

in battle array against them. So when David had set up in *battle* array against the Syrians, they fought with him. ¹⁸Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed seven thousand^a charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers^b of the Syrians, and killed Shophach the commander of the army. ¹⁹And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his servants. So the Syrians were not willing to help the people of Ammon anymore.

Rabbah Is Conquered

20 ¹It happened in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out *to battle*, that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it. ²Then David took their king's crown from his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance. ³And he brought out the people who *were* in it, and put *them* to work^a with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned *to* Jerusalem.

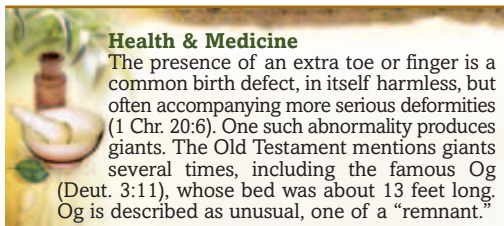
Philistine Giants Destroyed

⁴Now it happened afterward that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Sippai,^a *who was one of the sons of the giant*. And they were subdued.

⁵Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair^a killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

⁶Yet again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of *great* stature, with twenty-four fingers and toes, six *on each hand* and six *on each foot*; and he also was born to the giant. ⁷So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea,^a David's brother, killed him.

⁸These were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.



Health & Medicine

The presence of an extra toe or finger is a common birth defect, in itself harmless, but often accompanying more serious deformities (1 Chr. 20:6). One such abnormality produces giants. The Old Testament mentions giants several times, including the famous Og (Deut. 3:11), whose bed was about 13 feet long. Og is described as unusual, one of a “remnant.”

TRANSITION

Prophetic Account: David's Final Years

The ancient world knew of only two reasons for taking a census: to draft citizens into the military or to draft them into forced labor. Both types of conscription were common among Near Eastern kingdoms, but neither had ever been a part of Israel's life. During the tribal confederation, war had been a voluntary action and only foreigners had been enslaved. When David took a census, it was a clear step away from those covenant traditions and a clear step toward the usual patterns of kingship. Even Joab, David's pragmatic commander in chief, was surprised at David's decision (2 Sam. 24:3).

The census takers followed a route from Jerusalem to Aroer (east of the Dead Sea), north to Dan, west to Tyre, south to Beersheba, then back to Jerusalem. While it took nearly 10 months to complete this circuit (24:8), it is not certain when the census occurred.



• 2 Samuel 24:1–25

2 Samuel

David's Census of Israel and Judah

24 :1 Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, “Go, number Israel and Judah.”

²So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who *was* with him, “Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people.”

³And Joab said to the king, “Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see *it*. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?” ⁴Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel.

⁵And they crossed over the Jordan and camped in Aroer, on the right side of the town which *is* in the midst of the ravine of Gad, and toward Jazer. ⁶Then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi; they came to Dan Jaan and around to Sidon; ⁷and they came to the stronghold of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to South Judah *as*

19:18 ^aOr *seven hundred* (compare 2 Samuel 10:18) ^bOr *horsemen* (compare 2 Samuel 10:18) 20:3 ^aSeptuagint reads *cut them*. 20:4 ^aSpelled *Saph* in 2 Samuel 21:18 20:5 ^aSpelled *Jaave-Oregim* in 2 Samuel 21:19 20:7 ^aSpelled *Shimeah* in 2 Samuel 21:21 and *Shammah* in 1 Samuel 16:9