

Lecture #24 – Exposition of I Chronicles 11-20

Chapter 11 – David’s Rise

vs. 1-3 – David Anointed King

↪ II Samuel 5:1-3

The Chronicles account begins with the establishment of David on the throne of all of Israel, basically jumping into the Samuel/Kings account at II Samuel 5. This the story of David and his heirs, so little attention is paid to the story leading up to this moment.

vs. 4-9 – David Takes Jerusalem

↪ II Samuel 5:6-9

Jerusalem is taken by David. Joab is made chief general for his assault and capture of the fortified hill of Zion.

vs. 10-47 – David’s Mighty Men

↪ II Samuel 23:8-39

The roster of David’s mighty men appears here at the beginning of the account, instead of at the end of the Samuel/Kings account. There are sixteen additional names here.

Chapter 12 – David’s Band

vs. 1-7 – Benjaminite Warriors at Ziklag

↪ I Samuel 27:5-7

These men of Saul’s own tribe defected to David during the final months of his time running from Saul. These men are noted for being highly skill – ambidextrous! – warriors.

The inclusion of these Benjaminite warriors seems to illustrate the acceptance of David from beyond his own tribe. It also provides a link between Saul’s tribe and David.

vs. 8-22 - Warriors

☪ I Samuel 29:11

A roster of Gadite warriors is given, as well as mention of the arrival of those from Judah, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

Note the Spirit-led words of Amasai in vs. 18. God was strengthening David by reinforcing his band with the best warriors in Israel.

vs. 23-40 – Kingmakers

The combined forces of the tribes gathered to proclaim David king. The total was 339,600 and 1,222 chiefs.

The celebration feast of David's coronation lasted for three days.

Chapter 13 – David and the Ark

vs. 1-4 – National Agreement

We see here that the desire to move the Ark was not just David's but rather a national movement. No doubt that zeal sparked from David, but the entire nation was moved by his desire.

vs. 5-14 – First Attempt to Move the Ark

☪ II Samuel 6:1-11

The first attempt, zealous as it was, proved a disaster. Joy was abundant but not the respect for the Holiness of God. Uzza is slain by God for his impropriety in touching the Ark. The joy of the hour is turned to fear, and the Ark is left in the care of Obbedom.

Chapter 14 – David’s Victories

vs. 1-7 – David’s Family

☪ II Samuel 5:13-16, I Chronicles 3:5-9

In the Chronicles Account, the interlude between attempts to move the Ark is filled with the further establishment of David as king. He makes Jerusalem his home, a palace is constructed, and his family grows.

vs. 8-17 – Battles Against the Philistines

☪ II Samuel 5:17-25, 23:13-17

The Philistines make two incursions in attempt to weaken or defeat David. Both end in their failure when God moved on David’s behalf.

Chapter 15 – David and the Ark

vs. 1-24 – Preparations to Move the Ark Again

Much more detail is given in the Chronicles account to the preparation to move the Ark the second time. An assembly of the Levites is called, and they consecrate themselves to the work. The method of moving the Ark is correct. Singers are organized to fill the Ark’s journey with music.

🎵 Psalm 65

vs. 25-29 – Moving the Ark

☪ II Samuel 6:12-23

The ark is brought to Jerusalem with sacrifices, singing, and great joy. The only stain on this bright day is the attitude of Michal.

Chapter 16 – David and the Ark

vs. 1-7 – The Ark at Jerusalem

↻ II Samuel 6:18-19

vs. 8-36 – Psalm of Praise

Gaebelein writes:

“A great thanksgiving Psalm was then delivered by David into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. The view of modern critics, that this Psalm is post-exilic, does not call for any refutation, for the text declares that David himself delivered the hymn to Asaph. The Psalm is made up of portions of different Psalms. See Psalm 105:1-15; 96:1-13; 106:47-48; 107:1; 136. A careful study will show the far reaching meaning of this composite Psalm. It is a great prophecy. It begins with the celebration and praise of what Jehovah has done. Israel is called to remember His covenant. It is not the covenant at Sinai, with its conditional promises, but the unconditional, the grace-covenant, made with Abraham, an everlasting covenant that his seed is to have the land. But prophetically the Psalm points to the time when ‘His judgments are in all the earth’; it is at that time when the covenant made with Abraham will be remembered. Such a time will come according to the prophetic Word. Verse 22, ‘Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm,’ speaks of Israel’s preservation; for Israel is His anointed, a kingdom of kings and priests. The day must come when the covenant made with Abraham will be realized and when Israel shall possess the land, after their wanderings from nation to nation (verse 20). Then there will be a throne in Zion and a King shall reign in righteousness, even Christ (Psalm 2).

“Then Psalm 96 is quoted. It is a Psalm which looks forward to the kingdom on earth, when the nations acknowledge Jehovah and bow in His presence. The blessed age of glory, of which the prophets have so much to say, the unreached goal of the glorious future of the earth, the millennium, is pictured in this Psalm.

“...The praise of Israel concludes the thanksgiving Psalm. We repeat, it is prophetic. It looks onward to the time when the Lord will deliver His people, when the promises made to the fathers will all be fulfilled, when the nations of the earth will know the Lord and when He will reign over all. Such is Israel’s future. When He has been merciful to His land and to His people, the nations will rejoice (Deuteronomy 32:43).”¹

¹ Annotated Bible by A.C. Gaebelein. E-Sword module.

vs. 37-43 – Worship Before the Ark

David here organizes the divided worship between the Ark and the Tabernacle. It is still strange to imagine having these two being separate, but they will never be reunited. The next home for the Ark will be the Temple.

Chapter 17 – David and the Temple

vs. 1-10 – David Cannot Build the Temple

↪ II Samuel 7:1-11

David desires to build the Temple but God does not allow him to.

vs. 11-15 – Davidic Covenant

↪ II Samuel 7:12-17

God establishes the David Covenant.

vs. 16-27 – David's Prayer

↪ II Samuel 7:18-29

David offers a prayer/psalm of thanksgiving.

Chapter 18 – David's Victories

vs. 1-13 – David's Victories

↪ II Samuel 8:1-14

David battles and defeats the armies of Philistia, Moab, Zobah, Damascus, and Edom.

There is a supposed contradiction in II Samuel 8:4 and I Chronicles 18:4. II Samuel says there were 1,000 chariots, 700 horsemen, and 20,000 footmen. I Chronicles says there were 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen, and 20,000 footmen.

Improbable solutions include: a scribal error (it would have been caught and corrected)², 10 men fighting in a chariot (that would be more akin to siege weaponry and not cavalry), that these fought in squads of 10 (that could easily have been explained), or relying on the differences between terms used like footman and horseman in II Samuel 10:18 and I Chronicles 19:18 (that is a separate issue we will explain).

The best explanation for the difference in numbers here is that II Samuel 8:3-4 describes a battle “to recover his territory” while I Chronicles 18:3-4 describes a campaign “to establish his dominion”. The campaign described in I Chronicles does not include any more pitched ground battles but many cavalry skirmishes.

In vs. 8 there is an additional comment about the brass captured by David being used in the construction of the Temple.

vs. 14-17 – David’s Administration

↪ II Samuel 8:15-18

The leaders of David’s government at the height of David’s power.

Chapter 19 – Ammonite War

vs. 1-5 – Shaming David’s Envoys

↪ II Samuel 10:1-5

Hunan mistreats the envoys of David.

vs. 6-15 – Victory Against Ammon/Syria

↪ II Samuel 10:6-14

Joab defeats the combined forces of Ammon and Syria.

We have in vs. 6-7 some additional details not found in II Samuel. First, the amount of the payment: 1,000 talents of silver (\$25,599,161)³.

² H3967 מאות H7651 ושבע “Seven Thousand” vs. H505 אלפים H7651 ושבעת “Seven Hundred”

³ Calculated as 1,000 talents being 1,206,369 ounces and silver at \$21.22 an ounce (11-21-22)

Second, there is a variation in the accounting of the enemy soldiers. In II Samuel 10:6, we see 20,000 footmen from Zobah, 1,000 men from Maacah, and 12,000 men from Ishtob. A total of 33,000 men. In I Chronicles 19:7, we see 32,000 chariots and an unspecified number from Maacah. The total matches at 33,000 when we consider that Maacah provided 1,000 men. This is not an error or contradiction.

Third, there are different terms used for the enemy soldiers. In II Samuel they are “footmen” (Strong’s H7273) and “men” (Strong’s H376). In I Chronicles they are “chariots” (Strong’s H7393), which implies a soldier in a chariot and not just the vehicle itself. The simplest solution is that these soldiers fought both mounted and on foot and that a term for this type of hybrid fighter was not available. The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge has this note on the terms and numbers used:

“Thirty-two thousand soldiers, exclusive of the thousand sent by the king of Maachah, are mentioned in the parallel passage (2 Samuel 10:6); but of chariots or cavalry there is no mention; and the number of chariots stated here is prodigious, and beyond all credibility. But as the word *raichev* denotes not only a chariot, but a rider (see Isaiah 21:7), it ought most probably to be rendered here, in a collective sense, cavalry; and then the number of troops will exactly agree with the passage in Samuel. It is probable that they were a kind of auxiliary troops who were usually mounted on horses, or in chariots, but who occasionally served as foot-soldiers.”⁴

vs. 16-19 – Victory Against Syrians

☪ II Samuel 10:15-19

The Syrian counterattack to avenge their loss, and they are defeated a second time.

Another supposed discrepancy is found in comparing II Samuel 10:18 and I Chronicles 19:18. II Samuel has the men of 700 chariots and 40,000 horsemen being defeated and I Chronicles has 7,000 men which fought in chariots and 40,000 footmen being defeated. The difference between the horsemen and footmen we addressed in the previous section, and there is no real contradiction there.

The bigger issue is the difference between 700 and 7,000 chariots/charioteers. This is not a case of slipping up on a single word like many claim it to be. There is quite a bit of difference in the lettering of these words:

H3967 מאות H7651 שבע - II Samuel 10:18 – seven hundred⁵

H505 אלפים H7651 שבעת - I Chronicles 19:18 – seven thousand

⁴ The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge, E-sword module.

⁵ Remember to read right to left!

The solution is not readily apparent here. I doubt historically in there being 10 men⁶ in a chariot as some claim there to be. There also does not appear to be a difference between battle/campaign such as in II Samuel 8:4 and I Chronicles 18:4.

My best guess at a solution for this supposed discrepancy is that it reflects a change in warfare from this battle in 1039 B.C. to the time of writing II Chronicles around 450 B.C. In that gap of almost 600 years, much had changed in warfare. In the days of David, the chariot was a fearsome weapon that dominated the battlefield. But by the Persian (Achaemenid) Empire, chariots⁷ were on the decline and cavalry was becoming more important. After Alexander the Great's conquests the militaries of the Mediterranean world largely abandoned any reliance on chariots in favor of cavalry.

Therefore, in David's day it was far more impressive to take out 700 chariots, but after the Captivity it was far more impressive to take out 7,000 charioteers. This does leave a question about the ratio of charioteers to chariots, and the 10 to 1 ratio is very high. This could include auxiliaries or support units, which would lower the ratio. It is also probable that any wounded or slain charioteers were replaced in the battle, so that each chariot could have had multiple sets of charioteers slain.

Chapter 20 – David's Victories

Something missing? Where's Bathsheba? The story of David's sin with Bathsheba is omitted in the Chronicles account. While the fallout is devastating to David and his family, its effects are not important in the Chronicles account.

vs. 1-3 – Rabbah Captured

☪ II Samuel 12:26-31

The conquest of Ammon is complete and Rabbah is captured.

vs. 4-8 – Giant Slayers

☪ II Samuel 21:18-22

The focus of the Chronicles account is about to shift to the preparation for the Temple and the organization of the Kingdom. This account of the giant killers is therefore moved from late in David's life to here.

⁶ I cannot find any historical mention of having this many men in one chariot. Typical for this period is for a chariot to have two horses and two men, one driving and the other fighting. Having ten men would require more horses and negates the agility that made the chariot so effective.

⁷ They typically favored chariot archers over any other chariot tactics.