

## 2 Samuel Chapter 23

**Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.**

**<sup>3</sup>The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. <sup>4</sup>And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.**

**<sup>5</sup>Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.**

**<sup>6</sup>But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: <sup>7</sup>But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.**

Verse 1 – David’s last words. They start with his humble introduction as the son of Jesse; how he was raised up and promoted to the highest office. There is a shift from who he became in the natural to his spiritual aspects. He was anointed and set apart for service to God. He is connected to the promises of God from Jacob showing God’s faithfulness. In his power also is shown in his ability to praise God through his many psalms.

- How awesome! You don’t have to be the king in order to have great recognition in the Kingdom....a sweet spirit, praise and your worship are recognized as greatness in the Kingdom.

Verse 2 – The Spirit of the Lord spoke to him....the best speech. Spirit still can speak to us today. Oh that our words would always be led by the Spirit.

Verses 3-4 - Notice David’s last words are about what God told him.

- Rulers must be just and rule in the fear of the Lord. Before you can rule over others even your household and children, you should be just and in right standing with God.
- Application Question: How can I be sure I’m in right standing with God before I begin to rule over something? Answer – follow the first four Feast steps.
- Ruler should be light, give direction. The path should be clear. A leader gives clear direction and hope to start each day. That leader helps others to shine. Need the Holy Spirit to provide this kind of light. Light is associated with the glory of God. Must have Step 4 (Pentecost) to effectively bring God glory and in turn bring light to others.
- They fear God rather than others or loss of their pride or status.

- Natural items are used to describe good rulers. This helps us to better understand the impact a good leader has on others.

Verse 5 - He admits his house and leadership has not always lived up to this standard but he found favor anyway. Somebody talk to me.

- He says in his last words that even though he is the king, his own household is not a true reflection of what God desires. His hope still remains in a promise from God.
- Another translation is the verse may mean “For shall He not cause it to prosper”, which offers a different meaning. Whether it has happened already or not, the point is David says it is happening.
- He has an everlasting promise/agreement. A sure thing with God. This promise is his salvation and desire.
- Application for Today: Even though you may not see it or be experiencing God’s best, it doesn’t mean it won’t happen for you. This is another example of the kind of faith we see in Hebrews Chapter 11 with those heroes. The ones who waited to see the city and died waiting but their hope remained in a promise still to come that they would see.
  - Regardless of our circumstances and mistakes, there is always hope in the promises of God. Find out what those promises are as it pertains to you and then stand that you may see and experience the glory of the Lord in the land of the living.
- Covenant was not based upon his perfection. David admits he was not perfect and his house was not perfect. We know David made many mistakes in his walk, but this didn’t disqualify him from the Covenant or promises of God. You can recover.
- David’s wonderful response....not dwelling on past mistakes, all of his desire is found in God’s covenant of salvation. No matter what my state, my desire should be found in my salvation and relationship with God. There is always consolation in salvation.
  - I may not have everything, but I have my salvation. That should be a primary desire.

Verses 6-7 - Those against him and God are like thorns that will be bundled together and burned. Be careful being around them. Don’t touch them like thorns with your hands....they will be dealt with. Believers need to be dressed or prepared in order to deal with them. Who are they?

- Ungodly, worthless, wicked, etc. You have to use caution when dealing with people who are outside of right standing with God. Their fate is coming; but if we who are righteous come in contact with them, we have to protect ourselves. Don’t let the beauty cause you to overlook the thorns.

David’s Mighty Men

See 1 Samuel 22:1-2; they didn't start out as mighty men. As we read on, prepare a list of the different characteristics of David's mighty men. This is important as it can serve as a guide for how we can be mighty for the Kingdom today. There is still a need for mighty people of God in His kingdom today.

See also 1 Chronicles 10.

Verse 8 on – lists the mighty men he had. Last words take him back to the great men he trained and led.

**<sup>8</sup> These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.**

Adino = His ornament, was a Tachmonite (= thou will make me wise). He was a chief who defeated 800 at one time.

Application Question: what does 800 defeated enemies look like today? If God still desires mighty people today, it doesn't mean we are looking to kill 800 people unless you are in battle. But we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

- This is critical. I believe it shows that people who are mighty in the Kingdom have the ability to defeat the wiles of the enemy and the flesh each time it rises up. Every time I'm tempted by the enemy to sin or operate in the flesh or react in my emotions, and I win that battle.....I have slain the enemy one time (799 left to go).
- Forgiving 70x7=490. You are on the right path.
- Again, very important....this will change your perspective if you clearly understand the concept here....now every temptation and challenge can be viewed as a game day opportunity to do something great in defeating what the enemy is throwing at you. You can actually praise God for the opportunity to be great and mighty.

**<sup>9</sup> And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: <sup>10</sup> He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.**

Verses 9-10 - Eleazar =God has helped. One of three with David when they stood against the enemy when everyone else ran away. Fought Philistines until his hand got tired and stuck to his sword. The Lord used him to gain a great victory. God did it through him...what he did, God got the glory credit for it. His name means God has helped. How awesome.

- What have we done that God gets credit and glory for?
- Great application and example: Even when you get tired in the fight, keep swinging the word of God (the sword of the Spirit) against your enemy and your problem. Even when others who should be with you leave you alone, God will still be with you as you swing the Word. Don't be

surprised if the people who left you come back after you have defeated the enemy to share in the spoils.

- God has provided for us a champion and mighty man who will fight the battles for us so that we can enjoy the spoils of victory.
- Keep swinging that word. Ever face a situation where folk left you alone...but you still have a word/sword.

Let's start making **our list now of characteristics of David's mighty men:**

- They often had names that reflected the Kingdom
- You can often find them fighting the enemy (rather than fight against each other)
- They work for the King and the Kingdom. They belong to the King
- Sometimes they had to fight alone when their expected help ran away. The people they would have expected to assist and be with them, sometimes were gone when they looked around....but they stood against the enemy any way
- They know how to rise up in times of trouble. They don't stay down
- Mighty men can get tired in the fight
- But when they get tired, they never let go of the sword....which is the Word of God
- Mighty men hold on tight to the Word and use it skillfully in battle
- God works through them to get the victory. Even though they may be alone, they are never truly alone because God works through mighty men. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
- Mighty men work toward the glory of God
- Mighty men don't trip when people who should have been helping, only come back to share in the reward of the victory. Mighty men don't look at these people funny, don't cuss them out, don't withhold the blessing, etc. Talk to me....you know you have to be mighty in the Kingdom to let some things slide

**<sup>11</sup> And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. <sup>12</sup> But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.**

Verses 11-12 - Shammah =astonishment. When everyone else ran away...he stood his ground and defeated the enemy. Where the enemy had camped caused the people to run and miss out on provision/beans that were available.

- They had something they should have enjoyed but they can't enjoy the blessing because the enemy showed up. Fight for your blessing. Shammah stood in the middle of the field of blessing and defied the enemy. Don't let the enemy separate you from your blessing.
- The Lord will fight for you and gain the victory and glory when you stand on the promises. Our job is to stand, God gets the victory through us and through our faith. He will work through us to receive glory by delivering us.

Let's now add to our list of mighty men characteristics:

- They take back or protect what the enemy is trying to steal
- When others run (or become complacent) , they stand and fight against the enemy
- They can achieve great victories even though the odds are against them
- In the natural, they often appear outnumbered and insufficient, but they still stand for the Kingdom

**<sup>13</sup> And three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim.**

**<sup>14</sup> And David was then in a hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. <sup>15</sup> And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate! <sup>16</sup> And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.**

**<sup>17</sup> And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.**

Verses 13-17 - 3 of the 30 went down to visit David when he was hiding in a cave from the enemy. While David was stuck and hiding from the enemy he spoke a wish out loud. David wished for a drink from the well. What would we do, to give the King a drink (reference when you do it for the least of these, you've done it for the King). If we don't see what the enemy is doing then we won't see the need to take a spiritual stand and rise up....in our country, in our homes, in our churches, etc. Can't begin to be mighty if you can't recognize it's the enemy.

- Three of his men loved him so much, that they risked their own lives, didn't fear the enemy and had a break through to get the water and bring it back. Guess that's why they are mighty men.
- David wouldn't drink the water though. Poured it out as an offering.
- He wasn't worthy for these men to die for...but God is worthy. David would not enjoy what was more deserving for God so he poured it for Him. What they did for David was offered to God.
- They did all of this just to bring David a drink from that particular well. Why? It must have been their great love for the King.
- Other observations: what they meant for David was given in honor to God.
- Application: The same thing perhaps happens for us. When you provide for others who are going through a tough time in the Kingdom, and you are doing it for the Lord (see also Matthew 25:40-45), then you may receive mighty person credit.

Let's continue to add to our list of mighty men characteristics:

- They are fearless; perfect love casts out all fear
- Their motivation is their love for the King
- Mighty people don't get upset when their gift doesn't turn out the way they thought it would. If the use of their sacrifice is not used in the manner they expected and intended for it to be used....they don't bug out. Why not? Because it is used for the glory of God. As long as your sacrifice is motivated by God, you won't lose your mind.
- They experience "break throughs"

**<sup>18</sup> And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three. <sup>19</sup> Was he not most honourable of three? Therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three.**

Verses 18-19 - Abishai = my father is a gift. Chief among three. Fought 300 and defeated them. His feat was deserving of making him their captain. But he was not captain over the first three. Abishai was great but he didn't attain the level of the first three might men who are first mentioned above.

Note: As we go through this, notice how many times Joab's name is mentioned. But he will be missing later as one of the mighty. We will discuss.

**<sup>20</sup> And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow: <sup>21</sup> And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.**

**<sup>22</sup> These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. <sup>23</sup> He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his guard.**

Verses 20-23 - Benaiah = God has built up. His father was brave. He slew two bad guys like lions and then killed a real lion. Then killed an Egyptian.....took a spear out of his hand with a staff and killed him with his own weapon. If you are good enough, you can take someone against you out with their own weapon. He was one of the three key mighty men.

Let's continue to add to our list of mighty men characteristics:

- There are degrees of greatness and honor among the Mighty and different levels in the Kingdom
  - Application: just because you didn't attain what someone else did, doesn't mean your achievements for the Kingdom will not qualify you as mighty. There varying degrees of reward in the Kingdom. This is seen in several scriptures (1 Cor 3:11-15).
  - Mighty people don't compete against other mighty people in trying to be great.

- Mighty people don't try to discredit or pull other mighty people down just because they have less honor. The degree of greatness or what others have doesn't cause mighty people to be jealous.
- They don't let circumstances (e.g., snow) get in their way or prevent them from being faithful.
- They can take the weapons that the enemy uses against them, and turn it around for their victory. In essence, the Mighty can take the enemy out with their own weapon.
- They know how to disarm the enemy.
- Mighty Men are consistent. They don't just accomplish one mighty act and then quit. They are not one-hit-wonders. Note, Benaiah has performed "many acts" not just one or two.
- They know how to let God control what resources they have and He provides the increase.

**<sup>24</sup> Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem,**

Verse 24 - Asahel = God made. Slain by Abner at start of David's reign. We see Asahel's fate in 2 Samuel 2:18-23. He failed to defeat Abner, yet despite his failure, he is still counted among these greats. He had the opportunity to take out a smaller problem but continued to pursue Abner who was the root. He was fearless. He was warned by Abner not to pursue, but was still willing to sacrifice his life for the Kingdom.

Notice Joab is mentioned again.

Let's again continue to add to our list of mighty men characteristics:

- They use their talents (speed) for the good of the Kingdom
- They might fail in their pursuit, but their motivation still can make them one of the Mighty
- Application: Failure doesn't disqualify you from being one of the Mighty in the Kingdom

Now the remainder of the Chapter just lists the names of the remaining mighty men. Even in the meaning of their names, there is a Kingdom message. Let's look.

**<sup>25</sup> Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite, <sup>26</sup> Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikesh the Tekoite, <sup>27</sup> Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, <sup>28</sup> Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, <sup>29</sup> Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, <sup>30</sup> Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, <sup>31</sup> Abialbon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, <sup>32</sup> Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, <sup>33</sup> Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, <sup>34</sup> Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, <sup>35</sup> Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, <sup>36</sup> Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, <sup>37</sup> Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah, <sup>38</sup> Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, <sup>39</sup> Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.**

Elhanan = God has been gracious

Shammah (Harodite) = Astonishment

Elika = My God rejects



Helez = He has saved

Ira = Watchful of a city

Abiezer = My father is help

Mebunnai = Building of Jehovah

Zalmon = Shady (wooded hill?)

Maharai = Impetuous

Heleb = Milk

Ittai = With me

Benaiah = Yahweh has built up

Hiddai = For the rejoicing of Jehovah

Abi-albon = God is my father

Azmaveth = strong unto death

Eliabba = God hides (or God will hide)

Jonathan = Jehovah has given

Shammah (Hararite) = astonishment

Ahiam = mother's brother

Eliphelet = God is deliverance

Eliam = God of the people or God is kinsman

Hezrai = enclosed

Paarai = gaping

Igal = He redeems

Bani = built

Zelek = fissure or split

Nahari = snorter (snorer)

Ira = watchful of a city

Gareb = scabby (hill near Jerusalem)

Uriah = Jehovah is my light

Observations about the 37 Mighty Men:

Job not mentioned. You can be a successful leader in the world, but bad character can keep you from God's best. Look closely at Matthew 7:21-27. Jesus said there will be people who will claim to have done many great things in his name....yet Jesus will tell them to depart because he doesn't know them. I see Job as an Old Testament example of this scripture.



- Certainly he accomplished many great feats and won many battles for the King, but the motivation behind his success was selfish and self-centered and not always for the glory of God.
- Joab did not have good character.

See in contrast Uriah. Look at 2 Samuel 11:9-13 where the excellent character of Uriah is found. Rather than enjoy the comforts of home, he honors and relates to those soldiers still in the field. He recognized their discomfort. Here is another characteristic of mighty people:

- They can relate to the sufferings and conditions of others. I wish there were more mighty people around when you consider the fierce politics and division in our nations.

Importance of this story of mighty men...when we face similar situations and odds, how will we respond? Will we cut and run or stand our ground so He gets the glory and wax stronger. They had a positive response.

So below is the summary of characteristics of Mighty People for you and I to follow. Christ is still in need of mighty people to serve the Kingdom. We are taking the examples from some of the Mighty Men listed. They are very applicable for today. As you go through each one, think about a time in your life when you may have faced a similar challenge. Then see how the Mighty Men responded when the enemy attacked. If you recognize when the enemy attacks and apply the characteristics the Mighty Men did, God will work through us and our challenges to get the glory and the victory. Take on these characteristics and you can be listed among the mighty also. Question is, do you want to be mighty for the Kingdom and for our King Jesus?

#### Our "Current" List of Characteristics of David's Mighty Men:

- You can often find them fighting the enemy (rather than fight against each other)
- They work for the King and the Kingdom. They belong to the King
- Sometimes they had to fight alone when their expected help ran away. The people they would have expected to assist and be with them, sometimes were gone when they looked around....but they stood against the enemy any way
- They know how to rise up in times of trouble. They don't stay down
- Mighty men can and do get tired in the fight...but they don't quit
- But when they get tired, they never let go of the sword....which is the Word of God
- Be skillful in the use of the Word
- God works through them to get the victory. Even though they may be alone, they are never truly alone because God works through mighty men. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
- Mighty men work toward the glory of God
- Mighty men don't trip when people who should have been helping them, only come back to share in the reward of the victory. Mighty men don't look at these people funny, don't cuss them out, don't withhold the blessing, etc. Mighty people know how to forgive
- They take back or protect what the enemy is trying to steal
- When others run (or become complacent) , they stand and fight against the enemy
- They can achieve great victories even though the odds are against them
- In the natural, they often appear outnumbered and insufficient, but they still stand for the Kingdom

- They are fearless; their perfect love for the King casts out all fear
- Their motivation is their love for the King
- Mighty people don't get upset when their gift doesn't turn out the way they thought it would. If the use of their sacrifice is not used in the manner they expected and intended for it to be used....they don't bug out. Why not? Because it is used for the glory of God. As long as your sacrifice is motivated by God, you won't lose your mind.
- They experience "break throughs"
- There are degrees of greatness and honor among the Mighty and different levels in the Kingdom
- Mighty people don't try to discredit or pull other mighty people down just because they have less honor. The degree of greatness or what others have doesn't cause mighty people to be jealous.
  
- They can take the weapons that the enemy uses against them, and turn it around for their victory.
- They know how to disarm the enemy
- Mighty Men are consistent. They don't just accomplish one mighty act and then quit. They are not one-hit-wonders
- They know how to let God control what resources they have and He provides the increase.
- They use their talents for the good of the Kingdom
- They might fail in their pursuit, but their motivation still can make them one of the Mighty
  - Application: Failure doesn't disqualify you from being one of the Mighty in the Kingdom
- They don't cut and run in the face of the enemy or difficulties, they stand their ground and God receives the glory from their actions.
- They were motivated to serve the King and the Kingdom.
- They were influenced by the King and his example.
- They fought even though at times they were outnumbered or logic and odds were against them.
- The Mighty Men pursue.
- They don't let the enemy or problems run them off of the promises or the blessings from God
- They can be found standing on the promises of God
- They serve the Kingdom well.

When we face similar situations and odds, how will we respond? Do we consistently exemplify these characteristics? Now that we know them....we can. May we be mighty for our King.