



The Kingdom United: David Crowned King Over All Israel (2 Sam 5-6)

Notes: Week Three

2 Samuel 5-6 (HCSB)

David, King of Israel

⁵ All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Here we are, your own flesh and blood.”^[a] ² Even while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led us out to battle and brought us back. The LORD also said to you, ‘You will shepherd My people Israel and be ruler over Israel.’”

³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron. King David made a covenant with them at Hebron in the LORD’s presence, and they anointed David king over Israel.

⁴ David was 30 years old when he began his reign; he reigned 40 years. ⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years over all Israel and Judah.

⁶ The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites who inhabited the land. The Jebusites had said to David: “You will never get in here. Even the blind and lame can repel you”; thinking, “David can’t get in here.”

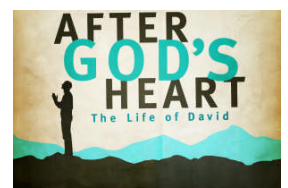
⁷ Yet David did capture the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. ⁸ He said that day, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites must go through the water shaft to reach the lame and the blind who are despised by David.”^[b] For this reason it is said, “The blind and the lame will never enter the house.”^[c]

⁹ David took up residence in the stronghold, which he named the city of David. He built it up all the way around from the supporting terraces inward. ¹⁰ David became more and more powerful, and the LORD God of Hosts was with him. ¹¹ King Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David; he also sent cedar logs, carpenters, and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. ¹² Then David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

¹³ After he arrived from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. ¹⁴ These are the names of those born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶ Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

¹⁷ When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they all went in search of David, but he heard about it and went down to the stronghold. ¹⁸ So the Philistines came and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.

¹⁹ Then David inquired of the LORD: “Should I go to war against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?”



The LORD replied to David, “Go, for I will certainly hand the Philistines over to you.”

²⁰ So David went to Baal-perazim and defeated them there and said, “Like a bursting flood, the LORD has burst out against my enemies before me.” Therefore, he named that place the Lord Bursts Out.^[d] ²¹ The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.

²² The Philistines came up again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ²³ So David inquired of the LORD, and He answered, “Do not make a frontal assault. Circle around behind them and attack them opposite the balsam trees. ²⁴ When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, act decisively, for then the LORD will have marched out ahead of you to attack the camp of the Philistines.” ²⁵ So David did exactly as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Geba to Gezer.

David Moves the Ark

6 David again assembled all the choice men in Israel, 30,000. ² He and all his troops set out to bring the ark of God from Baale-judah.^[e] The ark is called by the Name, the name of Yahweh of Hosts who dwells between the cherubim. ³ They set the ark of God on a new cart and transported it from Abinadab’s house, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio,^[f] sons of Abinadab, were guiding the cart ⁴ and brought it with the ark of God from Abinadab’s house on the hill. Ahio walked in front of the ark. ⁵ David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of fir wood instruments,^[g] lyres, harps, tambourines, sistrums,^[h] and cymbals.

⁶ When they came to Nacon’s threshing floor, Uzzah reached out to the ark of God and took hold of it because the oxen had stumbled. ⁷ Then the LORD’s anger burned against Uzzah, and God struck him dead on the spot for his irreverence, and he died there next to the ark of God. ⁸ David was angry because of the LORD’s outburst against Uzzah, so he named that place an Outburst Against Uzzah,^[i] as it is today. ⁹ David feared the LORD that day and said, “How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?” ¹⁰ So he was not willing to move the ark of the LORD to the city of David; instead, he took it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. ¹¹ The ark of the LORD remained in his house three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and his whole family.

¹² It was reported to King David: “The LORD has blessed Obed-edom’s family and all that belongs to him because of the ark of God.” So David went and had the ark of God brought up from Obed-edom’s house to the city of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those carrying the ark of the LORD advanced six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ David was dancing^[j] with all his might before the LORD wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁵ He and the whole house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of the ram’s horn. ¹⁶ As the ark of the LORD was entering the city of David, Saul’s daughter Michal looked down from the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent David had set up for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings in the LORD's presence. ¹⁸ When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of Hosts. ¹⁹ Then he distributed a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake to each one in the entire Israelite community, both men and women. Then all the people left, each to his own home.

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet him. "How the king of Israel honored himself today!" she said. "He exposed himself today in the sight of the slave girls of his subjects like a vulgar person would expose himself."

²¹ David replied to Michal, "I was dancing^[k] before the LORD who chose me over your father and his whole family to appoint me ruler over the LORD's people Israel. I will celebrate before the LORD, ²² and I will humble myself even more and humiliate myself.^{[l][m]} I will be honored by the slave girls you spoke about."²³ And Saul's daughter Michal had no child to the day of her death.

Footnotes:

- a. [2 Samuel 5:1](#) Lit *your bone and flesh*
- b. [2 Samuel 5:8](#) Alt Hb tradition, LXX, Tg, Syr read *who despise David*
- c. [2 Samuel 5:8](#) Or *temple, or palace*
- d. [2 Samuel 5:20](#) Or *Baal-perazim*; 2Sm 6:8; 1Ch 13:11
- e. [2 Samuel 6:2](#) = Kiriath-jearim in 1Sm 7:1; 1Ch 13:6; 2Ch 1:4
- f. [2 Samuel 6:3](#) Or *and his brothers*
- g. [2 Samuel 6:5](#) DSS, LXX read *with tuned instruments with strength, with songs*; 1Ch 13:8
- h. [2 Samuel 6:5](#) = an Egyptian percussion instrument
- i. [2 Samuel 6:8](#) Or *Perez-uzzah*; 2Sm 5:20
- j. [2 Samuel 6:14](#) Or *whirling*
- k. [2 Samuel 6:21](#) LXX; MT omits *I was dancing*
- l. [2 Samuel 6:22](#) LXX reads *more and I will be humble in your eyes*
- m. [2 Samuel 6:22](#) Lit *more and I will be humble in my own eyes*

Holman Christian Standard Bible - *Study Bible*¹

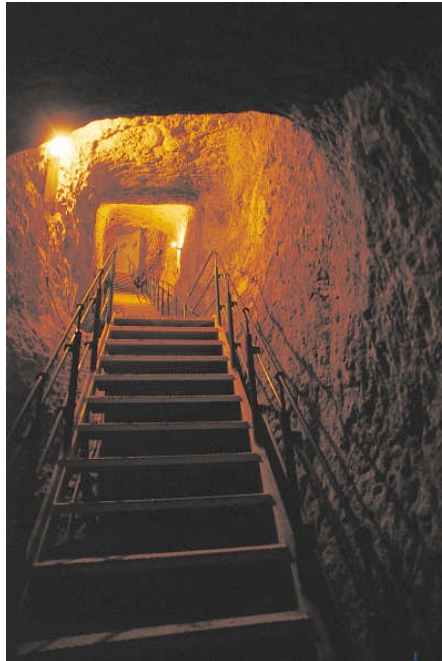
2 Samuel 5-6

2 Samuel 5

5:1 Representatives of all the tribes then came to David at Hebron. They were not his own flesh and blood as much as the Judahites were ([19:41-43](#)), but they were Israelites just like him.

5:3 In the LORD's presence (lit "before Yahweh") further confirmed God's blessing over David's reign.

5:5 The mention of Jerusalem anticipates David's conquest of the city and his making it his capital ([vv. 6-9](#)).



Some view David's moving Israel's capital from Hebron to Jerusalem as the most important geographical decision in the Bible. Shown here is Warren's Shaft, a channel through which water came into the fortified Jebusite citadel from the Gihon Spring ([2Sam 5:8](#)). This shaft was discovered in 1867 by Sir Charles Warren, a British Army officer and archaeologist.

5:6 The Jebusites had held at least a district of Jerusalem since the days of Joshua ([Jos 15:63](#)), and they thought their city was invincible.

5:7 Zion was a poetic name for Jerusalem; its exact meaning is unknown. The size of Jebusite Jerusalem was only about 12 acres (David subsequently expanded it somewhat), with a population estimated at around 1,500. Nonetheless, the city would serve the king well.

5:8 Water shaft may designate an almost 50-foot vertical shaft (today called "Warren's Shaft" after Charles Warren who discovered it) cut through rock from the Gihon Spring, Jerusalem's main water source. David's reference to the blind and the lame should be understood as a mocking taunt of the Jebusites who were not, in fact, able to defend their city.

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "2 Samuel 5-6".

5:9 Archaeological excavations have revealed some of David's supporting terraces on the city's eastern slope. David's choice of Jerusalem as his capital was a strategic move. It was more centrally located than Hebron, and it was located in Benjamin, the tribe of Saul. The northern tribes probably applauded this move because it promoted healing and unity among the tribes following the bitter civil war.

5:10 The phrase the Lord God of Hosts was with him shows that Yahweh was the true source of David's power and greatness.

5:11 King Hiram of Tyre, the leader of a wealthy Phoenician port city, sought to placate David through building assistance. He would later partner with David's son, Solomon, in the building of Israel's temple ([1Ki 5:1-12](#)).

5:12 David had a clear understanding that he was playing the role for which God had prepared him for the sake of...Israel.

5:13-16 Of the sons... born to David in Jerusalem, only Solomon would later play a role in the biblical account ([12:24-25](#); [1Ki 1:33-40](#)).

5:17 The Philistines heard about David's unification of Israel; now he stood as their enemy. They marched against him as he gathered his forces at the stronghold, Jerusalem, his new capital ([vv. 7,9](#)).

5:18 The Valley of Rephaim lay just southwest of Jerusalem.

5:19 David inquired of the Lord as he had on many other key occasions ([1Sam 23:2,9-12](#); [30:7-8](#)). The Philistines were a major threat to Saul and ultimately killed him; David, however, sought the Lord's guidance and received assurance of victory.

5:20 David was quick to give God the credit for his victory over the Philistines.

5:21 The Philistines abandoned their idols, and David and his men carried them off presumably to destroy them (cp. [1Ch 14:12](#) and note there).

5:23 God added a particular strategy to his encouragement of David to engage the Philistines again.

5:24 The sound of marching in the balsam trees was possibly produced by strong winds that typically would come up in the afternoon combined with an undisclosed act of God. When the Israelites heard this distinct sound, they would know God was marching before them, leading them to victory.

5:25 David cut off the Philistines' path of retreat and they had to flee northward down the Aijalon Valley instead of toward Gezer.

2 Samuel 6

6:1 David wanted a large and representative delegation, so he assembled choice men in Israel.

6:2 Baale-judah was also known as Kiriath-jearim, located in Benjamin. The ark of God had been there since Samuel's days ([1Sam 7:1](#)). The cherubim adorned the mercy seat atop the ark, stretching their wings toward each other ([Ex 25:20](#)).

6:3 The people set the ark... on a new cart instead of carrying it on poles as the law prescribed ([Ex 25:12-15](#)). The people of God did no better than the pagan Philistines had done ([1Sam 6:7](#)). This decision would have disastrous consequences ([2Sam 6:6-7](#)).

6:4 On Abinadab's house on the hill, see note at [1Sam 7:1](#).

6:6-7 The site of Nacon's threshing floor is unknown. Uzzah meant well when he tried to steady the ark when the oxen... stumbled, but God struck him dead for his irreverence. Good intentions must be coupled with proper reverence when approaching God (cp. [Heb 12:29](#)).

6:8 David's anger was perhaps due to Uzzah's carelessness that led to God's anger being displayed. The king had not wanted such a joyous celebration to be marred by death. It is also possible that David's anger was directed at God, for humans often fail to comprehend God's justice.

6:9 David feared the Lord that day in a way he had never done before. His question was prompted by his own sense of sinfulness and uncleanness, and his realization of the holiness of God.

6:10 The ark of the Lord ended up at the house of Obed-edom ([1Ch 15:16-18](#)). Gittite probably does not designate someone from Gath ([21:19](#); [1Sam 17:4](#)), but a person who lived near an olive press or wine press (Hb *gath*).

6:11 David delayed his plan for three months, perhaps to ensure the time of God's wrath had passed ([v. 12](#)), or perhaps out of reverent fear ([v. 9](#)).

6:13 David's sacrifice of an ox and a fattened calf after the ark had barely moved probably reveals he still had some concerns about the Lord's anger over the previous incident with Uzzah.

6:14 A linen ephod was a fine garment, typically worn by priests or Levites ([Ex 28:6](#); [1Sam 2:18](#)). Although David was dancing in worship before the Lord, the text does not indicate he actually assumed a priestly role. We should not understand [verse 13](#) as meaning David actually performed the sacrifice, though he certainly was leading his people in worship.

6:16 The text states one reason why Saul's daughter Michal... saw King David and despised him in her heart is that his actions seemed vulgar to her (cp. [v. 20](#) and note there). In addition to this, perhaps she was not sincere in her faith in the Lord ([1Sam 19:13](#)), or perhaps she was angry that David had taken her back from Paltiel ([2Sam 3:13-16](#)).

6:17 Burnt offerings marked general dedication to God, while fellowship offerings were sacrificial meals shared by priests and worshipers. Fellowship offerings were often offered for special blessings, and bringing the ark to Jerusalem certainly would have qualified as a blessing.

[6:20](#) Michal disapproved of David's dancing before the slave girls of his subjects, and she suggested his actions at least bordered on the vulgar. As a daughter of a king herself, she may have wanted King David to be more aloof from the common people.

[6:21](#) David responded sharply. He had danced before the Lord to celebrate God's goodness on his life. God had chosen him to succeed Saul, Michal's father, as well as Saul's whole family. David's mention of the whole family was a subtle jab at Michal as well. Perhaps Michal was more a daughter of Saul than she was a wife of David.

[6:22](#) Michal apparently did not think David should humble himself by celebrating as he did, but David insisted that he had acted appropriately and would continue to do so.

[6:23](#) Some suggest Michal's childlessness was the result of God's direct judgment, but the text is not clear on this. Her childlessness may have resulted from her and David having no conjugal relations due to the obvious tension in their marriage.

English Standard Version - *Study Bible*² 2 Samuel 5-6

2 Samuel 5

[5:1-25](#) It is not clear how soon the events of [ch. 5](#) followed those of [ch. 4](#) (see note on [2:10-11](#)). Presumably the deaths of Abner and Ish-bosheth caused a shock among David's supporters in the north ([3:19](#)) and caused them to put off accepting David as king. Some of the shock seems to have remained at the time this account was written. David apparently just bided his time, waiting for the elders of Israel to decide that they wanted him as king.

[5:1-5](#) At last, David is accepted and anointed as king over the entire house of Israel. First, messengers from **all the tribes** come and ask him to become king; then the **elders of Israel** come themselves. David makes a **covenant** with them as representatives of the nation (cf. [1 Sam. 10:25](#)), and they anoint him **king over Israel** (cf. [1 Sam. 11:15](#)). David is one of them (see [Deut. 17:15](#)), he is a proven military leader, and he is the chosen of the Lord. Many critical scholars argue that the Bible contains little historically reliable information regarding David and his rule. Some believe it is mere fabrication. But no persuasive evidence contradicting the biblical account has been found. In 1993, an inscription was found at Tell Dan that mentions the "house of David," and it dates to the ninth century B.C. The term "house of David" may also appear on the Moabite stone that comes from the same century.

[5:1](#) **we are your bone and flesh.** Even though there is a distinct division between Judah and the rest of Israel, they still recognize each other as kin (cf. "brothers," [2:26-27](#)).

[5:6-25](#) **Jerusalem, the City of David.** David captures the Jebusite city of Jerusalem to serve as the capital of his united Israel. He builds a palace in his royal city and continues to have children there. He also defeats the Philistines.

2. Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "2 Samuel 5-6".

5:6-13 The account of David's kingship over Israel starts with the capture of **Jerusalem**, on the boundary between Judah and Benjamin. It had not been controlled by any tribe, and thus it was both symbolically and geographically better suited to be the capital of all Israel than Hebron (in central Judah). Jerusalem was the "Salem" of Melchizedek ([Gen. 14:18](#)). It has been fortified since the Middle Bronze Age, i.e., the first half of the second millennium B.C. In the second half of the millennium it was one of the city-states of Canaan that was under the influence of Egypt. Several letters from the king of Jerusalem to the pharaoh exist among the fourteenth-century Amarna letters. The Jebusites are listed among the Canaanites in [Gen. 10:16](#) and, broadly speaking, were considered to be among the Amorites ([Josh. 10:5](#)). The city was too strong to be conquered at the time of Joshua ([Josh. 15:63](#); [Judg. 1:21](#)). The Jebusite city, **the stronghold of Zion**, was located on the western slope of the Kidron Valley above the city's water source, the spring of Gihon. An extensive network of water tunnels has been excavated, one of which was probably the **water shaft** through which David's men entered the city. This water shaft is often identified with "Warren's Shaft," which is directly over the water channel near the spring, though recent archaeological finds have challenged this. According to [1 Chron. 11:6](#), Joab led the attack and was therefore made David's chief commander.

5:6-8 the blind and the lame will ward you off. The Jebusites probably meant that the fortifications were so strong that the city needed no able-bodied defenders. David quotes their words in ordering the attack, referring to the Jebusite defenders as "the blind and the lame." **The blind and the lame shall not come into the house** may mean that the Jebusites were not allowed at David's court.

5:6 The Canaanite or Jebusite city of **Jerusalem** was located on a hill known as "Ophel." It is located in the southeastern part of the modern city. The Ophel was inhabited as far back as the Chalcolithic period (3rd millennium B.C.). The city is mentioned in Egyptian texts from the twentieth century B.C.

5:8 water shaft. See note on [vv. 6-13](#).

5:9 the Millo. Cf. [1 Kings 9:15, 24](#); [11:27](#); [1 Chron. 11:8](#); [2 Chron. 32:5](#). The Hebrew word means "the fill." It was a series of terrace walls, built on a steep slope, supporting the fill behind it in order to create level areas. Houses were then built on these artificial platforms, which were connected by narrow staircases. It was apparently the king's duty to look after this construction. During heavy rainfalls, the fill became heavy and increased the pressure on the terrace walls, thus requiring regular maintenance of these walls. When this construction was neglected, the houses would fall down the steep slope and the city would disintegrate. Remains of these supporting walls have been found on the eastern slope of the city of David.

5:10 For the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him, as he was when David was first anointed in [1 Sam. 16:18](#).

5:11 Hiram king of Tyre is mentioned in [1 Kings 5:1-18](#) as a friend of Solomon who provides the cedars to build the temple, just as here he provides David with cedars to build his house. Tyre was a trading empire, and it was in its interest to keep the inland trade routes, especially those through Israel to Egypt, open to its merchants. According to Josephus, however, Hiram did not begin to reign until near the end of David's own reign. If that is correct, either this construction should be dated toward the end of David's reign or the Hiram in 1 Kings is the successor (probably son) of the Hiram here, who continued his father's good relationship with David. The cedars of Lebanon (which have now all but disappeared) were famous throughout the Near East. There are Assyrian reliefs of men cutting them down and transporting them to Nineveh.

5:13-14 This is a summary statement about David's kingship in Jerusalem (cf. [3:2-5](#)); it does not mean that these sons were all born before [5:17](#). The birth of **Solomon** is mentioned in [12:24](#). None of the other sons play a major role in the Samuel-Kings narratives. The parallel passages [1 Chron. 3:5-8](#) and [14:4-7](#)

list two more sons in addition, and comparison with a Dead Sea Scroll suggests that the two names might have been omitted in the Masoretic text of Samuel. **Nathan** ([2 Sam. 5:14](#)) was an ancestor of Jesus ([Luke 3:31](#); see note on [Luke 3:23-38](#)), as was Solomon ([Matt. 1:6-7](#)).

[5:17-21](#) Until now the **Philistines** may have considered that David was to some extent still their vassal ([1 Samuel 27](#)); at least they must have been happy about his struggle with Ish-bosheth. But when David becomes **king over Israel** (i.e., both Israel and Judah) and even captures Jerusalem, they realize that he is a threat. **went down to the stronghold**. This is probably a stronghold toward the Philistine country. The **Valley of Rephaim** is the valley leading toward Jerusalem from the southwest. The incident in [2 Sam. 23:13-17](#) may have happened at this time. **David inquired of the LORD** as he did in [1 Sam. 23:2, 11; 30:8](#); and [2 Sam. 2:1](#). **like a bursting flood**. Throughout the ancient Near East writings, battles are described in terms of floods. “Baal” in **Baal-perazim** is here a common noun meaning “lord” (see note on [4:4](#)). **The Philistines left their idols there** ([5:21](#)) is a reversal of [1 Samuel 4](#), where the Philistines carried off the ark of the covenant. According to [1 Chron. 14:12](#), David had the idols burned.

David Defeats the Philistines *c. 1000 B.C.*

Soon after David moved his capital to Jerusalem, the Philistines prepared to attack David’s forces at the nearby Valley of Rephaim. David defeated them, but they regrouped and prepared for a second attack. This time David attacked them from the rear and struck them down from Geba (or perhaps Gibeon) to Gezer.



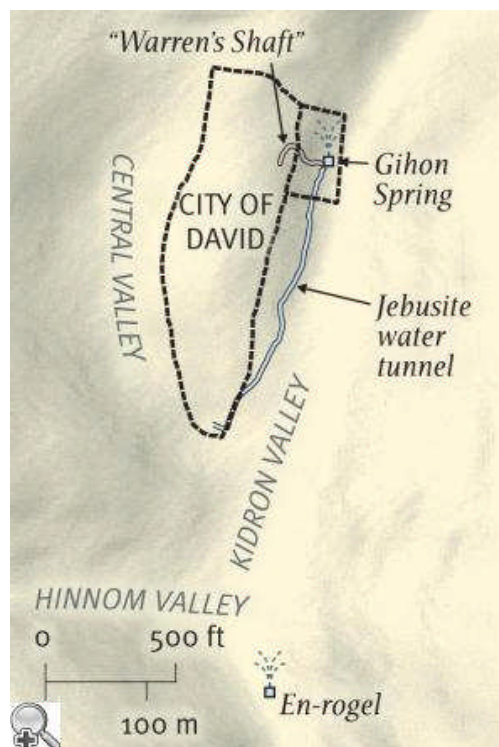
[5:22-25](#) It may be that the **sound of marching** was a distinct sound caused by the Lord that frightened the Philistines (as in [2 Kings 7:6](#)). Another possibility is that the Philistines knew the sound was the sound of **trees**, so David was able to use the sound as cover for his attack. By this victory, David drove the Philistines out of the central hill country.

2 Samuel 6

6:1-23 Zion, the Place of Worship. Jerusalem was not only to be the political capital of a united Israel, it was to be the religious center also. David brought the ark of the Lord of hosts from Baale-judah, where it had been most of the time ever since the Philistines returned it in [1 Samuel 6](#). [Psalm 132](#) refers to this occasion.

David Captures the Stronghold of Zion *c. 1005 B.C.*

After securing his reign over all Israel, David moved his capital from Hebron, a southern city of Judah, to a more central and tribally neutral location at Jerusalem. At the time, Jerusalem (called “the stronghold of Zion”) was held by the Jebusites, and its terraced defensive walls and nearby steep hills and valleys made it seem impenetrable. But David sent men up a water shaft (believed by some to be Warren’s Shaft) to capture the stronghold, and he renamed it the city of David.



6:1-2 Baale-judah. In [1 Sam. 7:1](#), the name of the city where the ark was kept is given as Kiriath-jearim; the fact that the name by David’s time was Baale-judah suggests that [1 Sam. 4:1-7:2](#) existed as an earlier set of narratives and was carefully fit to the larger context of the books. **the LORD of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim.** See note on [1 Sam. 4:3-4](#).

6:3-4 They carried the ark on a new cart. Presumably this refers to a ritually clean cart, as the Philistines had done when returning the ark ([1 Sam. 6:7](#)). But that was not the method that the Lord had commanded his people to use. Rather, God’s command was that the ark should be carried by the Levites, using poles placed through rings on the sides of the ark (see [Ex. 25:14-15](#); [Num. 4:15](#); [7:9](#); [Deut. 10:8](#); [31:9](#), [25](#); cf. [Josh. 3:15](#)). **Uzzah and Ahio** were probably brothers of Eleazar (cf. [1 Sam. 7:1](#)), though they may have been sons, since it is phonetically possible that “Uzzah” is a variation of “Eleazar,” similar to the variants “Uzziel” in [1 Chron. 25:4](#) and “Azarel” in [1 Chron. 25:18](#) or King Uzziah ([2 Kings 15:32-34](#); [2 Chron. 26:1](#)) and Azariah ([2 Kings 15:1-7](#)).

6:5 Before the LORD, as in [Ex. 28:29](#), means that the Lord himself was present above the ark (see note on [1 Sam. 4:3-4](#)). Both this passage and [1 Sam. 4:1-7:2](#) show that the ark was not just an arbitrary symbol of God's presence, but God himself manifested his presence in a special way where the ark was, so the ark should not be treated lightly. **with songs and lyres**. Music is part of worship in most societies, and it was an important part of Israelite worship. The prophets in [1 Sam. 10:5](#) were accompanied by harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre. David sings God's praises in [2 Sam. 22:50](#), and in his old age he organized musicians to praise the Lord in the temple ([1 Chron. 15:16](#); [23:1-5](#)). The Psalms contain many references to using music in worship, as in [Psalms 32](#); [71](#); [92](#); [149](#); and [150](#). For descriptions of lyres, **harps**, and **tambourines**, see note on [1 Sam. 10:5](#). The word translated **castanets** appears only here in the Bible. Since it means "shaking," "castanets" is a reasonable guess. It might also be a "sistrum," an instrument consisting of metal rings or disks shaken on rods. There were various types of **cymbals** in the ancient Near East; some were several inches in diameter. Some were held upright while playing, like the modern orchestral cymbal; in other cases, the two cymbals of the pair were held horizontally with rods, one above the other. If one follows the alternative translation in the ESV footnote (reading "fir trees" for "songs") the meaning may be "branches of fir trees" (cf. [Matt. 21:8](#)), or "instruments made of fir wood."

6:6-11 and God struck him down (v. 7). The death of Uzzah resembles the outbreak against Bethshemesh in [1 Sam. 6:19](#). Touching the ark was a direct violation of God's law ([Num. 4:15](#)). Even though Uzzah's motive was clearly to prevent desecration, his fault was occasioned by the earlier mistake in the mode of transporting the ark (see note on [2 Sam. 6:3-4](#)). **afraid of the LORD**. This incident was a dramatic reminder to David of God's holiness and of the necessity of approaching God only according to his revealed instruction, so much so that David was afraid even to bring the ark back to Jerusalem.

6:11 and the LORD blessed Obed-edom. The presence of the Lord brings much blessing to the household where the Lord is honored.

6:12-15 those who bore the ark. This time the ark is carried, as is proper ([v. 13](#); [1 Chron. 15:12-15](#); see also [2 Sam. 15:24](#)). The text may indicate that only one sacrifice was offered at the beginning of the journey, when they **had gone six steps**. But some interpreters think it means that David sacrificed every six steps. There are other references to repeated sacrifices in relation to processions in Near Eastern literature. Solomon also sacrificed a huge number of animals when he dedicated the temple ([1 Kings 8:63](#)). **he sacrificed**. Here and in [2 Sam. 6:17](#) it is doubtful that David himself killed all the animals, but it was done at his direction, and this emphasizes that he was the central figure in the retrieval of the ark. David's **ephod** was the simple linen robe worn by priests (cf. [1 Sam. 2:18](#)). The ram's **horn** was an instrument used especially for signaling. **with rejoicing**. David is filled with joy because the ark coming to Jerusalem means that God himself is bringing the blessing of his presence to David and his kingdom.

6:14 David danced before the LORD. The term for "dancing" in [vv. 14](#) and [16](#) does not appear elsewhere in Scripture and seems to describe a whirling dance. Dancing expresses joy (cf. [Ex. 15:20-21](#); [Ps. 30:11](#)) and can be a part of jubilant worship (cf. [Ps. 149:3](#); [150:4](#)).

6:16-19 Michal... despised him in her heart. Michal is identified not as David's wife but as the **daughter of Saul**, and she shares in Saul's lack of spiritual discernment. She should have been rejoicing with David "and all the house of Israel" ([v. 5](#)) at this great occasion, for the Lord himself was coming to dwell in the midst of his people in Jerusalem. The motif of a royal woman looking out a palace **window** is common in the Bible (see [Judg. 5:28](#); [2 Kings 9:30](#)), as well as on ivories discovered in Syria, Phoenicia, and Israel. The **tent** corresponds to the tabernacle of [Exodus 26](#). These gift items are mentioned in a list formula, as in [1 Sam. 6:17](#) and [25:18](#).

6:20-23 Although David returns to the members of his household for the purpose of blessing them, he is greeted by his wife Michal's sarcastic comment, "**How the king of Israel honored himself today.**" No doubt she felt he should have worn his royal robes as would befit a king, but David stresses that he was dressed simply **before the LORD**. Michal accuses David of **uncovering himself**, which seems to be a reflection more of Michal's bitterness and contempt for David than a true statement of fact. The "linen ephod" worn by David ([v. 14](#)) was a simple white garment worn by priests in the fulfillment of their duties ([1 Sam. 22:18](#)). **had no child**. The text does not say what caused her childlessness, leaving the reader to reflect on whether it was a natural result of the rift between Michal and David, or whether it was due to God's judgment of Michal (as would seem to be the case) for her contempt toward David in his divinely appointed role as king of Israel.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

2 Samuel 5-6

5:3-5 This was the third time David was anointed king. First he was privately anointed by Samuel ([1 Samuel 16:13](#)). Then he was made king over the tribe of Judah ([2:4](#)). Finally he was crowned king over all Israel. David's life as an outlaw had looked bleak, but God's promise to make him king over all Israel was now being fulfilled. Although the kingdom would be divided again in less than 75 years, David's dynasty would reign over Judah, the southern kingdom, for over 400 years.

5:4, 5 David did not become king over all Israel until he was 37 years old, although he had been promised the kingdom many years earlier ([1 Samuel 16:13](#)). During those years, David had to wait patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise. If you feel pressured to achieve instant results and success, remember David's patience. Just as his time of waiting prepared him for his important task, a waiting period may help prepare you by strengthening your character.

5:6 The fortress of Zion (which became the city of Jerusalem) was located on a high ridge near the center of the united Israelite kingdom. It was considered neutral territory because it stood on the border of the territory of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and it was still occupied by the Jebusites, a Canaanite tribe that had never been expelled from the land ([Judges 1:21](#)). Because of its strategic advantages, David made Jerusalem his capital.

5:6, 7 The Jebusites had a clear military advantage, and they boasted of their security behind the impregnable walls of Zion. But they soon discovered that their walls would not protect them. David caught them by surprise by entering the city through the water tunnel.

Only in God are we truly safe and secure. Anything else is false security. Whether you are surrounded by mighty walls of stone, a comfortable home, or a secure job, no one can predict what tomorrow may bring. Our relationship with God is the only security that cannot be taken away.

5:12 "David realized that the LORD had confirmed him as king...." Although the pagan kingdoms based their greatness on conquest, power, armies, and wealth, David knew that his greatness came only from God. To be great means keeping a close relationship with God personally and nationally. To do this, David had to keep his ambition under control. Although he was famous, successful, and well liked, he gave God first place in his life and served the people according to God's purposes. Do you seek greatness from God or from people? In the drive for success, remember to keep your ambition under God's control.

5:17 "The stronghold" is the mountain stronghold in the wilderness of Judah that David used when defending himself against Saul (see [23:14](#) and [1 Chronicles 12:8](#)).

5:17 The Philistine oppression of Israel had begun in the days of Samson ([Judges 13-16](#)). The Philistines were still Israel's most powerful enemy although David was once considered a friend and ally ([1 Samuel 27; 29](#)). Because they occupied much of Israel's northern territory, they apparently did not bother David while he was king of Judah to the south. But when they learned that David was planning to unite all Israel, they tried to stop him.

5:19 How could David get such a clear message from God? He may have prayed and been urged to action by the Holy Spirit. He may have asked God through a prophet. Most likely, however, he went to the high priest, who consulted God through the Urim and Thummim that God had told the Israelites to

3. *Life Application Study Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 470-473.

use for just such a purpose. (For more on the Urim and Thummim, see the notes on [Leviticus 8:8](#) and [1 Samuel 10:20](#).)

5:19-25 David fought his battles the way God instructed him. In each instance he (1) asked if he should fight or not, (2) followed instructions carefully, and (3) gave God the glory. We can err in our "battles" by ignoring these steps and instead (1) do what we want without considering God's will, (2) do things our way and ignore advice in the Bible or from other wise people, and (3) take the glory ourselves or give it to someone else with out acknowledging the help we received from God. All these responses are sinful.

Criticizing God's Leaders		
It is dangerous to criticize God's leaders. Consider the consequences for these men and women.		
<i>Person/Situation</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Miriam: Mocked Moses because he had a Cushite wife	Stricken with leprosy	Numbers 12
Korah and followers: Led the people of Israel to rebel against Moses' leadership	Swallowed by the earth	Numbers 16
Michal: Despised David because he danced before the Lord	Remained childless	2 Samuel 6
Shimei: Cursed and threw stones at David	Executed at Solomon's order	2 Samuel 16 ; 1 Kings 2
Youths: Mocked Elisha and laughed at his baldness	Killed by bears	2 Kings 2
Sanballat and Tobiah: Spread rumors and lies to stop the building of Jerusalem's walls	Frightened and humiliated	Nehemiah 2 ; 4 ; 6
Hananiah: Contradicted Jeremiah's prophecies with false predictions	Died two months later	Jeremiah 28
Bar-Jesus, a sorcerer: Lied about Paul in an attempt to turn the governor against him	Stricken with blindness	Acts 13

5:25 After David became king, his first order of business was to subdue his enemies—a task the nation had failed to complete when they first entered the land ([Judges 2:1-4](#)). David knew this had to be done in order to (1) protect the nation, (2) unify the kingdom, and (3) prepare for building the Temple (which would unify religion under God and help abolish idolatrous influences).

Chapter 6

6:3 The Ark of God was Israel's national treasure and was ordinarily kept in the Tabernacle. When the Ark was returned to Israel after a brief Philistine captivity ([1 Samuel 4:1-7:2](#)), it was kept in Abinadab's home for 20 years. David saw how God blessed Abinadab, and he wanted to bring the Ark to Jerusalem to ensure God's blessing on the entire nation. (See the notes on [Exodus 37:1](#) and [Joshua 3:2-4](#) for more information on the Ark.)

6:6, 7 Uzzah was only trying to protect the Ark, so was God's anger against Uzzah just? According to [Numbers 4:5-15](#), the Ark was to be moved only by the Levites, who were to carry it using the carrying poles—they were *never* to touch the Ark itself. To touch it was a capital offense under Hebrew law ([Numbers 4:15](#)). God's action was directed against both David and Uzzah. David placed the Ark on a cart, following the Philistines' example ([1 Samuel 6:7, 8](#)) rather than God's commands. Uzzah, though sincere in his desire to protect the Ark, had to face the consequences of the sin of touching it. Also, Uzzah may not have been a Levite. As David sought to bring Israel back into a relationship with God, God had to remind the nation dramatically that enthusiasm must be accompanied by obedience to his laws. The next time David tried to bring the Ark to Jerusalem, he was careful to handle it correctly ([1 Chronicles 15:1-15](#)).

6:8-12 David was angry that a well-meaning man had been killed and that his plans for a joyous return of the Ark had been spoiled ([6:8](#)). He undoubtedly knew that the fault was his own for transporting the Ark carelessly. After cooling down, he had the Ark put into temporary storage while he waited to see if the Lord would allow him to bring it to Jerusalem. This also gave David time to consider the right way to transport the Ark. The fact that God blessed the home of Obed-edom was a sign to David that he could try once again to move the Ark to Jerusalem.

6:14 David wore a priestly garment, possibly because it was a religious celebration.

6:16ff Michal was David's first wife, but here she is called daughter of Saul, possibly to show how similar her attitude was to her father's. Her contempt for David probably did not start with David's grand entrance into the city. Perhaps she thought it was undignified to be so concerned with public worship at a time when it was so unimportant in the kingdom. Or maybe she thought it was not fitting for a king to display such emotion. She may have resented David's taking her from Palti (see the note on [3:13, 14](#)). Whatever the reason, this contempt she felt toward her husband escalated into a difficult confrontation, and Michal ended up childless for life. Feelings of bitterness and resentment that go unchecked will destroy a relationship. Deal with your feelings before they escalate into open warfare.

6:17 Only a priest could place the sacrifices on the altar. [Leviticus 1:2-13](#) indicates that anyone who was ceremonially clean could assist a priest in offering the sacrifice (see the notes on [Joshua 3:5](#); [1 Samuel 20:26](#)). So David probably offered these sacrifices to God with the aid of a priest. Solomon did the same ([1 Kings 8:62-65](#)).

Michal

Sometimes love is not enough—especially if that love is little more than the strong emotional attraction that grows between a hero and an admirer. To Michal, Saul's daughter, the courageous young David must have seemed like a dream come true. Her feelings about this hero gradually became obvious to others, and eventually, her father heard about her love for David. He saw this as an opportunity to get rid of his rival for the people's loyalty. He promised Michal's hand in marriage in exchange for David's success in the impossible task of killing 100 Philistines. But David was victorious, and so Saul lost a daughter and saw his rival become even more popular with the people.

Michal's love for David did not have time to be tested by the realities of marriage. Instead, she became involved in saving David's life. Her quick thinking helped him escape, but it resulted in Saul's anger and her separation from David. Her father gave her to another man, Palti, but David eventually took her back.

Unlike her brother Jonathan, Michal did not have the kind of deep relationship with God that would have helped her through the difficulties in her life. Instead, she became bitter. She could not share David's joyful worship of God, so she hated it. As a result, she never bore David any children.

Beyond feeling sorry for her, we need to see Michal as a person mirroring our own tendencies. How quickly and easily we become bitter with life's unexpected turns. But bitterness cannot remove or change the bad things that have happened. Often bitterness only makes a bad situation worse. On the other hand, a willingness to respond to God gives him the opportunity to bring good out of the difficult situations. That willingness has two parts: asking God for his guidance and looking for that guidance in his Word.

Strengths and accomplishments

- Loved David and became his first wife
- Saved David's life
- Could think and act quickly when it was needed

Weaknesses and mistakes

- Lied under pressure
- Allowed herself to become bitter over her circumstances
- In her unhappiness, she hated David for loving God

Lessons from her life

- We are not as responsible for what happens to us as we are for how we respond to our circumstances
- Disobedience to God almost always harms others as well as harming us

Key verse

"But as the Ark of the LORD entered the City of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked down from her window. When she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she was filled with contempt for him" ([2 Samuel 6:16](#)).

Michal's story is told in [1 Samuel 14-2 Samuel 6](#). She is also mentioned in [1 Chronicles 15:29](#).

