



1 Chronicles 12-14

Tape #7125
I Chronicles 12-14
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to I Chronicles, chapter twelve. Now in the twelfth chapter of Chronicles, we have those men that began to gather unto David. It would appear that we are looking at those that gathered to David in four different areas, or at four different times.

When Saul was pursuing David, David finally fled for his life to the Philistine city of Gath, and under the protection of king Achish. David then said to king Achish, "Look the company that I have are too many, we're crowding the city of Gath. Why don't you just appoint me a territory to live?". So, he gave to David, Ziklag. The exact location we do not know, but it is somewhere south of Jerusalem, and probably somewhere southeast of Gath. There, David and his men began to dwell, sort of in exile, having fled from Saul's insane anger.

While David was at Ziklag, these are the men who began to gather to him, in verses one through seven. The men from the tribe of Benjamin, which was Saul's tribe. The Benjamites were always known for their toughness. These guys were really tough. They were always it seems, skillful. It was a art or whatever, that was passed down, of using the sling. It says at one spot, concerning the men of Benjamin, there was a certain number of them, that at about a hundred yards, or so, with a sling, could split a hair. I mean, they were really accurate with those slings!

Here at Ziklag, they're gathered together these men of Benjamin, who were skillful archers, as well as men who were capable in using the sling. It seems that the men of Benjamin, were many of them left-handed. At another place it talks about them using their left hands, and here it talks about them being ambidextrous, in that they were equally skillful with their left hand, or their right hand, in the hurling of stones. It is an interesting thing, there is a psychological term called, positive transference. That is, if you are normally right handed, if you will learn to do a task with your left hand, you will automatically be able to do it with your right hand, because of in the brain there is this positive transference, from the left to the right, if you are normally right handed.

Doctor Lorenz, a skillful surgeon, famed Austrian, in the teaching of his students, taught them if they were right handed, always to do the procedures with their left hands. Because, there are places when you are working with a person that you can't always get your right hand around to work on them correctly, so if you learn to work with your left hand, and do the intricate procedures with your left hand, you have the positive transference, and you can do it equally well, with the right hand, without trying, or without learning with the right hand.

So, these men, whether or not they were left-handed, but just were right-handed, but learned to use their left hand, in using the sling, you had the positive transference, and they were then able to do it equally well with the right hand.

When I was growing up, I used to love to throw rocks. We lived out in the country, sort of, and so we were always throwing clods, in the bean fields, and in the walnut orchard at the walnuts in the trees, after the walnuts had most of them fallen, you go out and there was still walnuts hanging in the tree, and we would throw rocks at them. I decided to learn to throw with my left hand, though I was right-handed. Same with batting, I learned to bat left-handed, though I was right-handed. It is interesting, this positive transference. You learn the skill with the opposite side, and it positive, there was this positive transfer over to the other side.

These men of Benjamin, used either hand. Skillful with both hands. Then it gives the names of the fellows, which we're not going to bore you with. Verse eight.

The men of Gadites came to David when he was in the hold of the wilderness [Now having moved on from Ziklag, to probably the area of Abdulum. These men from the tribe of Gad came. Now Gad was over on the other side of the Jordan river, is where the Gadites had settled, and they came to David there in the

hold of the wilderness.] *and they were [men of might] men of war they were ready for battle, they could handle the shield and the buckler, their faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as the deer upon the mountains (12:8).*

I love these men that gathered to David. There are periods of history, in which I have thought that I would have like to have lived. There are events of history I've always felt I would've enjoyed participating in. One of those eras of history that I would've enjoyed, was the era of David. I would've loved to have been one of David's men! I've long been an admirer of David. These guys living out there in the wilderness, rugged and tough as nails, and just these Gadites, "like deer on the mountains"! And, when they came to join David, the Jordan river, it was in the month of March, and traditionally the flood time, and Jordan was flooding. These guys swam across the river that was overflowing its banks, to join David. Just a rugged bunch of fellows. Verse fifteen.

These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, [Which would be the end of March.] when it had overflowed all his banks; and they put to flight all of them in the valleys, both toward the east, and toward the west. Then there came the children of Benjamin and Judah unto the hold, [Again, which was probably Abdulum.] unto David. And David went out to meet them, and he asked them, If you have come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit to you: but if you have come to betray me to my enemies, seeing that there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look upon it and rebuke it (12:15-17).

So, "If you've come to be my friend, welcome fellows! If you've come to betray me, then let God deal with you, because I'm innocent". It is interesting to me, that if they had come to hurt, or to harm David, by betrayal, rather than saying, "I'll get you guys!", he commits them to God. I have found that God will be our defense.

The scripture promises that, "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper". For this is the heritage of the children of the Lord. I have found that if you are wrongfully accused, or someone comes against you wrongfully, because of your commitment to the Lord, the Lord will take care of you. The Lord will be your defense. I have also found, that if I seek to defend myself, He'll let me. In other words, if I trust in Him, He'll take care of the situation. But, if I trust in myself, then He'll let me flounder on my own.

It is fascinating to me that David, "If they have impure or improper motives in coming here, then let God take care of you". He's not threatening personal kind of vengeance or whatever upon them, but is willing to commit the case to God. "I'll let God take care of it."

Now the spirit of God came upon Amasa, [This is one of the places where we read again, of God's Spirit coming upon a man. "The spirit came upon Amasa,"] who was the chief of the captains, and he said to David, Thine are we, we're on your side, thou son of Jesse: ["David, we belong to you. We're on your side."] peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to your helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. [There was the recognition and the growing recognition among the people that God was working through David. That the hand of God was upon his life, and that God was blessing him. This was the gradual consciousness of the people, as they saw David, as they watched him, and saw how God was with him, and blessed him, gave him victory over his enemies. There came slowly to the people, this recognition. Now interestingly enough, it would infer in the text that here the recognition came as a result of God's Spirit upon Amasa. Declaring, "Look, we're with you. We're on your side. May you be blessed, those that help you be blessed. For God is helping you".] So David received them, and made them captains of the band. And then there fell some of Manasseh to David, [And this is a different time and group] when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they didn't help the Philistines: fro the lords of the Philistines upon advisement [Or with counsel.] sent them away, saying, If the battle gets tough, David and his men will join with Saul and turn against us (12:18-19).

When David was dwelling in Ziklag with the Philistines, having fled from Saul, he had formed a sort of alliance with Achish, the king of Gath. So when he went to march against Israel, and against king Saul, this was the time when Saul was defeated, and killed. Achish originally invited David to go along with him for battle, and David said, "You know, my men are yours. Let's go." But then when the other lords of the Philistines saw David and his group, they said to Achish, "What in the world are you doing bringing David in? Isn't this the guy that they sing about? He killed his tens of thousands? Isn't this the one that killed

Goliath? Send him home! We don't want him fighting with us! If the battle starts going tough against Saul, then he'll turn, and his heart will be knit back to Saul again. So get rid of him."

Now at that time, some of the men from Manasseh had come to help David. So they returned with David to Ziklag. Now you remember when they got back to Ziklag they discovered that some people from the south, the Nomads, the Bedouin tribes, had come and had kidnapped their wives and children, and sacked the city, and had taken off? At that time these men, David had a tough bunch. They were so upset, they wept until they had no more strength, and then they said, "Let's kill David!". You know, it's funny how that you want to take your feelings out on somebody, even though he's not responsible at all! So David said, "Come on let's pursue after them", and how David and his men pursued after, and found the men, and took back the spoil, and so forth. But, at this time, the men, some of the men from Manasseh joined David.

So these were they that came at this particular time to Ziklag, and it gives the names of the captains of the thousands from Manasseh, that were with David. Verse twenty one.

They helped David against these band of rovers: [These guys that had invaded the land, and had taken David's wives, and children, and kidnapped them. They helped David against this band.] *for they were all mighty men of valour, and they were captains in the host. For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God (12:21-22).*

So there gathered unto David these various groups. It originally started out with sort of a rag-tag kind of a band. A group of fellows who were in debt, who were in trouble, escaping from the law, and they joined unto David. But God made of them a mighty army, that subdued really, the kingdoms around them.

So these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, that came to David to Hebron, [Now this is the next group. When David, when Saul was killed in this battle with the Philistines, then David went from Ziklag to Hebron, where the tribe of Judah made David king over Judah. David reigned over Judah for seven years, in Hebron. Before the death of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, at which time, they decided to make David king over all of Israel. So now these are the men that came down to Hebron, to join with David, to make him king over all of Israel. It gives the numbers of those men that came to David.] *to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord (12:23).*

It was that which was prophesied by Samuel, as he anointed David, and said that God had anointed him to be king over Israel. So, the word of the Lord, to David, through Samuel.

The children of Judah six thousand eight hundred. The children of Simeon, seven thousand one hundred. Levi, four thousand six hundred (12:24-26).

As you go down the various tribes, and the numbers of men, you find that there were approximately three hundred and thirty nine thousand, six hundred men that joined themselves with David at this point, plus a thousand, two hundred and twenty one captains. So it's a pretty formidable force, by now. Starting out with about six hundred men. Now the ranks had swollen, for daily they came to him until it was a great host, like the host of God. When it speaks of those who came from Zebulun, verse thirty three.

These men who were expert in war, could use all kinds of instruments of war, fifty thousand from the tribe of Zebulun, who could keep rank: [That is, men who would not break rank. Whenever you were engaged in battle, in those days, it was always the attempt, you would come in your ranks, marching together in rank, and there was always that endeavor to break through the ranks, or to break the ranks. As you get the ranks broken, the guys begin to turn and run. Then you're at a disadvantage, because it's hard to throw your spears backwards at your enemies, when you're running away. So the thing was always to get them to break rank, to turn, and start to run, because then you've got the battle in your hands. Because, you can you know, running at them, really use the spears to great advantage. So these men from Zebulun, tough guys! "They would not break rank."] *and more than that, they were not of double heart (12:33).*

They had a singleness of heart, and purpose. One of the problems today with many Christians, is that of a double heart. A heart towards the things of God, and a heart towards the things of the world. When a person has a double heart, it's always a sign of weakness. Someone said, "If you don't stand for anything, you'll fall for everything!". You've got to know what you stand for, and where you stand. You've got to have a set purpose. You have to set your heart upon it. Daniel, and his friends in Babylon, determined in their hearts not to defile themselves. A singleness of heart. "Fellows we're not gonna defile ourselves. We're

gonna live pure, godly lives.”

Some fellows came up to me this morning, and they said they were up to three o’clock this morning, talking about their commitment to the Lord. They have made that determination that, they were just going to start living full on for the Lord. They’d set in their hearts, that they are gonna have a heart for God. A singleness of heart, in serving God. It was exciting! These guys were, all of them big guys, looked up to them, six foot two, three, and five, I think. I thought, “Man that’s neat!” Setting, and determining that God is gonna be first, and foremost in my life. I’m gonna live for God, I’m gonna serve God. This world really has nothing to offer of eternal value, the things of the world are bobbles and beads.

We sort of think of the early time, the United States when it wasn’t the United States, when those men came from Europe, from Spain, and all, and took advantage of the natives that were here. Trading them glass beads, for the gold. We think, “Oh those people! How cruel to give these Indians, glass, shiny glass beads, in exchange for gold, taking advantage of them!”, and we think, “Those poor Indians, deceived, in taking something of little or no value, for something that was so valuable.”

But I think of how many Christians there are who are trading the valuable things, for the beads that Satan offers. The worthless things of this world. People are bartering off their eternal soul, for glass beads, for the glitter and the glamour of the world around them. For that false value system, that is in the world, a person would barter something so valuable as his soul. “Yet what would it profit a man, if he gained the whole world, and lost his own soul?” Singleness of heart. That’s the secret of strength. The men of Zebulun came, not with double heart, singleness of heart.

Of Naphtali thirty seven thousand. The Danites, twenty eight thousand six hundred. From Asher, forty thousand. Then from the other side of the Jordan river, the Reubenites, the Gadites, half the tribe of Manasseh, all in all a hundred and twenty thousand men. [A formidable force!] These were all men of war, who could keep rank, and they came with a perfect heart [Or a complete heart, a totally to it, and totally with it.] to Hebron, to make David king over all of Israel: and all of the rest of Israel also were of one heart to make David king (12:34-38).

That is why the kingdom of David brought Israel into the apex of its glory, and power. The people were excited, one heart, in this issue.

So they were with David for three days in Hebron, [Partying] eating drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. Moreover those that were near them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on their donkeys, and on their camels, and on their mules, and oxen, and meat, and the grains, the cakes of figs, and the bunches of raisins, and the wine, and the oil, and the oxen, and the sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel (12:39-40).

Happy days! “David is gonna be king!” They brought with the camels, and the mules, and the donkeys, all of the supplies for this big celebration.

Chapter 13

Now in chapter thirteen, one of the first things that David desires to do, is to bring the ark of the covenant, to Jerusalem. I think that it is rather significant that his first activity, as king, stems from a spiritual desire. It is really a spiritual activity to bring the ark of the covenant, unto Jerusalem, in order that there might be the acknowledgment again, of the place of Jehovah in the life of the nation. “We’re gonna bring the ark of the covenant back.” In the days of Saul, they did not really use the ark of the covenant. They didn’t enquire of the Lord, there at the ark of the covenant. So one of David’s first activities is this desire, to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem.

And so he consulted with the captains of the thousands, and the hundreds, and with every leader. And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seems good unto you, and if it be of Jehovah our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also the priests and Levites, which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul (13:1-3).

“If it seems right to you, and to God, let’s get everybody together, let’s do a big thing. Let’s bring this ark of the covenant back unto us.” It had been captured during the time of Saul’s reign, by the Philistines.

They had taken the ark of the covenant, and sought to use it, sort of as some kind of a magical amulet of sorts. When they were being pressed in battle, by the Philistines, they thought, "Well let's bring the ark of the covenant into the battle, and surely God will turn back the Philistines". But instead, the ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines. It had the exact opposite effect as they were hoping.

As they brought the ark of the covenant into the camp, the men all began to cheer and yell, and the Philistine says, "Oh what's happened!", and they said, "Oh they've brought their god into the camp". They said, "Boy we'd better fight harder", and they did and they defeated the Israelites, and captured the ark. Of course, as they took it to the different Philistine cities, the men were breaking out with boils. So when they finally decided to bring it to Ekron, the men of Ekron said, "No way fellows! You're not bringing that thing here! We've heard of the problems you've got!" So they said, "Well let's get rid of this thing! We can't keep it in our cities".

So they took a couple of cows, and they harnessed them to a cart, and with sacrifices, and so forth, they sent this cart. They said, "If the cows go directly back towards Israel, then we'll know this was of the Lord. If they just sort of roam around, then it's just coincidence". But when they turned these cows loose, they made a direct line towards Israel, and they came to Bethshean, and the people of Bethshean saw the ark coming, with these cows that were just mooing, and they saw the ark on this cart, and they rejoiced and all. Of course you remember that some of them looked in the ark, and God smote them, and there was a several thousand died as a result of that trespass against it. So they said, "Ooh, let's just set that thing right over there". They left it there, carry, Kirjath Jearim, which is near Bethshean, probably oh, four or five miles from Bethshean, over to Kirjath Jearim. So the ark had remained there. Oh it's probably fifteen miles from Jerusalem.

David now wants to bring it back to Jerusalem. So the first really activity, as, as king over the whole land is to establish the thing spiritually now. "Let's get our priorities. God first. Spiritual things first. Quite often, as we perform wedding ceremonies, after we have made the pronouncement of the couple standing before us, to be husband and wife, because of the request of the couple, that their first activity, as husband and wife, be a spiritual activity, we serve them communion. I'm always impressed, as I serve the communion to the couple who have just made their dedication of their lives to each other, their vows to live the rest of their lives together, before God as husband and wife, that their very first activity in this new dimension, is a spiritual activity, acknowledging the centrality of Christ in their relationship. Putting Christ first, as they partake of communion. To me, it's always a good foundation upon which to build a marriage, when put the spiritual things first. After communion, then they kiss. But, spiritual things first, that acknowledgment of the place of the Lord, "In our marriage, in our future", as they receive communion.

I think that it's great for David, the first thing that he wants to do in the establishing of the kingdom, is to establish now, this spiritual foundation, this spiritual base. "Let's return to basics. Let's put God first in the activities of our kingdom." The problem though, is that David inquired of all of the captains and the leaders. He should have inquired of the Lord, and of the priests. For though David's desire, was a good desire, what he was wanting to do was the right thing to do, yet he was going about it the wrong way.

He was copying the methods of the Philistines, rather than seeking the Lord. When the Philistines sent, sent the ark of the covenant back, they sent it on a cart, with a couple of cows drawing it. So, David in his endeavor to bring the ark of the covenant back, had a new cart built, and took a couple of cows, and these guys were, or the oxen, and they were driving these oxen, pulling the cart, with the ark of the covenant on it. Copying the method of the Philistines.

But in the book of Numbers, God had given instructions how the ark of the covenant was to be transported. It was to be carried by the priests, by these staves that were put through the rings, in the side of the ark. No one was to touch the ark. They were to lift up these staves, and carry it, sliding the staves through these golden rings, and they were to carry it between themselves. That was God's instructions in the transporting of the ark of the covenant.

I think that there is a spiritual analogy here, from which we can learn a lot. I think that the church has been guilty of following the methods of Madison Avenue, in trying to build the church, in trying to build the attendance, in trying to raise the funds. There are professional groups that churches hire, that will come in,

and they will set up a promotional campaign. They will make a sociological, demographic study of your community. They will, for the fee, help you to develop church growth, using worldly tactics, and methods, and means. There are also those other groups, who the church can hire who will come in, professionals who will raise money for the church. Professional fund raising schemes.

We're always getting letters you know, about to the Chairman of the Fund Raising Program, and, and some new concept, idea, method and all, to raise funds for the church. But these are, for the most part, borrowing from the world. They're copying the Philistines. I wonder sometimes, that God doesn't strike them dead! Good thing I'm not God! Ha, ha! God wiped out these guys!

As they were bringing the ark on this cart, they came to the threshing floor, and the ox stumbled, and the cart started to shake, and Uzza, one of the guys who was driving the oxen, reached his hand to steady the ark, and when he touched it, God smote him, and he died. We read in verse seven.

They carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. And David and all of Israel were playing before God with all their might, they were singing, with harps, and psalteries, and timbrels, and cymbals, and with trumpets (13:7-8).

I mean it was a gala thing! They had gathered all these men of Israel. Big, tough mighty men. Now they're dancing, and their singing, and their rejoicing. What a spectacle this must have been! Now this is one of those places, I'd like to have been there! It must have been a time of, of great excitement, as we are acknowledging the place of God in our national life, and there is sort of a spiritual movement, but suddenly, in the midst of the thing, Uzza reaching to steady the ark, falls over dead. This whole gala, exciting crowd, is in a moment, hushed. A fear comes upon them all.

And David was afraid of God that day, and he said, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me? ["I mean wow! If, if being around the ark, one little slip up man, and you've had it! I can't live with this thing!"] And, he had a real fear now, of it. A, a real respect, and reverence, realizing what it means, to have the presence of God, a means of purifying, and walking in purity. So David called the name of the place Perezuzza. Perez means "breaking forth", for God broke forth on Uzza, and thus the name of the place, Perezuzza.] So David did not bring the ark home to himself to Jerusalem, but he just set it aside there in the house of Obedom who was a Levite. And it remained there for three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obedom, and all that he had (13:12-14).

Now we won't get there this week, but next week, we'll bring the ark to Jerusalem, only we'll enquire of the Lord, and figure out how to do it. In other words, "Yes God wants to do a work. We're convinced of that. Well let's sit down, and have a planning committee, and let's plan on how we can reach this community. Let's sit down and strategize". No that's not the way the work of God is accomplished. God wants to do a work, yes. "Let's seek the Lord and find out how He wants to do it. Let's let God guide the activities of the church."

You will discover, and we have discovered, when God guides, God provides! You don't need finance committees, you don't need the professional fund-raising techniques. You don't need men to come in, and to make the demographic studies of the city, and tell you how to build the church of God! But God has got a program, and if we seek the Lord, He'll guide us in accomplishing the things, that He wants accomplished. So just the desire to do something for the Lord isn't sufficient. We must do them in the way that the Lord would have them done.

Now, that always is the way that will bring glory to God. When we do things with man's methods, it may be that we get the job done, but because we've done them with man's methods, then man gets the glory. This professional team puts your name in their advertising, and they tell how they went to this little community, and the church was just five hundred people, but after they inaugurated their program, now there is twelve hundred members, you know, and they are taking the glory for what has been accomplished there in that community. "We helped this church raise seventy thousand dollars to put in their new education unit", you know and they're always telling what they have done, and man is getting and taking the glory.

But when we wait upon God, and seek God, there's no pressure, there's no hype. We just let God work, and seek God to do His work, then only God can get the glory! People come around and they want to know, "Well what kind of a program did you use?" "Well, we don't have any program." "Well, how do you

account for what's happening?" "Well, it's the Lord!" "Ah, come on now!", you know. They're always looking for some gimmick, some secret, but it's just seeking God for the way that He wants things to be done. Letting God be in control. God has a work that He wants to do, but there's the right way of doing it, and the wrong way of doing it. The right way will be blessed of God, and led of God, and continues then, to be a blessing, because it brings such glory to God.

That's why God so often uses such unlikely people! That why God has chosen the simple things of the world to confound the wise! They look at the men that God's used, they say, "Well they don't have their doctorates. How can they do that? Who gave them the authority?" They can't understand how God can use a Raul Rees, or a Mike McIntosh, or a Greg Laurie, or Jeff Johnson, I mean it's, it's a shocker that God can use people like that to do His work. They say, "Well he doesn't have any kind of an education, how...", hey, it's God! To God be the glory, great things He has done.

We just have celebrated twenty three years here at Calvary Chapel, of course we don't make a big thing over anniversaries, but the first Sunday of December, and many of you didn't know it, we celebrated our twenty third year here. In twenty three years, we have seen God do one phenomenal work! I mean it's just, you know, beyond the wildest imagination, what God has done in the past twenty three years, through this church! We started out with twenty five people, twenty three years ago, the sixth of December.

As God began to bless, and we were growing, and we had to build a church to accommodate the growing congregation, when we started out, there were several little churches in Costa Mesa, about the same size as ours. Some of them a little bigger. One of the pastors of one of these little independent congregations, as we were building the facility out here, which is now Maranatha Village, because God was blessing, and we were growing, he told his congregation, "Folks, if God can do it for Chuck Smith, he can do it for anybody!". He was seeking to encourage the people. That's just why God did it for Chuck Smith! So that God could use it as an example, and an encouragement to others, if God can use me, He can use anybody. Thus, that's why God uses nobodies, so that nobodies can be encouraged, and they can know, "Hey, if God can use him, God can use me!".

That's why we wrote the book, "Harvest", and we let you in on some of the background of these fellows, so that you can know, that God can take the most unlikely person in the world, the person voted most apt to fail, most apt to end in the penitentiary. God can use them to do a mighty work, in touching thousands of lives. If God can use them, God can use you. What it takes is singleness of heart. The commitment of myself totally, and completely unto God. Putting God first, and then allowing God to work through me. Not trying to develop some kind of program, not following the methods of the world, but seeking the plan and the will of God. We'll find that next week, as we study David bringing the ark back to Jerusalem, in the right way.

Chapter 14

Chapter fourteen is dealing with...

Hiram the king of Tyre who sent messengers down to David, and he brought down timbers of cedars, he sent masons and carpenters, in order to build a palace for David (14:1).

Now king, now recognized by all of Israel, he felt it was important that David have a beautiful palace there in Jerusalem.

And so David perceived that the Lord had confirmed him the king over Israel, for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel (14:2).

God loved His people, and God blessed His people, and David saw how God was blessing, and he came to the realization, "Wow, God has chosen me to be king!". That's such a glorious thing! That realization that as God works, and as God is doing His glorious works, He's chosen you to have a part in that work. You perceive, "Wow!", and you can't really believe it all. You say, "You know, me? A shepherd from Bethlehem? You know king over these people? Over this powerful kingdom?", but, David's far from perfect.

And he began to take more wives at Jerusalem: [and began to bear] they began to bear more sons and daughters (14:3).

I think there was about eleven sons, and a couple of daughters that are listed here that were born from

David. Now this is in, he increased his harem, which is against the law of God. In Deuteronomy, chapter seventeen. “And when you set kings over your land, they are not to multiply unto themselves wives.” And yet David was guilty of doing so.

Now the Philistines, when they saw the success of David...

They saw that he was anointed king over Israel, they came to seek David. [They wanted to destroy him.] And David heard that they were coming against him, so he went out against them. And the Philistines spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And David inquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? will you deliver them into my hand? And the Lord said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into your hand. So they came up to Baalperazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by my hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of the place Baalperazim (14:8-11).

Which is the breach against Baal. Here God destroyed the Philistines. In the battle, the Philistines had brought their little gods, Baal, their lords. The word, “Baal” is, is in the Philistine, “Lord”.

And they had brought their little gods, their little images, and David ordered them all to be gathered and burned (14:12).

God’s breach, God breaking forth out, against, and upon the Philistines.

So the Philistines regathered their forces, spread themselves again in the valley. And David inquired again of God; [Now this is a salient point. I think it’s a place where we often make a mistake, in that we think that we have God’s methods, and so we don’t bother to pray the next time. “Well we know how God does these things. We just go out now, and attack. Now we know the plan of God, so we just you know, follow this.” Rather than seeking the Lord again, in a similar situation, we figure, “Hey this is the way it’s done, we don’t need God’s advice, we don’t need God’s help now. You know we’ve been this route before, so we just go out and we strike the enemy”. But David was wise enough, though facing the same enemy, in the similar circumstances, having just defeated them decisively. They regrouped, they gathered together again, and David prays again. Rather than just saying, “Come on guys, let’s go!”, he prays again and seeks counsel of the Lord again. “Shall we go out against them again?”] and the Lord said, No; circle around them, and come in from the other side of the valley, but take your men, and stay there under the mulberry trees, until you hear the sounds of [And the Hebrew is, the sounds of steps, or the,] marching steps in the mulberry trees, like the sound of God marching before you now into battle: then attack them from that position (14:13-15).

The significance being, that God is not confined to one method, or to one way in doing His work, and that we need to be seeking God continually. Though they may be similar circumstances, God might have different methods at this time, than He used the last time. One of the common mistakes of the church, is falling into methodology. In fact in seminaries, they have courses on methodology. They teach you methods, on how to do things within the church. The methods by which you do these various things, methodology it’s called.

But God is not confined to a single method, to a single way of accomplishing His purposes. We should never just follow patterns that have been successful in the past, because they were successful in the past. We need to continually be seeking the wisdom and the guidance of God for every new situation. Even though it may be similar to a previous situation, let’s seek God’s face and God’s way of accomplishing now, the things that He is wanting to do.

May God free us from that, what I call, “ritualism”. The church is guilty of ritualism, but it’s also guilty of ritualism, and getting in a rut! Trying to keep doing the thing the same way. I have found that there’s only a slight difference between a rut, and the grave, it’s just the length, and the depth. Ha, ha! When you get into a rut, you can soon die, you can make it a grave, and you can get buried in a rut, if you stay in it long enough.

So, let’s keep open to God. Let’s keep seeking the Spirit, that He will direct us in God’s ways, how God wants to destroy the enemy, and let’s be open to the ways of God always, realizing that God may be leading in a totally new way. Let’s be willing to forsake the old ways, and please, please should the Lord see fit to take me, before He comes again for His church, and new leadership is raised up to lead this flock, please do

not be guilty of coming to the new leadership, and saying, "But when Chuck was here, this is the way Chuck did it!". I promise you I will haunt you if you do! Ha, ha! God moves on, and God stays relevant to the age, and you cannot stay in a rut. That is why things are changing, and there are always those old stiff necked, hard cores, who say, "But this is the way we've always done it!", you know, and they get shook when there's a change made! But times are changing, and it's important that we not go into battle with the same methods that brought us victory the last time. God may have a new way of fighting this battle! Let's keep on our knees, let's keep open to the Spirit of God. Let's keep sensitive to the way God is wanting to work, and if we do, we will see the continued blessing, and work of God, as He brings victories over the enemy! A lot to learn here from David! God help us to learn it, that we might remain in tune and in harmony, with what God wants to do, and how He wants to do it. Shall we pray?

Father we thank You for the privilege of being your people, and the privilege of seeing Your work. Lord, help us tonight to always be open unto the things of the Spirit. Help us to be led by the Spirit, help us to walk in the Spirit. Lord we're so glad to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, and the head over His church. Lord help us, that we might be always seeking from You, how you would have us to attack the enemy. That we might continue to experience Your victories Lord, over the powers of darkness, as the enemies fall at Your hand. Lord, bless Your people, enlarge their borders. Keep Your hand upon their lives, and keep them from evil. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.