



# David

 LifeGroups  
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# David's Success

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# A Godly Person gives Honor to God

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- A godly person gives glory and honor to God for success.
- 2 Samuel 8:1–6 and Psalms 60 and 108
- This chapter is a summary of all of David's victories in battle, both against the Philistines he had already conquered and others he would conquer throughout his reign.
- These passages do not give a chronological account.
- This was, however, a legitimate way to record history in the ancient world.

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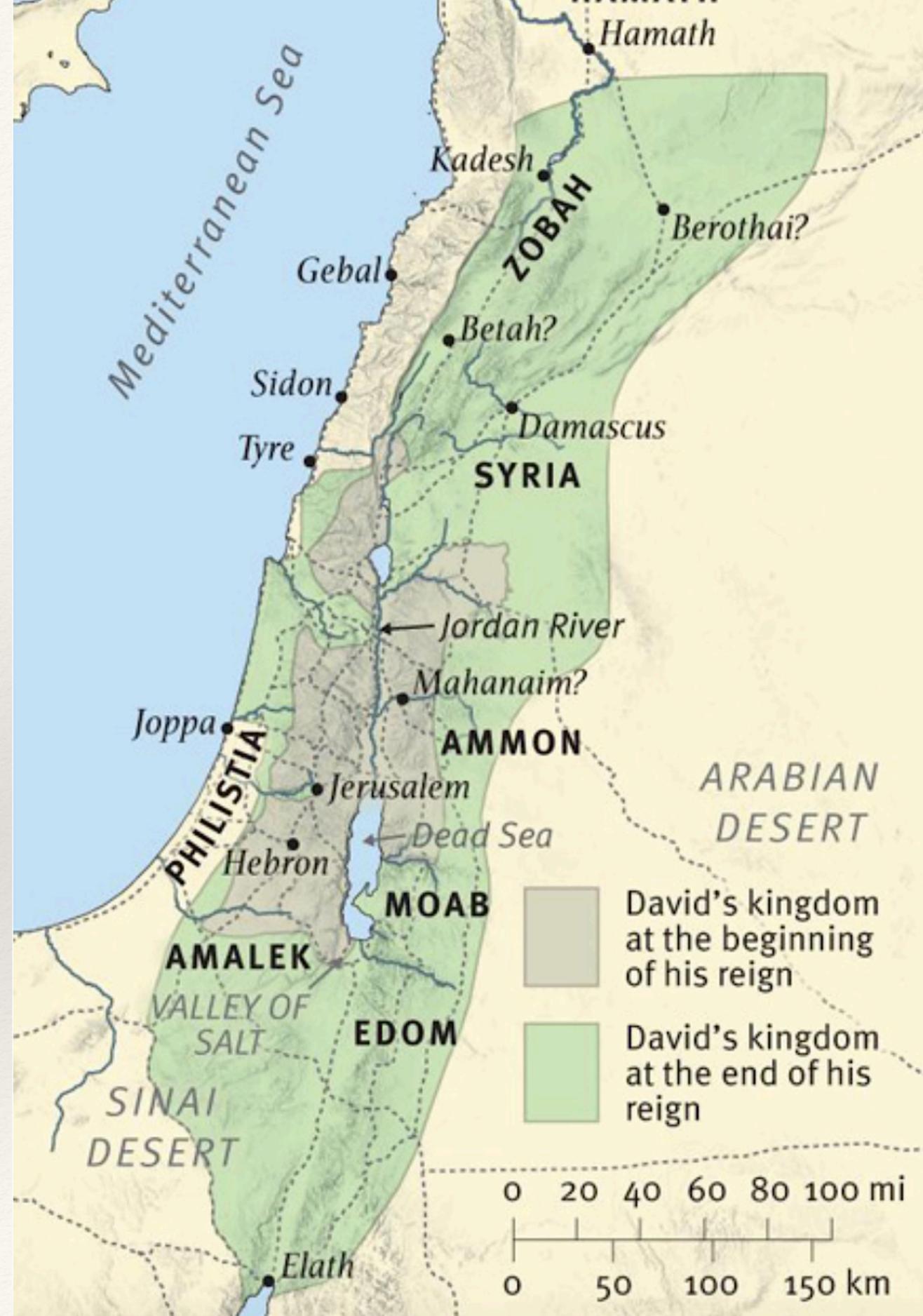
- 1 Samuel is all about Saul's reign and David's journey to the throne.
- This first section of 2 Samuel is about the golden age of David's reign, when he was following God, and everything was going well for him.
- In chapter 11, we will see his great sin with Bathsheba and things will start to go wrong.
  - 2 Samuel 1–10: Triumphs of David
  - 2 Samuel 11–24: Troubles of David

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- Chapters 8 and 10 together describe how David defeated many of the pagan nations around them in the Promised Land, finally fulfilling almost all of what God had promised the people of Israel when they came out of Egypt and to the Holy Land almost 500 years before.
- That was a promise God made to Abraham back in Genesis, almost 500 years prior to the exodus (Genesis 15:12–21; Exodus 6:8).
- There were still a few places along the coast that David never conquered.
- History writers considered his reign to be the one that fulfilled this promise.



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- Second Samuel says, “The Lord gave victory to David wherever he went” (8:6, 14).
- David’s reign and Solomon’s, before he was led astray from the Lord, were considered Israel’s golden age.
- In the Psalms, David gave God the credit for his victories; it was God who trod down Israel’s foes (60:4–5, 12; 108:13).
- In both Psalm 60 and 108, David used some of the names of the same places in 2 Samuel 8, when he said it was God who divided up the land (60:6)

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- Some were tribes and cities of Israel, and some were pagan nations David conquered, telling us it is God who is in control of every nation around the world, not just Israel.
- David described the tribes and cities of Israel as His helmet and scepter but the pagan nations as his washbasin and the ones upon which he casts his shoe and shouts in triumph (60:7–8).
- The heading to Psalm 60 says it was written “for instruction.”

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- The instruction is that when Israel was disobedient to God, He left them, and they were not successful in battle (60:1–5), but when God was with them, they did “valiantly” and did “tread down their foes” (60:12).
- This is what they saw from the beginning of the conquest.
- When they did as God commanded, such as at Jericho, He won their battles for them.
- When they did not do what God said, such as at Ai, He allowed them to be overtaken (Joshua 6–7).

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- David was successful because “the Lord was with him” (1 Samuel 18:14).
- David gave all the credit and glory to the Lord for his success.
- From the beginning, when he was a shepherd boy with just a slingshot, he recognized that it was the Lord who would prevail regardless of which soldier or army was stronger (1 Samuel 17:33–37, 45–47).
- Do we give glory to God when we experience success, not just in ministry endeavors, but in all areas of life? When things go well at home or in our relationships, do we thank and praise God for His blessing and help?

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- Godly people dedicate to the Lord what He has given them.
- 2 Samuel 8:11–18
- In addition to giving credit to God for his successes, David dedicated his spoils from battle to the Lord.
- He didn't just praise and thank the Lord with his lips.
- Instead of keeping the spoils of war for himself, David dedicated them to the Lord, setting them apart to be used for the temple his son Solomon would build (1 Chronicles 26:26; 1 Kings 7:51).

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- David didn't just give a part of the spoils; he gave it all to the Lord.
- This wasn't David "tithing" on his "income."
- It was David giving the Lord His due. If the Lord won the battle, shouldn't He receive the spoils?
- David also had other nations bringing him tributes of bronze, silver and gold, all of which he dedicated to the Lord.
- Romans 12:1-2 tells us to give our whole lives as a "living sacrifice."

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- David captured 1,700 horsemen, but he only kept enough horses for 100 chariots.
- This was because of God's commands concerning kings from Deuteronomy – that they not acquire “many horses,” “many wives,” or “excessive silver and gold” (Deuteronomy 17:14–17).
- David kept enough horses for a substantial enough army, but he didn't keep too many.

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- By contrast, the Egyptian army had about 2,000 chariots.
- In the Exodus, Pharaoh took 600 “chosen” (best) chariots and “all the other chariots” to chase the Israelites who had left (Exodus 14:7).
- That was a massive army; David kept very few in comparison.
- Though he was Israel’s greatest king, and this was Israel’s golden age as a nation, he kept his army and his palace relatively humble.

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- Here is a summary of David's reign – he was just and fair to all his people.
- This was another part of God's law concerning kings.
- A king after God's own heart was to have his own copy of the law that he read every day so that he would not turn aside from it and so that "his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers" (Deuteronomy 17:18–20).
- Unlike most kings of the world, the king of Israel was not supposed to think of himself as greater than anyone else. He was called to be a servant leader, a shepherd of his flock (2 Samuel 7:8).

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- Jesus said the same thing to His disciples when they argued about who would be the greatest in His kingdom.
- He said the rulers of the Gentiles lorded their authority over their people, but it would not be that way in His kingdom.
- Whoever wants to be great in the kingdom of God must be the servant, just as He came to serve (Matthew 20:20–28).
- Though David made many mistakes and committed grave sins, he showed a humble servant-leader's heart.

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- He understood that his role as king was to rule as God's representative, while God was the real king who deserved all the power, glory and honor.
- David dedicated all he had to the Lord and served the people with justice and righteousness.
- He was not a perfect king, but he tried to fulfill God's vision for what a king should be rather than follow the ways of the leaders of the world's kingdoms.

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- Godly people do their best, but trust the Lord to make His will happen
- 2 Samuel 10
- Chapter 8 summarizes David's victories over his enemies.
- But then chapter 10 gives us the details of his defeat of the Ammonites. The war with the Ammonites is also the setting of the story of David's sin, so they happened at the same time.
- David was home to see Bathsheba on the roof only because he didn't go with his army out to war against the Ammonites (11:1).

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- When the king of the Ammonites died, David sent condolences to his son, the new king, but the new king's advisors told him that David must be tricking him and spying out the land to attack.
- So the king disgraced David's servants, shaving off half their beards and cutting their garments at the middle, which would expose their private parts.
- Then the Ammonites hired the Syrians to help them fight David.

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# Godly People Dedicate to the Lord

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- David's general, Joab, devised a wise military strategy to try to defeat them and told his brother who fought with him to "be courageous" but ultimately, "may the Lord do what seems good to Him" (10:12).
- He didn't stand and do nothing; he strategized as best he could. He did his part with his human wisdom. But ultimately, he trusted the Lord to do what He saw fit.
- He made his plans and did what he could, but then he turned the results over to the Lord.

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- Joab showed trust in God, but he was also willing to do whatever he could in his own strength and wisdom to fix the situation.
- Too often, we lean too far one way or the other. We sit back and do nothing to try to fix the situation, “trusting God” to bail us out. Or we try to control everything about our situations, including the outcome.
- We plan, strategize, and cling to our plans but don't really trust that God's will is what's best.
- Joab showed a good blend of trusting God and acting in wisdom

# Biblical *View* of Success

compelling **truth**

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CHRISTIA

[Home](#) > [Index](#) > [The Christian Life](#) > [God in our Hearts](#) > Bible success

**What is a biblical definition of success?  
What does the Bible say about success?**

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# Biblical View of Success

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- The world defines success mainly by measuring the amount of wealth, power, and popularity a person obtains in this world.
- Worldly definitions of success are deceptive and tragic because they focus on what is fleeting and passing and ignore what is lasting and eternal (Hebrews 11:25; James 4:14; Psalm 102:3; Job 7:7).
- Worldly definitions of success are notoriously short-sighted and, if followed, end in misery (Matthew 16:26; Luke 12:20; 16:25).

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# Biblical View of Success

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- On the contrary, the Bible defines success in terms of what is spiritual and lasting and ends in eternal life and joy (Matthew 6:19–20; John 3:16; 15:11).
- Whereas worldly success is centered on the promotion and gratification of ourselves, biblical success is centered on obedience to and glorification of God (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
- Success is obedience to God, empowered by the Spirit of God, motivated by love for God, and directed toward the advancement of the kingdom of God. Success begins with obeying God's command to repent and believe in Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15; Acts 19:4; 20:21).

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# Biblical View of Success

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- When a person receives Jesus Christ they also receive the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30; Romans 8:9; 2 Timothy 1:14). The Spirit empowers believers to obey the teachings and commands of Christ (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49; 1 Thessalonians 1:5).
- This obedience is motivated by our newly implanted love for God (Romans 5:5; Galatians 4:6).
- Before we knew Christ we were alienated from God (Ephesians 2:12), after we receive Christ, we are reconciled to God and desire to love Him with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength (Mark 12:28–30).

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# Biblical View of Success

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- We are as light and salt to the world (Matthew 5:13–16) and the aroma of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14–17).
- Having been reconciled to God, we are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation—sharing the truth of salvation and life in Him with others (2 Corinthians 5:18–21).
- By living Christ-like lives, spreading the good news of the gospel, and making disciples, we participate with God in the advancement of His kingdom (Matthew 28:29–30).

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# Biblical View of Success

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- Any degree of victory or success we achieve is attributable to the grace of God working in us for our good and His glory (Ephesians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Romans 8:28; 16:27); it is not from ourselves.
- Humility and a willingness to serve God and others is perhaps the most important attribute in the kingdom of God and the one most likely to end in true biblical success (Mark 9:35; Philippians 2:4–11).

