

# 1 Chronicles 20:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

## Analysis

**Theological Analysis:** This passage falls within the section on Final conquests and giant slayers. The Hebrew term רָפָה (rapha) - giant/Rephaim is theologically significant here, pointing to God enables victory over impossible odds. The Chronicler's narrative, while paralleling Samuel-Kings in places, offers a distinct theological perspective emphasizing temple worship, Levitical service, and covenant faithfulness.

Chronicles presents David not primarily as warrior-king but as worship organizer and temple planner. This verse contributes to that portrait by highlighting the spiritual dimensions of Israel's national life. The text demonstrates that true prosperity comes through proper worship and covenant obedience rather than merely military or political success.

Doctrinally, this passage teaches about God enables victory over impossible odds. Cross-references throughout Chronicles connect David's reign to the broader redemptive narrative, showing how God's covenant promises advance through faithful human leadership while ultimately depending on divine grace and power. The messianic implications are profound: Christ defeats spiritual giants (powers and principalities).

## Historical Context

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**Historical Background:** This section describes events from David's reign (c. 1010-970 BCE) but was written centuries later during the Persian period (c. 450-400 BCE). The Chronicler's selectivity in retelling David's story serves his theological purposes—he omits David's sins (Bathsheba, Absalom's rebellion) while emphasizing David's worship reforms and temple preparations.

The historical setting of Final conquests and giant slayers occurred during Israel's united monarchy, when the nation reached its territorial and political zenith. Archaeological evidence from this period shows significant building projects and administrative development. However, the Chronicler writes for a much smaller, struggling post-exilic community, using David's golden age to inspire hope for restoration.

Ancient Near Eastern parallels show that temple construction and royal sponsorship of worship were common across cultures. However, Israel's understanding of worship centered on covenant relationship with the one true God rather than manipulation of capricious deities. This theological distinctiveness shapes the Chronicler's presentation.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does this verse's emphasis on God enables victory over impossible odds challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?
2. What does Christ defeats spiritual giants (powers and principalities) teach you about Jesus Christ and His redemptive work?
3. In what practical ways can you apply the principles of covenant faithfulness and proper worship demonstrated in this passage?

## Interlinear Text

|                                |             |              |           |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| וַיָּהִי                       | לְעֵת       | תְּשׁוּבָתוֹ | הַשָּׁנָה |
| H1961                          | H6256       | H8666        | H8141     |
| And it came to pass that after | was expired | the year     |           |

אֶת יוֹאָב וְנָהֲג הַמֶּלֶךְ יֵצֵא אֵת לֵעָתָה

And Joab H53097 and led forth H5090 the king H4428 go out H3318 at H6256 that time H853

הַ כֹּחַ הַ צְבָא וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶת אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן  
 the power of the army and wasted <sup>H853</sup> the country of the children of Ammon  
 H2428 H6635 H7843 H776 H1121 H5983

|          |              |      |          |           |         |               |         |
|----------|--------------|------|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|---------|
| וַיָּבֹא | וַיִּצָר     | אֶת  | רַבָּה ה | וְדָוִד   | יֵשׁ ב  | בִּירוּשָׁלַם | וַיִּךְ |
| and came | and besieged | H853 | Rabbah   | But David | tarried | at Jerusalem  | smote   |
| H935     | H6696        |      | H7237    | H1732     | H3427   | H3389         | H5221   |

וַיָּבֹא אֶת־רַבְּבָה וַיַּחֲרֹבֶה׃  
**And Joab** H853 **Rabbah** H7237 **and destroyed** H2040  
H3097

## Additional Cross-References

**2 Samuel 11:1** (Kingdom): And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

**Deuteronomy 3:11** (Kingdom): For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

**Amos 1:14** (Parallel theme): But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind:

