



Daily Verse and Comment

1 Chronicles 14:11

(11) So David and his men went up to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, God has broken out against my enemies by my hand." So that place was called Baal Perazim.

New International Version

This chapter records the brief accounts of two encounters in the Valley of Rephaim, probably near Bethlehem, that [King David](#) had with the Philistines. Our verse is part of the concluding comments on the first battle (verses 8-12), while the second encounter is narrated in verses 13-16. Both clashes occurred just after David became king over all Israel, having united Judah with the northern tribes, and the Philistines were probing into Israelite territory to test his strength and perhaps divide and thus weaken the nation.

David's forces win both battles decisively, a severe setback for the Philistines, who had been consistently victorious over Saul's armies in the recent past. The stark contrast with Saul is deliberate, showing that the new king had God's support, unlike the old king. One of the clear differences is that, when David inquires of [God](#) whether he should meet the Philistines in battle, the Lord answers him: "Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand" (verse 10). Recall that in the last years of his reign, "when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets" ([1 Samuel 28:6](#)). And in desperation, facing the armies of Philistia in the Valley of Jezreel, Saul seeks a medium instead—leading to disastrous results. The chronicler is illustrating the good things that happen when the leader of the nation truly fears God.

The chief emphasis, however, is that God Himself is the main cause of the Israelites' victories; He fights their battles for them ([Exodus 14:14](#)). David is humble before God, not presuming to take the armies of Israel to war unless the true Ruler of Israel permits it ([1 Chronicles 14:10](#)). Nor does he presume

that just because he has God's permission that it will result in victory: David asks Him if He will allow him to conquer his adversaries. Both questions receive affirmative answers, giving the king and his soldiers great confidence—certainty—that they will emerge triumphant. All the credit goes to God.

In the picturesque way of the Hebrews, David depicts his first victory in Rephaim as a divine breakthrough of water, something like the onrush of a flash-flood. He may have been thinking of the results of heavy rainfall in hilly country, when the water pours down the hillsides and the gullies cannot contain it but spill over, eroding under the torrent. In a similar way, armies can rush down upon their foes, who are unable to defend against the onslaught and break.

Thus, David calls the place *Baal Perazim* or “Lord of Outbursts.” We do not normally think of God in this way, but we are instructed by this passage in Scripture to consider it. Our God has a multifaceted personality. He is not always calm and patient, treading softly and ruffling no feathers. Sometimes, He suddenly breaks out with an ear-splitting shout and an onrush of overwhelming power that nothing and no one can stand against! Fortunately, He does this against His and His people's enemies, sweeping them away with a stroke of His arm.

Do we wish for Him to act this way in our behalf? Perhaps He will not come to our aid as dramatically as He did for Israel in I Chronicles 14, but if we follow David's example of humble inquiry and faithful service, He will fight our battles for us. Our task will be to follow His lead and glorify Him for His wondrous intervention.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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