

1 Chronicles 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver's beam.

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

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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

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 defeat 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

וְתַחַת	עַד	מִלְּסֶם	ה	אֶת	פָּلָשָׁת	יִם	יְהִי
H1961	H5750	And there was war	H854	again with the Philistines	slew		
		H4421		H6430		H5221	
אֶלְעָנָן	בֶּן	לְחָמִי	אֶחָי	גָּלִיל	בְּגִתְתִּים		
and Elhanan	the son	of Jair	Lahmi	the brother	of Goliath	the Gittite	
H445	H1121	H3265	H3902	H251	H1555	H1663	
וְעַז	בְּמִנְחָה	אֶרְגִּים:					
staff	whose spear	beam	was like a weaver's				
H6086	H2595	H4500	H707				

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 21:19 (Parallel theme): And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

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