

I CHRONICLES

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Chronicles chapter 12 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Over the past few weeks we have covered a long period of time. We looked at the genealogies from Adam on through King Saul, the first king in Israel. And as we have seen, we are given some genealogies that focus on lines that will die out, that are not important and then there is the main focus and that is the lineage of the Messiah. Thus, the focus last week was the new king in Israel David and that will be our focus through the rest of this book of I Chronicles. In fact, in chapter 29, at the conclusion of I Chronicles we will see the death of King David and as we get into II Chronicles we will pick up with David's son, Solomon who will be on the throne.

This evening, as we continue on in our study we will be in chapter 12 of I Chronicles and the focus is on David. Keep in mind that the lineage that the Messiah will come from is the lineage of David, from the tribe of Judah! It is as G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "Every word of this chapter carries the mind on to greet David's greater Son, and the men He gathers about Him." In other words, we are moving towards Jesus and the men and women that He will gather around Him for the work that He has called us to do, you and me just as David has gathered mighty men around him!

Also, keep in mind that the last half of chapter 11 and the first half of chapter 12 give us some historical background of when David was on the run from King Saul, even though we opened up chapter 11 with David anointed as King in Hebron after the death of King Saul. These are just some details that are being filed in for us regarding the mighty men that traveled with David.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in I Chronicles chapter 12, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we continue studying through His Word.

I CHRONICLES 12

VERSES 1-2

1. Keep in mind that David has been on the run from King Saul for almost 10 years and he feels the situation he finds himself in is hopeless. And so David goes down to Ziklag, a Philistine city, to live, as he flees to the enemy for safety from Saul. This city of Ziklag was located about 25 miles southwest of Gath and the king of Gath, Achish, is asked by David for a city to dwell in and not one close to the royal city. And so Achish gives David and his men the city of Ziklag to live in. And they remained in this city for some 16 months. Because David made this alliance with Achish, it was not real but Achish believed it was, David was required to pay tribute and show his loyalty and submission to this Philistine king. Thus, David made raids from Ziklag against various desert tribes. He would seize their property and bring some of the plunder back to the Philistines and the rest he divided up among his own countrymen, although the Philistines were unaware of this and they believed David was raiding the cities in Israel. And over time more and more men joined forces with David, mighty men of valor!

2. One of the groups that joined forces with David were the men of Benjamin, they were from Saul's own tribe and they defected to David's side! Why did they defect or leave the ranks of King Saul? I believe they were dissatisfied with what Saul was doing and they joined forces with David. And these guys were skilled with the bow and the sling, able to use their right hand or their left to defeat their enemy, they were ambidextrous! We read in Judges 20:16 of men that came from Benjamin who were also skilled as these men. It says, "**Among all this people were seven hundred select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss.**" That was a plus, being able to use either hand with accuracy in battle!

VERSES 3-15

1. Here we see more men who cut their ties with King Saul and came to the side of David, to fight with him. And listen to what we are told in verses 8 and 15 of what some of these mighty men did, who were 11 in number. We are told, "**Some Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains . . . These are the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its banks; and they put to flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west.**" I Chronicles 12:8, 15.

Keep in mind that these 11 men lived on the eastern side of the Jordan River, outside the Promise Land, and when they wanted to join forces with David, it was not the ideal time to cross the Jordan River as the River was overflowing its banks, the current was obviously swift, but it did not stop them from getting to David!

Spurgeon said this in regards to what these Gadites did. He wrote, “These Gadites likewise furnish us with a noble example of strong devotion. When the eleven men determined to join David, they were living the other side of a deep river, which at that season of the year had overflowed its banks, so that it was extremely deep and broad. But they were not to be kept from joining David, when he wanted them, by the river. They swam through the river that they might come to David.”

What an example for us. You see, what gets in our way from serving the Lord? What gets in our way of coming to Church? What gets in our way of sharing our faith? And we can have many excuses but the reality is, if you really want to do something, you will do it! Let me show you what I mean. A few weeks back the DVD for the Super Bowl champs, the Green Bay Packers came out and at one store they were going to sell the DVD at Midnight. Guess what, there were people waiting in line, during the snow and cold, for several hours to get the DVD, they wanted to be the first ones to buy one and get Donald Driver’s autograph! That is dedication, that is devotion and it puts many Christians to shame who are unwilling to do anything because things are getting in their way!

2. Let me share with you a few points to show you what drove these men, what made them do what they did. And yes, they wanted to be with David just as we should desire to not let anything prevent us from being with our Lord, but here are a few qualities of these men.

- ***Mighty men of valor*** – That means that they were men of courage, they were not going to let anything get in their way or stop them from what they were going to do! May we be men and women of valor!
- ***Men trained for battle*** – These guys had prepared themselves for battle just as we are to prepare ourselves for battle in the Lord's army. Not fighting flesh and blood but a spiritual battle and thus, we must put on the whole armor of God as Ephesians chapter 6 tells us! May we be men and women trained for battle!
- ***Men who can handle shield and spear*** – They not only were prepared for battle but they knew how to use the weapons of war for the battle. How important is that for us as Christians, to be able to use the weapons that God has given to us and not just to put them on display! May we be men and women who can handle the shield and spear!
- ***Men whose faces were like the faces of lions*** – Did you ever see a lion worried? No, and these men had a calmness about them and they were confident in God. Thus, they could have that boldness in the midst of a battle because they were secure in the Lord. Folk's, we too must have faces like a lion in the midst of the battle, but with the calmness of a dove you might say because our strength is in the Lord. May we be men and women who have faces like the faces of lions!
- ***Men who were as swift as gazelles on the mountains*** – These were not your couch potato's, but men who were ready to move, they were mobile, ready to fight wherever they were needed. We too must be mobile, ready to fight wherever the Lord sends us, whatever situation we are in. May we be men and women who are swift as gazelles on the mountains!

The key, of course, is that we must be in Christ, we must be led by Him and not our own will or desires. It is as Spurgeon wrote, "The grace of God can make us like them. The grace of God can make us brave as lions, so that, wherever we are, we can hold our own, or rather can hold our Lord's truth, and never blush nor be ashamed to speak a good word for him at all times. He can make us quick and active too, so that we shall be like the roes upon the mountains." God can do great things in us and through us if we would only let Him! And can you imagine the strongholds of the enemy that would come tumbling down if we only put on the whole armor of God and moved ahead. You see, when you study the armor of God do you know the only area that is not protected? It is your backside and thus, there is no retreat for the Christians, just forge ahead!

VERSES 16-22

1. Here we are continuing to see the defectors from Saul's army join sides with David. We see more from Benjamin and Judah join with David, but David is unsure about these men and questions them. Why did David question them as to their loyalty? The reason David did this was because David was not sure if they were spies for King Saul looking to infiltrate the ranks of David or if they truly wanted to join forces with him. But Amasai, probably Amasa the son of David's sister Abigail who became David's army commander after Joab had fallen from favor and he held the post for only a short time before being assassinated by Joab and Amasai is filled with the Spirit of God and he tells David that they were with him. You see, they realized that God was no longer with Saul, but He was with David.

2. Now keep in mind that during David's 16 month stay in Ziklag he would go out and destroy small enemy cities, while Achish thought David was out raiding the cities of Israel. But then a problem arose, for the armies of the Philistines were getting ready to invade Israel, and Achish asks David to join them, and he could not refuse. But God stepped in and as the military leaders of the Philistines saw David they refused to let him join them. They were fearful that David would side with Saul and fight against them.

So as David and his men headed home to Ziklag they saw their city going up in smoke. The Amalekites destroyed their city and took captive their families. David was once again in trouble, for even his own men were beginning to turn against him. But instead of sulking over the situation he found himself in, he brought his problem to the Lord. And God tells David that they will not only defeat the Amalekites but they will also get their loved ones back. And that is exactly what happened. Also remember that it is this battle against the Philistines that Saul and his sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua are killed.

3. And thus, many in Israel saw what was happening with King Saul and what was happening with David and they joined forces with David. Keep in mind that all the discontent, those that owed money, those nobody wanted totaled 600 men when they started and now those numbers have grown so much we don't even see numbers, just a great army for David! God had brought this great army together!

VERSES 23-40

1. Now that Saul is dead the entire nation of Israel will ask David to be their king. But prior to this, for some 7½ years David reigned in Hebron over the house of Judah, but now the nation is coming to him, requesting that he would be their king and lead them. Keep in mind that around the age of 12 David was anointed king by the Prophet Samuel, and now years later that promise has become a reality. David went through years of training, years of preparation, and now God is causing men to be drawn to him as their leader. David did not have to fight for the throne; God gave it to him just as He promised David. And as they made David king, there was great joy in Israel!

2. I am amazed at people that fight and make all kinds of deals, have these plans to get into a certain ministry, usually a high profile ministry and that is sad. I never see people doing that to be Sunday School teachers and yet, how important that is. But when you look at the life of David, how he lived, not a perfect man but one who loved the Lord, we can learn an important lesson. You see, if God has called you into a ministry, you don't have to go kicking down the door to obtain it. In God's timing He will open that door and all you will have to do is step in. Notice what Jesus says in Revelation 3:8. He says "**I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.**"

Doors of ministry are not opened by us, for we only have a little strength. They are opened and they are closed by the Lord. No one can stop what He is going to do, except us, if we do not step through that open door - that door of opportunity!

3. In this section David is given the numbers of men from each tribe who can go to war and what is interesting to me is the tribe of Levi is mentioned in verses 26-28. I thought they were not to go into battle? If you look at what is said in Numbers 1:47-53 we are told that they were not numbered for war but it didn't say that they couldn't go to war! In fact, Selman makes these interesting remarks, "The Levites were never prohibited from engaging in the military activity, despite their religious duties."

4. Also, look at verse 32, the sons of Issachar, we are told of them that they were the ones "**who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.**" The idea here is that they knew it was time to side with David, they saw the situation they were in and using the godly wisdom they had, they made the right choice! Folk's, God has given to each of us godly wisdom and many times we don't use it. Look at the times we are in, look at what is going on in this world, our jobs, our homes, whatever the case may be and do what is right. Don't do what everyone else is doing, or what your flesh wants to do, but do what God wants you to do because you have that godly understanding of the times and thus, you do what is right!

5. In verse 33 we are told of the sons of Zebulun and they were "**stouthearted.**" Or The King James Version says, "**they were not of double heart.**" The Amplified Bible puts it like this, "**men not of double purpose but stable and trustworthy.**" And the Living Bible says, "**totally loyal to David.**" The idea here is that these men had a single purpose, their heart was not divided and they showed their devotion to the king, to David!

Let me share with you a few Scriptures regarding this idea of a divided heart and that God has called us to be sold out to Him, to have an undivided heart. In Matthew 6:21 we are told, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** How true that is, what is the passion of your heart? It should be the Lord. Also, Jesus said in Matthew 15:8, **“These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.”** God is not looking for an empty profession of faith but a real one! And in Matthew 22:37, just to give you a few, we are told by Jesus what He desires of us, **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”** God wants our entire being, all of us and like David’s men; we are to be totally loyal to Jesus!

6. And the last point in this section is found in verse 38 where we are told that **“All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came from Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel.”** The reason they could stay in ranks is simple, they were totally devoted to David and nothing was going to distract them or move them from that course! Their single devotion to the king made them able to stay together as a single unit! Folk’s, as we serve our King, Jesus Christ, we should also be able to stay together and work together for the cause of God’s Kingdom! But many times, it is as F. B. Meyer wrote, “Too many like to break the ranks, and do God’s work independently. Fifty men who act together will do greater execution than five hundred acting apart. . . . Unity is strength; and in their efforts to overthrow the kingdom of Satan it is most essential that the soldiers of Christ move in rank and keep step.” May we work together as we follow the Lord and see what great things He can do!

And what are the results of all this? **“there was great joy in Israel.”** Let me say this, apart from surrendering to the King of kings and walking in unity with our brethren, there will be no true joy. Let me close this section out with these following two thoughts. First, Selman wrote, “The paragraph as a whole, however, shows that the people of God are the real heroes of the chapter. Those Israelites exemplify the principle that when God’s people become committed to one another in obedient service to God’s chosen king, they find both unity and joy.” And F. B. Meyer wrote, “The enthroning of David was the uniting of the kingdom. Herein is the secret of the unity of the Church. We shall never secure it by endeavouring to bring about a unity in thought, or act, or organization. It is as each individual heart enthrones the Saviour that each will become one with all kindred souls in the everlasting kingdom.” What a beautiful picture this is and it can be a reality if we are willing to walk accordingly!

I CHRONICLES 13

VERSES 1-4

1. David is now the king over all Israel and he wants to bring the Ark of God back to Jerusalem. You see, some 70 years earlier the Philistines captured the Ark of God and took it back to Ashdod and they placed it in the temple of Dagon. This god they worshiped was half man and half fish, as strange as that sounds. By doing this the Philistines were saying that the God of Israel must bow before the god Dagon. But the next morning they came into the temple and found Dagon flat on his face, bowing before the God of Israel. So they stood their god up and again the next day Dagon was flat on his face and this time his head and hands were broken off.

God also struck the people of Ashdod with tumors and sent in plagues of rats upon their city. So they sent the ark to Gath, who sent it to Ekron, and the people of Ekron cried out saying, “**They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!**” (I Samuel 5:10). It was like a hot potato, nobody wanted it!

And so they called for the priests to see what could be done with this problem and they told them to do the following. Take two cows that have just calved and tie them to the cart and place the Ark on the cart. If they go to their young, then all these things that have happened to you are just bad luck, it is just a coincidence. If they bring this cart with the Ark to Israel, then it is of God and thus it is out of our hands and these judgments will stop.

And as these cows take off, they don't return to their calves but they bring the Ark to Beth Shemesh, and when the people of Beth Shemesh saw the Ark returning, they made a great sacrifice and had a huge celebration for the Ark had been in the hands of the Philistines for 7 months.

But some of the people got over zealous and looked inside the Ark, and God struck and killed 50,070 men. And so the people of Beth Shemesh did not want the Ark with them any longer and called for the people of Kirjath Jearim to come and take the Ark from them, which they did. Now after many years of residing there, David wants to bring the Ark back and place it in the heart of the land, back in the heart of the people, for the Ark represented the presence of God.

2. Now this was the right thing to do the only problem was who David consulted in bringing this Ark of God back to Jerusalem. You see, we are told that, **“David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. And David said to all the congregation of Israel . . .”** You see, he did not consult the Lord. Now you may be wondering how I came to the conclusion since it also says, **“If it seems good to you, and if it is of the LORD our God . . .”** and thus, it seems like David sought the Lord. But I don't believe he did and the reason I can say that is because of what transpired next. Let' read on and see.

VERSES 5-8

1. So David gathers all the people together, from the southern part of Israel all the way to the northern part of Israel and they come to Kirjath Jearim to get the Ark and bring it back to Jerusalem. David is doing the right thing, the Ark needed to be returned to Jerusalem, he just went about it the wrong way because he did not inquire of the Lord, he did not follow what God's Word said and we will see that in a minute.

What did they place the Ark of God on? It was a cart that was made of many boards and it had big wheels! We would never do that today, would we? You bet we do! We try to bring in the glory of God, we try to build up the church, we try to get things going by having board meetings and voting on what we should do and to really get things going we hire big wheels to come in and draw the people. Folk's that is not the way the Lord works! You see, in the book of Numbers the Lord instructed His people that the Ark was to be carried upon the shoulders of the Levites and for us, we will never have the glory of God brought in by board meetings and big wheels, but only when it is carried upon the shoulders of people who love Him, who praise Him, who worship Him! May we not forget that because it is easy to do!

Listen to what Spurgeon has to say regarding these events. He wrote, "If you read the story through, you will see that it appears to be an affair of singing, and harps, and psalteries, and timbrels, and cymbals, and trumpets, and of a new cart and cattle; that is about all there is in it. There is not even a mention of humiliation of heart, or of solemn awe in the presence of that God of whom the ark was but the outward symbol. I am afraid that this first attempt was too much after the will of the Flesh, and the energy of nature."

VERSES 9-11

1. So we see here that Uzza also spelled Uzzah in II Samuel 6:6, and Ahio are on this cart with big wheels and as they and the oxen get to Nachon's or Chidon's threshing floor, the cart hits a rock and the Ark begins to tilt. Well, as Uzza sees what is happening he did what needed to be done, he placed his hand upon the Ark to steady it so that it would not fall off the cart. But as soon as he touched the Ark, he was struck dead.

Now in reading this it seems so unfair for God to do something like this. Uzza was only trying to protect the Ark from falling off the cart and breaking. Why would God do this? That is not the correct question, what we should ask is, "Why would Uzza disregard God's Word?" You see, in Numbers 4:15 we are told, "**And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.**"

You see, God said that they were not to touch the Ark, it was to be carried on the shoulders of the Kohathites only after it was covered and Uzza disregarded God's Word and he paid for it with his life! Maclaren had this to say regarding what transpired here. He wrote, "He saw no difference between the ark and any other valuable article. His intention to help was right enough; but there was a profound insensibility to the awful sacredness of the ark, on which even its Levitical bearers were forbidden to lay hands."

2. I see an application here for each of us. You see, God has told us what He desires of us in His Word. Now we can listen and obey or we can do our own thing. And as we do our own thing and nothing is happening, maybe there is death to the thing we want to do and we cry out, “Lord, why are you not blessing this?” Maybe the reason the Lord is silent is because you are disobeying what His Word is saying. Maybe you have touched that which God has said not to touch!

3. Here we saw this great celebration and with the death of Uzza we really see an end to this celebration! And we see that David becomes angry with God, he is mad because of what God had done. In fact he names this area, “**Perez Uzza**” which means “outbreak against Uzza.” And in the Hebrew it is even harsher, for it speaks of an attack of an enemy upon a person. David’s anger has led to a wrong conclusion about God. David, instead of looking inward to check his own heart, is looking outward and blaming God for what has happened. We need to be careful we don’t go down that road. God is not at fault and thus, we need to do a heart check to see where we are at!

It is as J. Vernon McGee said, “Today there are many folk who are putting their hands in the Lord’s work where they should not be putting them. They are interfering with the Lord’s work. I could tell you of many instances of men, probably meaning well, but not doing it God’s way. As a result, blessing does not come. Just so in the case of the ark - the man who interfered was put out of the way.”

VERSES 12-14

1. Notice what happens here. David is not only angry with God but he is also fearful of God. This is not a referential fear of God that David has, but he is terrified of God. You see, because of this incident his whole concept of God was shattered. That is why when we don't understand situations in our own life, that we don't blame God, but check our heart and fall back on His character, who He is, and you can only do that if you know Him. James tells us in James 1:16-17, "**Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**" You see, only good comes from God and He loves us so much that He will do whatever it takes to get us back on track with Him!

Now here's the thing. We don't need to be afraid of God as David was but we need to be afraid of our own sin that has brought us to this point. God was not at fault as I have said, it is not a problem with God but it is a problem with us. For David and for us many times it is a lack of knowledge and obedience that gets us in trouble!

2. I think that David's question here is interesting as he asks, "**How can I bring the ark of God to Me?**" Pretty straight forward and yet, you will notice that God does not answer that question. Why? Because God has already instructed David and the nation in how the Ark of God was to be carried in His Word.

In Exodus chapter 25 God said that the Ark was to have 4 rings, one in each corner. And when it was time for the tabernacle to move, as I have said, the Kohathites (Numbers 4:15) were to go into the Holy of Holies, after the Ark was covered so they could not see or look upon it and carry the Ark. Now they were not to carry it any way they wanted. You see, there were two poles that would be placed in the rings, and then the Ark was to be carried upon the shoulders of the Kohathites.

Here's the thing. The Ark represented the presence of God, and you did not touch or approach God anyway you wanted. God was not to be man handled. Today many do what David did. They want to approach God according to their terms, their ways, and God will not accept that. You see, it is only through Jesus Christ that we can go to the Father. Remember what Paul told Timothy in I Timothy 2:5-6, "**For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.**" It is not my way, and it is not even your way, but it is *YAHWAH!* We need to follow Him and not approach Him the way we want, but what He has told us in His Word!

3. David should have known that God does not act like this for no reason at all, and if he would have gone to the trouble of seeking his answer in the Word of God he would have seen that he was wrong, and not God. Because of David's anger and fear of God, he leaves the Ark in the house of Obed-Edom for 3 months and during those 3 months; Obed-Edom and his household are blessed. You see, a proper attitude towards the things of God bring blessings into our life. On the other end, a cavalier spirit, doing it your way instead of God's, will bring divine judgment, as David experienced. You see, the end does not justify the means as David had thought! There is a right way to do things and a wrong way and then there is God's way and we need to obey God and not what we think is right or wrong!

I CHRONICLES 14

VERSES 1-2

1. During this period of time David is engaged in a construction project, working on his palace. And David hires Hiram, king of Tyre to do the work. David and Hiram had become good friends but Hiram was not a believer. But the work that Hiram's people did was beautiful, using the cedar trees from Lebanon for the work. He hired the best to do the work, even though they were not believers. A good lesson for us, for through a relationship like this, you don't know what doors God may open for you to minister to this person. And David saw the hand of God on his life and what an exciting thing as you are serving the Lord and you see God's hand upon the work you are doing. May we all experience that in our lives!

VERSES 3-7

1. David continues to multiply wives unto himself, who bore his children, and because of God's silence here, some have wrongly concluded that God was endorsing this kind of behavior. It is amazing the sin we like to justify. God said way back in Deuteronomy 17:17 that they were not to multiply wives unto themselves and again in Genesis it was one man to one woman, Adam and Eve. God is only reporting what has happened not condoning it. In other words, this might be a historical fact and it was but it was also a moral failure on David's part and he will suffer the consequences for his actions. And really, think about it like this if you still think what David did was right. If a newspaper reports on a bank robbery, it is not endorsing stealing, but just reporting the facts. That is what God is doing here.

VERSES 8-12

1. So as David's fame grows the enemies of Israel are not happy, especially the Philistines. You see, David had defected from being with the Philistines at one time, even though he was not supporting them or helping them, but they thought he was. And now he is their enemy! So the Philistines gather for war against David and Israel, and the first thing that David does is he inquires of the Lord in what he should do. And God gives him the battle plan and the victory. And the gods of the Philistines, the ones they brought into battle with them, were burned by David and his men.

Now let's think this through for a minute. The Philistines are preparing for battle against David and the nation of Israel and thus, this is a no brainier! Of course he needed to go to war and defend his people, his nation, his kingdom! Sometimes the obvious is not the right thing to do. You see, David sought the Lord to make sure what he was to do and the Lord instructed him to go to battle. The key is he sought the Lord; he did not lean on his own understanding of the situation.

What a great lesson for us. How often do we respond a certain way in a situation because we feel it is the right thing to do and it may seem like the right thing to do. But let me tell you this, before you respond, before you get your underwear in a bunch you might say, bring it to the Lord and see what He would have you to do. You might be surprised to see what He has in store, many times the opposite of what you were going to do even though it seemed so obvious to you!

VERSES 13-17

1. Again the Philistines go against Israel, and I want you to notice that David once again inquires of the Lord in what he should do. Now why in the world did he ask God what he should do, God already told him last time what to do? Because God can do whatever He wants in a variety of situations and we need His guidance in all that we do and never say, “Hey, that is the way we did it back in 1982 and it worked then!” No, seek the Lord. Here we see that God gives to them a different battle plan and once again David and the nation of Israel are victorious over the Philistines. Gibeon was about six miles northwest of Jerusalem and Gezer was about sixteen miles west of Gibeon and it seems that the Philistines left the Valley of Rephaim and fled north to Gibeon. And then they were pursued all the way to Gezer, which was a town that was located close to their own land.

And we see David ask specific questions of the Lord, and if we are unsure what to do, we too need to be specific when we pray and ask for direction from God. And now we see David’s fame spreading throughout the land, and not because of his might, but because God was lifting this man up.

2. Let me share these words with you from J. Vernon McGee regarding seeking direction from the Lord, not leaning on our own understanding or doing something and then blaming God when it doesn’t work out like we thought it should. He wrote,

A dear lady came to the church where I served in Pasadena years ago. She said she was going to a faith healer and I advised her not to. I thought she should go to a doctor. She said, “Oh, Dr. McGee, you are so wrong. God is going to heal me. You think I ought not to go to this faith healer but I am going and I will be healed.” She went and she was not healed. She couldn’t understand it. She thought God was going to heal her. The whole affair made shipwreck of that woman’s faith and she got to the place where she completely turned her back upon God. She said, “He let me down.” No, He didn’t. He doesn’t want us to do something very foolish. He wants us to use good old sanctified common sense. She should have gone to a doctor. Her foolishness eventuated in her death.

My friend, of course we need to trust the Lord. But we need to make sure we are getting our directions from Him. Sometimes we are to go out and do battle, and sometimes we are to withdraw.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible, pp. 375-376

3. Let me close with this. In Proverbs 3:5-6 we are told, “**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**” And The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, “**Lean on, trust in, and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths.**”

When we seek the Lord, when we don't lean on our own understanding of situations because we are usually wrong, He will direct us and out of that there will be the victory! God directed David and we may wonder why God is not doing that now! The reason is simple. Because we are not asking the Lord and many times we are not asking because we don't expect to hear from Him! The only solution to that problem is to draw close to God, listen to Him and when you are asking, ask in faith believing that God will answer your prayer that is in accordance with His will and it will be in accordance to His will if you are seeking Him!

Let me close with these words from Payne who wrote, "Because he looked to the Lord for his strength and for his strategy, he was able to beat back to Philistine offenses, to secure the independence of God's people, and to terminate forever the threat of Philistine conquest and oppression." When we seek God's direction and He speaks to us we then need to go forward as David did and see the victory He will bring in your life. There is great victory in obedience, may we not forget that!