

This chapter opens with a familiar phrase: “*It happened in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out to battle...*” (1 Chronicles 20:1, NKJV). In ancient times, spring was the season for war—after the harvest, before the next planting. It was the natural rhythm of that era. But notice something important: David stayed behind in Jerusalem while Joab led the army against the Ammonites and besieged the city of Rabbah.

At first glance, it might seem like David had no part in this victory—until we compare this account with 2 Samuel 12. There, we learn Joab had essentially secured the city but invited David to come finish the campaign so the final credit would go to him as king. It was a gracious move on Joab’s part. David arrived just in time to lead the final assault, take the crown of the defeated king, and bring the spoils back to Jerusalem (vv. 2–3).

So what’s the takeaway for us?

Sometimes the Bible presents different angles of the same story. It’s not a contradiction—it’s a fuller picture. And that in itself is a reminder that when things seem unclear or confusing in Scripture, a little digging and prayerful study often brings clarity. We don’t need to panic over apparent contradictions; God’s Word is trustworthy.

But there’s also a deeper spiritual application here: David was absent when the battle began. And if you remember what happened during a similar season recorded in 2 Samuel 11—the Bathsheba incident—it’s a reminder that *idleness in times of duty* can lead to temptation or sin. We’re most vulnerable when we check out spiritually or fail to show up where we’re supposed to be.

Thankfully, in this case, David stepped in and finished strong. He received honor, but it was Joab who had done much of the hard work—and Joab’s humility in giving David the credit is something to admire.

Verses 4–8 wrap up with further battles against the Philistines, including more giants—likely relatives of Goliath. One warrior even had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. Strange as that sounds, it highlights an ongoing truth: there will always be “giants” to face, even after major victories.

What’s our personal challenge here?

- Are we showing up to the battles God has called us to, or are we sitting on the sidelines?
- Are we quick to assume the Bible has contradictions—or are we willing to go deeper and trust that God’s Word holds up under scrutiny?
- Are we like Joab—serving faithfully behind the scenes and willing to let others get the credit?
- Do we understand that even after victory, spiritual giants may rise again—and we need to remain alert, equipped, and ready?

13-Bible Reading Study Notes

1st Chronicles Chapter 20

Let's be people who fight faithfully, stay spiritually engaged, and give God the glory in every victory. And when the season calls us to battle—whether it's in prayer, service, or leadership—let's not be found idle. Let's show up.