

In the preceding chapters of 2 Samuel, we witnessed the waning strength of Saul's house and the unsettling dynamics of Israel's leadership under Ishbosheth. The political landscape was fraught with instability, marked by internal strife and a lack of decisive leadership. As David emerges from these tumultuous conditions, 2 Samuel 5:6-12 represents a critical turning point in his ascent to power. Here, we see David not just as a king contending with rivals, but as a visionary leader who begins to establish Jerusalem as the unified capital of Israel and Judah. This chapter transitions from the fragmented leadership under Saul and Ishbosheth to David's strategic consolidation of power, highlighting his capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites and the establishment of the city as both his political and spiritual stronghold. Through these acts, David lays the foundational stones of a kingdom that seeks to embody the divine covenant, setting the stage for a new era of leadership characterized by God's favor and a renewed sense of national identity.

### CONQUERING JERUSALEM (2 SAMUEL 5:6-9)

Jerusalem, a city with over 5,000 years of history, was initially a Jebusite city before the arrival of the Israelites. Despite its strategic importance, the city's natural defenses and the Jebusites' resilience kept it from being conquered during Joshua's Canaan conquest.

David ultimately took control of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, an event significant due to the city's formidable geographic position and the Jebusites' confidence in their defenses. The city's strategic location between Judah and the tribes of Israel made it attractive to potential conquerors.

The first biblical mention of "Zion" appears in 2 Samuel 5:7, referring to a Jebusite fortress that later became Jerusalem's foundation. "Zion" evolved from a geographic term to a symbol of Jewish spiritual and political unity. The term likely originates from a Semitic word meaning "fortress," reflecting David's ambition to create a secure and unified kingdom offering both physical and spiritual safety.

The phrase "the same is the city of David" was used to identify Jerusalem unequivocally in the Hebrew Scriptures. It emphasizes David's role in shaping Jerusalem as the Israelite kingdom's political and spiritual hub.

David conquered the city through a challenge involving entering the city via a water system, demonstrating his strategic prowess. Joab fulfilled this challenge, leading to the city's capture. The discovery of "Warren's Shaft," an ancient tunnel believed to be the "gutter" used for the city's conquest, provided historical context to the biblical narrative.

### ESTABLISHING JERUSALEM (2 SAMUEL 5:10-12)

In verse 10, we read a summary note of David's victories, with a glimpse into the future with the words, "David went on, and grew great." Both the conquering of Jerusalem and the continued success were due to the fact that "the LORD God of hosts was with him." This title for God is connected to the armies of heaven, highlighting the strength of God. This heavenly support is a recurring theme in David's narrative, consistently linked to his military and political successes. It serves to emphasize that David's strength and victories were not purely the result of his own might and skill, but were a manifestation of God's favor and guidance.

Following the capture of Jerusalem and the establishment of his rule, David's successes attracted the attention of neighboring kingdoms. Hiram, the king of Tyre, a prosperous city-state known for its skilled artisans and high-quality cedar, sent "cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons" to David for the construction of his palace. This action was not only a strategic political move to establish alliances but was also likely an obligation. Previously, Tyre might have been required, perhaps under Saul's reign, to send tribute to the Israelite kingdom. The tribe of Asher, in whose territory Tyre would have been, had failed to conquer the city, and thus, like the Jebusites with Jerusalem, Tyre existed independently. Seeing the fall of Jerusalem and the rise of David's influence, Hiram was likely determined to ensure good relations with the new power in the region.

Now, likely at least 15 years or more from Samuel's anointing, David could rest in the knowledge that God had indeed "established him king over Israel." Even more, David understood that God had not done this just to bless him, but "for his people Israel's sake" (v. 12). This moment marked the fulfillment of God's promise, and it also underscored the purpose of David's leadership - to serve and guide God's people. David's kingship was not merely a personal triumph but a manifestation of God's care and plan for the nation of Israel.

### CONCLUSION

In these pivotal events, we see the establishment of David's house, setting a precedent for God's promise in the forthcoming chapters: "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever" (2 Samuel 7:16). Just as the promises made through Samuel did not find immediate fulfillment, so too the ultimate promise about the kingdom of David experiences a delay. However, we can trust in God's divine timing. His promise to establish David's throne forever may not occur immediately, but we know it will come to fruition, in His time.