

# David Conquers Yerushalayim

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

**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?

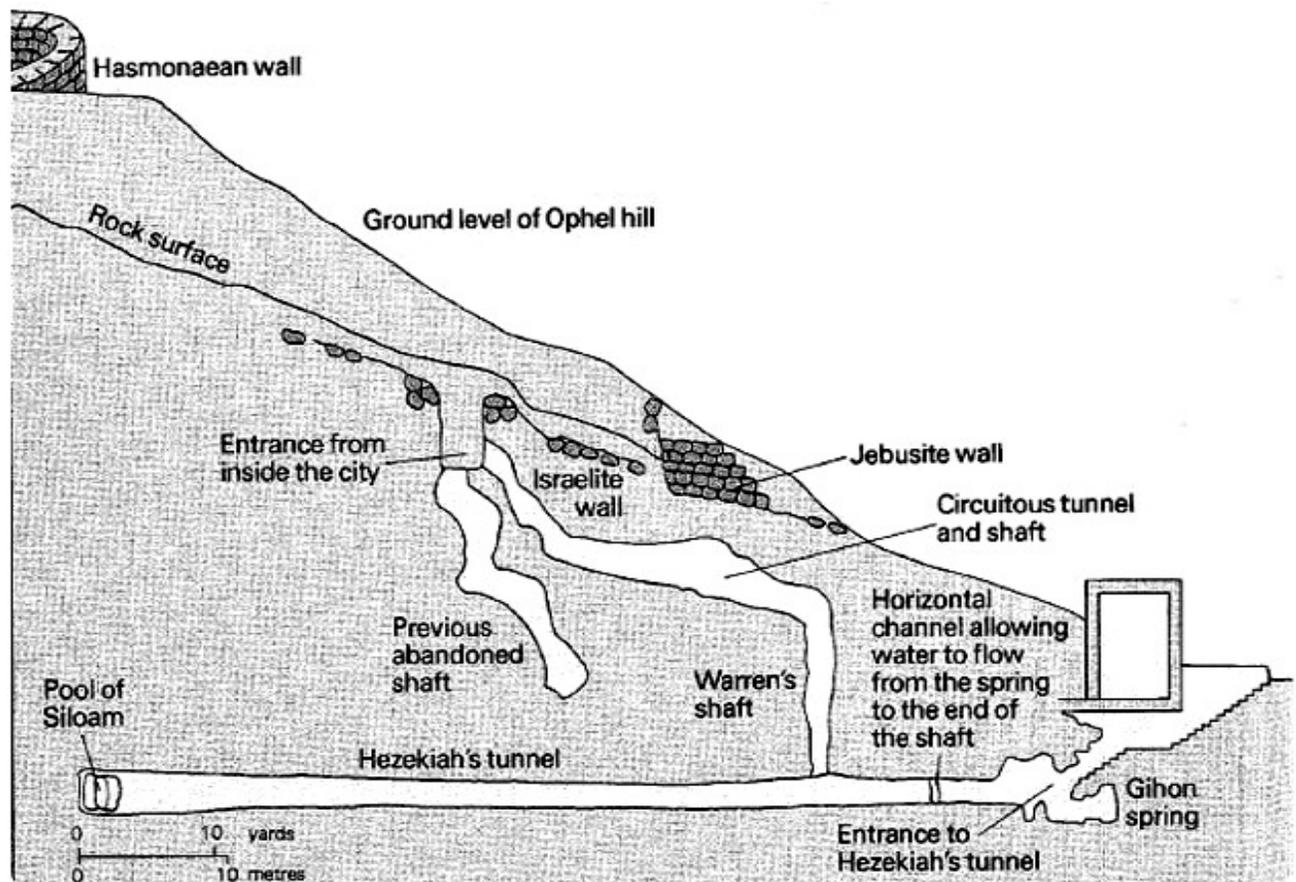
**REFLECT:** If you had absolute assurance that "ADONAI was with you," how would your life be affected? What fears would be eliminated? What new ministry would you start? What old habits could you break? How has God blessed you to be a blessing?

**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 (Ezekiel 5:5).<sup>253</sup>

**David Conquered Jerusalem:** Joab, accompanied by his men, climbed up through a tunnel that led from a subterranean water shaft outside the City. 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.<sup>254</sup> **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 (2 Sam 5:6; 1 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 (2 Samuel 5:7; 1 Chron 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.<sup>255</sup>

**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.<sup>256</sup> 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 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 HaKodesh 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.<sup>257</sup>

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**).