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David Conquers Yerushalayim

Second Samuel 5:6-12, First Chronicles 11:4-9 and 14:1-2

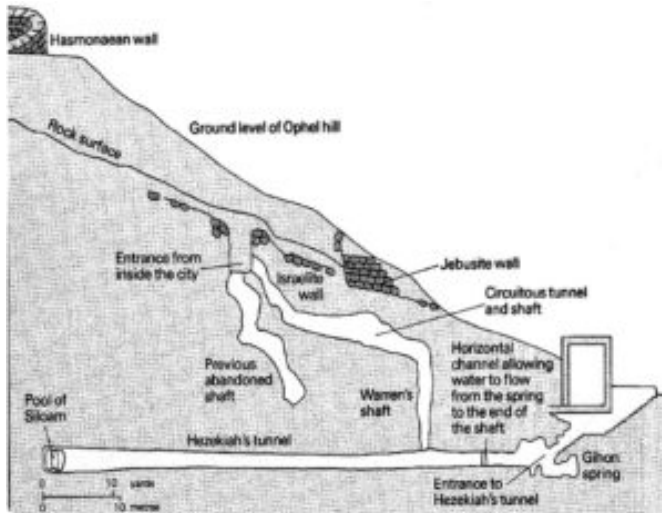
David conquers Yerushalayim DIG: Who were the Jebusites as portrayed in Judges 1:21 and 19:10-12? How close was that era to this? Do they show similar characteristics? What? How did David react? Why was David so successful in conquering the city? For whose sake?

REFLECT: If you had absolute assurance that “ADONAI was with you,” how would your life be affected? What fears would be eliminated? What new ministry would you start? What old habits could you break? How has God blessed you to be a blessing?

1003 BC

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

Although Judah seems to have gained a temporary occupation of at least part of the City, the Jebusites had not been dislodged from the citadel and gained possession of it until their defeat by David. Standing on a rocky plateau, surrounded on three sides by deep valleys and fortified by deep walls, Jerusalem was considered by the Jebusites, and later by the Hebrews, to be virtually unconquerable. The old Jebusite city of Jerusalem lay outside the walls of the present city, on a ridge known as the Ophel that extends southeast of the ancient Temple. Far and away the most important city in the Bible, Yerushalayim is mentioned there more often than any other. Geographically and theologically it is located in the center of the nations (Ezeki’el 5:5).²⁵³



David Conquered Jerusalem: **Joab son of Zeruiah**, one of **David's** nephews, climbed up through a tunnel that led from a subterranean **water shaft** outside **the City** (to see a video of how David conquered **Jerusalem**, [click here](#)). Known as Warren's Shaft, discovered in 1867 by British engineer Sir Charles Warren. It's a tunnel about 230 feet in length that runs from **the spring of Gihon (Second Chronicles 32:30)** to the top of the hill on which the ancient fortress of **Tziyon** must have been situated. This network of natural channels and shafts in the limestone and sedimentary rock lay beneath **Tziyon**. The purpose of the tunnel was to enable the garrison to draw water from the spring in the event of siege. Therefore, it was not through primary planning, but by means of skillful adaptation of these pre-existing natural features that **Yerushalayim** was ensured of a dependable water supply, yet at the same time, provided **Joab** a means of entering the city and conquering it.²⁵⁴ **The Israelites** made **their** way through it into the fortress and surprised **the Jebusites**.

David and all the Israelites marched to Yerushalayim to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites were one of the minority peoples of Canaan, frequently mentioned in connection with **Jerusalem**, which was also known as **Jebus (Judges 19:10)**. **The Jebusites** considered **themselves** to be impregnable. **They** boasted to **David**, "**You cannot get in here; even the blind and lame can ward you off (Second Samuel 5:6; First Chronicles 11:4-5a)**. Capturing **Tziyon** was something that neither **Joshua (Joshua 15:63)** nor **the Judges** who followed **him** had been able to do. **Judah** temporarily captured **Jebus (Judges 1:8)** and **it** was later given to the tribe of **Benjamin**, but **Benjamin** failed to take **it (Judges 1:21)**. Many think that **Jerusalem** is within the tribal territory of **Judah**, but **it** is actually in the tribal territory of **Benjamin**. It was a **city** that even **Benjamin** could never conquer.

The overconfident **Jebusites**, however, did not reckon with the skill and determination of **David** and the power and might of **David's God**. Against all odds, **God** enabled **David** to capture **the fortress of Tziyon** (not to be confused with modern **Mount Tziyon**, which is further to the west) - **which is the City of David (Second Samuel 5:7; First Chronicles 11:5b)**. **This verse makes it clear that originally the site of Tziyon was identical with that of the Jebusite fortress on the Ophel ridge. The name was afterwards transferred to that part of the ancient city of Jerusalem north of the Ophel on which stood the Temple and the royal palace built by Solomon.**

This is the first occurrence of the name and word **Tziyon** in the TaNaKh. Originally, the word **Tziyon** was applied to Mount Ophel, where **the Jebusite Jerusalem** was located. The word **Tziyon** was later extended to the mountain behind Mount Ophel, or Mount Moriah, and still later extended to the whole **City**. The narrator goes on to say that **Tziyon** is also called **the City of David** because **it** was **his** private property by right of conquest. It belonged to the family of **David** and **his** successors. As a result, it was independent of any tribe, and avoided any tribal jealousy over the sight of the capital. Likewise, in America the White House is in the District of Columbia and not in any particular state.

Having established the most important fact . . . that **David** made **the City his** own, the narrator allows himself a brief account on how **the stronghold** was captured. **On that day David had said: Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft [see Warren's Shaft above] to reach the Jebusites and whoever leads the attack will become commander-in-chief. Joab son of Zeruiah went up first, and so he received the command** of the new united army of the monarchy. Having entered **Yerushalayim** by use of **the water shaft, David's men** overwhelmed **the Jebusites, the enemies of the** recently anointed **king (Second Samuel 5:8; First Chronicles 11:6)**.

But **David's** defeat of **the Jebusites** did not mean that **he** wiped **them** off of the face of the earth. On the evidence of the friendly negotiations between **David** and **Araunah** in **Second Samuel 18-25**, and **David's** insistence on paying a fair price for **the Jebusite** threshing-floor rather than taking possession of it as conqueror, it can be suggested that there was no outright slaughter of **the Jebusites** or any attempt to oust them from **their** stronghold. **Jerusalem** is usually described as a city-state, and after they defeated **the Jebusites**, it remained a city-state. The coming of **David** only meant a change of **city ruler**. The inhabitants remained, but their fortress had become the personal possession of **David** and was under **his** control.²⁵⁵

The New Capital of the United Kingdom: The capital was then moved from Hebron to

Jerusalem. David then took up permanent residence in the fortress and called it the City of David by right of conquest, which had no established connections with any one tribe. Transcending tribal rivalries, **it** made the unity of the nation possible. **He built up the area around it** to make **it** larger than when **he** first captured **it**, **from the terraces inward**. It was built at the highest point of the extreme northern end of **the City of David** and served as the foundation of a two-thousand-square-foot level platform that the “fortress of **Tziyon** was later constructed.”²⁵⁶ Much later King Hezekiah would strengthen it even further in preparation for the Assyrian invasion (**Second Chronicles 22:5**). **And** even within **Tziyon** there was more leveling to be done in order to make building possible. **Joab restored the rest of the City (Second Samuel 5:9; First Chronicles 11:7-9).**

Ultimately, **David’s** continuing progress was not because of **his** gifts that were no doubt great, but to **his** spiritual resources. **He became more and more powerful because ADONAI-Tzva’ot was with him (Psalm 46:5, 7 and 11). Hiram king of Tyre, a contemporary of David who ruled for only seven years and probably the father of Solomon’s close ally, sent envoys to David** as a friendship treaty **along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a royal palace for David. Then David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Isra’el and had exalted his kingdom, not for himself personally, but for the sake of the people of Isra’el (Second Samuel 5:10-12; First Chronicles 14:1-2). David** kept from exaggerating **his** own importance (**Deuteronomy 17:20**) and from extravagant policies involving oppressive taxation unlike **Rehoboam (First Kings 12:11), his own son Solomon and Eliakim** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah, to see link click Bz - Concerning Eliakim, Otherwise Known as King Jehoiakim**).

David was then securely settled in **his** own **city**. This rise was **God’s** doing. **David**, in contrast to **Sha’ul**, became greater and greater, because **YHVH** had been with **him** every step of the way. **David’s** heart was set firmly on following **Ha’Shem** and **David** did not let **his** new power as **king** change **his** heart for **the LORD. God** was **God . . . and David** was **his** humble servant. In the end, it is **ADONAI’s** guiding providence that works in **David’s** favor.

If we stay inside the book of **Samuel**, we have come to an ending. **David** is now secure. In some important ways this appears to be the high point of the delight, nerve and appeal of **David. He** had shown great faith and trust in **God** in extremely hard trials that lasted for years. What would **David** do now that **he** had become **king**? **The LORD** had defeated **David’s** enemies, killed off the previous reigning king, **Sha’ul**, and twice **God** worked in allowing the **Sha’ul’s** next son in line to reign, to be killed off. It was **God** who orchestrated

the deaths of the previous king and his family. Thus, **David** came to the throne with clean hands in regard to ending the dynasty of the previous king. **David's** dynasty would continue on the throne of the southern **kingdom** of Judah for almost four hundred years, till the Babylonian exile. That is so different from the Northern **kingdom** of Isra'el, which had nine dynasties in almost two hundred years, with each new dynasty killing off all the inhabitants of the previous ruler.

David gave the glory for **his** success to **YHVH**. We have learned that **David became famous after returning** from the battle with **Edom (Second Samuel 8:13a)**. But even **when David was successful in battle, he** refused to touch the glory (see [Cx - David's Victories](#)). In **Psalm 60:12, he** says: **With God we will gain the victory, and He will trample down our enemies. David** knew what to do with fame. When the people applauded **his** name and reputation, **he** brought the glory right back where it belonged, and said, "**ADONAI, You** have done it all." We would do well to do the same.

David not only honored **God** in **his** humble attitude giving **ADONAI** all the glory for battles, but **He** also gave all the treasures from his victories to build **God's** Temple. When **David** was settled in his palace and **the LORD** had given **him** rest from all **his** enemies, **David's** thoughts didn't turn to more buildings for **himself**, wisely **David's** heart led **him** to seek to honor **YHVH** by seeking to build a place for **the ark of God** (see [Cr - The Ark Brought to Yerushalayim](#)). Though **God** did not allow **David** to build the Temple because **David** was a warrior and had shed blood, still **David** sought how **he** could please **Ha'Shem** with all of **his** possessions. **David** provided resources for the Temple of **his God**; gold, silver, bronze, iron and wood, as well as onyx, turquoise, stones of various colors and all kinds of fine stones stone and marble - all these in large quantities. Besides providing all these many resources, **David's** devotion to **God** led **him** to give from **his** personal treasures of gold and silver, over above all **he** had already provided for the Temple: three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver (**First Chronicles 29:2-5**). Not only did **he** give of **his** own personal wealth, **he** also called on the leaders to be willing to consecrate themselves and give to **the LORD**. Then the leaders also gave gold, silver, bronze, iron, and precious stones. As a result, the people rejoiced at the willing response of the leaders (**First Chronicles 29:6-9**). **David's** wholehearted joyful and abundant giving to **ADONAI** was a model, which encouraged his leaders to also give willingly and wholeheartedly. **His** example paved the way for rejoicing. Both the people and **David** the **king** rejoiced greatly.

David reigned over all Isra'el and beyond, **doing what was just (Second Samuel 8:15a)**. **His** circumstances might have changed, but **David** remained a humble servant of

ADONAI. The Ruach ha-Kodesh is saying that, on the whole, **David** exercised **his** royal office in the proper way. **He** asserts the general tone, not the near perfection of **David's** rule. **David** was doing what a godly king was supposed to do (**Psalms 72** and **101**). In the larger picture of biblical faith, the establishment of **David** in **Jerusalem** is not an ending but the beginning of a new life for **Isra'el**. The establishment of both **David** and **Yerushalayim** open up new possibilities for the future and gave **Isra'el** a new theological conviction about what **God** could, and would, do in the future.²⁵⁷

Clearly the hope of a New **Jerusalem** explodes beyond the realities of **the Life of David**. As believers, many of us travel to **the City of David** to walk in the dust of our **Great Rabbi**. But even more than that, we look forward to the Messianic Kingdom where the resurrected **David** will be given the dual titles of **king** and **prince**. **He** will be a **king** because **he** will rule over **Isra'el** (**Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24, 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5**), and **he** will be a **prince** because **he** will be under the authority of **Christ** (see the commentary on **Revelation Fi - The Government of the Messianic Kingdom**).