

'THE B.I.B.L.E.' ("Yes! *That's The Book for Me!*") Studies in Psalm 119

'Upsets Happen'

It happens in politics – *'Breaking News!'* report: *'Trump Wins Presidency!'* It happens in sports – ESPN reports: *'USA Soccer Team Ousted by Trinidad/Tobago'*. It happens in scholasticism – *'Bob Dillan Wins Nobel Prize for Literature'*. Totally unexpected upsets happen in all areas of life. Some underdog or unknown shocks everyone with a victory or conquest nobody thought possible.

In the Bible, David experienced many miraculous, upset victories in his life: defeating bears and lions that foolishly attacked his flock (*as a shepherd boy in 1 Samuel 17:34-35*), slaying the Philistine giant Goliath (*1 Samuel 17:48-51*), killing ten-thousands of Israel's *enemies* (*as a military warrior / 1 Samuel 18:5-7*), and defeating Philistine invasion armies upon becoming King (*2 Samuel 5*) are just a few of David's *upset victories* recorded in Scripture. Time and again, he overcame the odds-on favorite 'loser', only to experience God's victorious deliverance. His conquests, recorded in **2 Samuel 5**, were undoubtedly very special to him, taking place immediately after the merger of Israel and Judah into one united theocratic kingdom. Defeating the previously unbeatable Jebusites to acquire a mountain top area now called Jerusalem was a historical upset. Then, the legendary *Mulberry Tree March* strategy of God to spoil the Philistines, attacking from the only vulnerable direction southwest of Jerusalem, was an astounding upset battle.

David didn't have the New Testament verse, **2 Corinthians 2:14**, but he experienced the blessings of it a thousand years before it was written: *"Now thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumph in Christ..."* More *upset headlines* still await obedient Christians who, against all odds, trust God's Word and move ahead in faith, instead of fleeing from some fight before them. But, of course the most awesome upset of human history is Christ's resurrection from the dead! His awesome victory over sin, death and the grave makes the possibilities endless for all who love and follow Jesus as personal Lord and Savior. **Trust Him! Upsets STILL do happen!** PtL

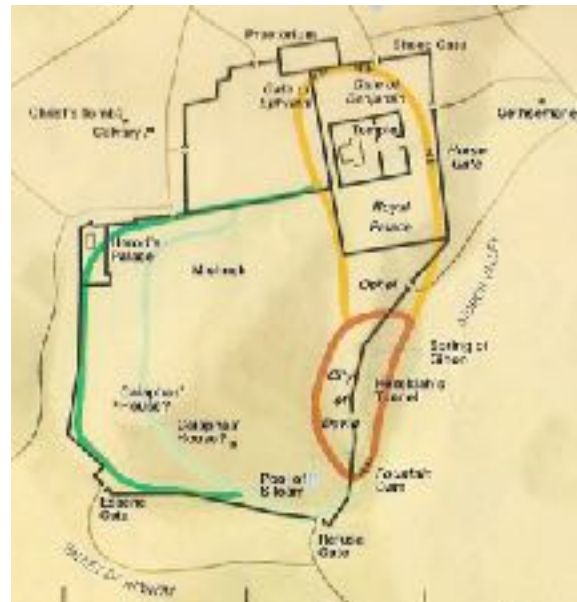
Historical Background of 2 Samuel 5

(King David – age 37 / unification of the kingdom of Israel)

Israel (*the northern part of the kingdom*) & **Judah** (*the southern part of the kingdom*)

David seeks to move the capital northward from Hebron to Jebus in the territory of Benjamin between Israel and Judah. The city was ideal for the new capital because it was on a high elevation surrounded by deep valleys on three sides, making it easily defendable. It had a good fresh water supply, the **Gihon Springs**, east of the city and was close to the main travel routes of the region.

After conquering the mountain-top district, called **Zion** (*first mention of Zion is v 7*) (*the name Zion came to refer to the temple mount area (Isaiah 10:12)*) and then to the whole city of Jerusalem (*Isaiah 28:16*). For the next 40 years David ruled over Israel from the *stronghold* of Jerusalem as the capital city of the new theocratic kingdom called *'the City of David'* (*as also is Bethlehem, David's birth place/ Luke 2:4*). The **Millo** (*Hebrew for landfill*) is the stone-filled terracing that levels off the mountain peak area, providing better defenses for the exposed northern approach direction.



‘Look into My Eyes!’

(Being in the focal point of God’s Word and will)

Psalm 119:121-128

(Hebrew letter ‘*ayin*’ / soft ‘*e*’ sound) (symbol: ‘*eyes*’ / usually central focal point; ‘*eye of storm*’)
Probable historic event associated with this section: **2 Samuel 5:1-10** / acquisition of Jerusalem

‘Your Eyes are Upon My Predicament’

(David’s need when facing arrogant, hostile oppressors)

“I have done justice and righteousness, do not leave me to my oppressors.

Be surety for Your servant for good; do not let the proud oppress me.” (vs 121-122)

- Why does David affirm his personal innocence and deserving of God’s victory before battle?
- Is it accurate for him to fear that God may not give him victory if he is not right before God?
- Do you pray and talk with God in a similar way when a spiritual battle is before you?
- In what ways do challenging situations help us stay clean in our walk with the Lord?
- What does he mean ‘*be surety for Your servant*’? When would it be good for you to pray like this?

‘My Eyes Look into Your Promises’

(David’s urgency for biblical guidance from God)

“My eyes fail from seeking your salvation and Your righteous Word.

Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, and teach me Your statutes.

I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies.

It is time for You to act, O LORD, for they have regarded Your law as void.” (vs 123-126)

Apparently (David) has been diligently searching Scripture for insight on how to go about this war.

- As he meditated on Scriptures about the task at hand, what strategy did God reveal to him? (See **2 Samuel 5:8**).
- When you have a challenge ahead, do you try to study all pertinent Scriptures on it, meditate and pray earnestly for God to show you how to go about it? Or do you just do it your way and pray for God to give you success? Which way is best? (*any such experiences to share?*)
- David’s blessing of God’s guidance on how to take Jebus led him to trust God again in an even more astounding victory! (*Discuss 2 Samuel 5:23-25 and talk about how God might lead you into victory in very interesting ways if you seek God’s will the way David did.*)

‘We Love Those Precepts!’

(David’s confidence and holy zeal from God for battle)

*“Therefore **I love Your commandments more than gold, yes, fine gold!***

*Therefore, all Your precepts concerning all, I consider right; **I hate every false way.”*** (vs 127-128)

- God’s Scriptural precepts (biblical instruction on what to do) are the *gold standard* of God’s will. As gold is to our currency, so God’s Word is *the backing* for everything we trust God for in life.
- Discuss the importance of having biblical reasons for whatever we endeavor to do with God’s help.
- This is especially true when engaged in spiritual warfare against some *stronghold* God wants to be brought under control. See **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** and discuss its modern day application in defeating *strongholds* of sin in our lives. Have you experienced *stronghold* battle in your life? (*Share?*)
- Talk about the connection between *loving God’s commands* and *hating every false way*.