalm 60:9-10 - "Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out

with our armies?"

Psalm 60:11 - "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man."

See **Psalm 118:8** - "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

Psalm 60:12 - "Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies."

The total victory was first proclaimed in **Genesis 3:15** where the Seed will "tread down" or crush the head of the serpent,

- **Psalm 91:13** - "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."

- **Psalm 110:6** - "He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries."

Rashi - He crushed the head on a great land: This resembles the prophecy of Habakkuk (3:12): "You have crushed the head of the house of the wicked." [This refers to] the head of Pharaoh]

Also in the Prophets:

- **Isaiah 26:5-6** - "For He has humbled those who dwell on high; He lays the lofty city low. He brings it down to the ground; He casts it into the dust. Feet trample it down—the feet of the oppressed, the steps of the poor."

- **Malachi 4:3** - "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

- **Habakkuk 3:13** - "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah."

...and finally revealed in **Revelation 19**:

- **Revelation 19:15** - "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Finally, the Beast and the False Prophet will be "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (**Revelation 19:20**)

- **Hebrews 2:8-9** - "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

