

Mighty Men: Apply Within

2 Samuel 23:8-17

February 28, 2010

Intro

As we near the end of our study of the life of David, we come to 2 Samuel 23 where there is a list of the names of the mighty men whom David had.

First, I think it's important to note that David himself should be considered a mighty man. That's what drew these men to him. In fact, late in David's life when he was becoming old, the Philistines had attacked Israel yet again and David himself went out to battle. In the battle that day was one of the sons of Goliath whom David had slain when he was a youth.

This son of Goliath, named Ishbi-benob, had singled David out. He was wearing a new sword and was intent on using it to kill David. So there was David in his old age taking on one of the giant sons of Goliath in single-handed combat. David became weary, however, so Abishai came over and helped him. After that, they didn't let David go into battle anymore. But it's amazing that David, as the king of Israel was willing not just to go out with his men, but to take on the son of Goliath single-handedly!

So David himself was a mighty man and here is listed out for us the names of the mighty men who had been with David all his years.

God is still looking for mighty men and women who want to make a difference in their generation and who desire to do great things through the strength that God provides.

2 Chronicles 16:9, The eyes of the Lord search to and fro throughout the whole earth in order to show Himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are completely His.

I. Keys to Becoming a Mighty Man of God

- 1 There was a group of 30 mighty men of David and Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the 30. Perhaps you remember that Abishai and Joab were David's nephews and were two of his main generals; Abishai is listed as chief of the 30 mighty men.
- 2 There was also a group of three mighty men who stood greater than the 30. Those are the men who are listed first.
- 3 These three of David's mighty men represent for us then the keys of understanding what it means to be a mighty man or woman of God today.

A. Adino – willing to do much with little

- 4 Adino slew 800 in one battle carrying only a spear and so he is listed first of David's mighty men. This is simply an amazing feat of accomplishment.
- 5 The example that he becomes for us is that of being willing to launch out in faith, trusting that little is much when God is in the midst of it.
- 6 David himself becomes one of the greatest examples of this very point. He was willing to face Goliath carrying only a sling and five smooth stones.
- 7 This is most certainly a key to becoming a mighty man or woman of God; having the faith to trust that God is eager to demonstrate his strength in your life, but also a willingness to step out in the thick of it and do something for God.
- 8 Isn't that what God promises us?

Isaiah 41:10, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

2 Timothy 1:7, For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind.

- 1 But when we see men who have become mighty because they had great faith, we also need to understand that at first they had smaller faith and then it became greater faith as they walked in it.
- 2 David grew in his faith when he was a lonely shepherd practicing with his sling and watching over the sheep God had entrusted to his care.
- 3 How do we increase in our faith? ... that leads us to the second of David's mighty men.

B. Eleazar – clinging to his sword

- 1 In verses 9 and 10 we read about the second of David's mighty men, Eleazar, the son of Dodo.
- 2 Eleazar means, "God has helped."
- 3 At first, you might think that anyone who is called the "son of Dodo" would have to be a tough guy. But there was much more to it than that.

- 4 What made Eleazar a mighty man was that his hand clung to the sword until his hand was weary and became locked in place; frozen to his sword. He refused to give up, and he refused to let go of his sword.
- 5 The sword of course is a picture of the Word of God and clinging to the Word until our hearts are molded around it is a powerful picture of a mighty man or woman of God today.

Hebrews 4:12, For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Ephesians 6:17, And take “The Helmet of Salvation,” and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

- 6 It’s no wonder then that when it comes to spiritual warfare; the enemy of our soul would desire to disarm believers of their sword.
- 7 He would try to do this by trying to get us to deny the authority of God’s Word or to deny the truthfulness of God’s Word.
- 8 What the Scriptures help us understand, however, is that the Word of God is what God uses to increase our faith.

Romans 10:17, So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

- 9 But from the example of Eleazar, we understand how important it is to have our hearts molded to the Word of God, because God’s Word is written on our hearts.

Jeremiah 31:33, “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it;”

- 1 It’s also what God uses to transform us, to bring the change we need in our lives to be made new.

Romans 12:1-2, And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- 2 But Eleazar was also a mighty man not just because he clung to his sword, but also because he knew how to use his sword. He was a master at its use. He carried

it with him, he practiced with it; he became a master at how to use it in battle.

2 Timothy 2:15, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Illus – Several years ago Jordi gave me a book for Father’s Day called “The Compleat Gentleman.” It was a history of what it means to be a gentleman, going back to knights, etc. But I remember an interesting point; a gentleman masters whatever he does.

In those days, a gentleman had to carry a sword and must practice every day if he wanted to master the sword.

C. Shammah – faithful and true

10 The next of David's mighty men was Shammah. He was renowned as a mighty man because there was a plot of ground full of lentils, the Philistines had gathered into a troop and the people of Israel fled, they fell back.

11 But Shammah did not fall back. He was told to hold that field of lentils. He might die there, but he would not fall back.

12 The eyes of the Lord are searching for mighty men and women today who will take their stand in whatever field, whatever place God has set them.

13 I am reminded of the strong words of faith of the apostle Paul...

2 Timothy 1:12, I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him until that day.

1 Can you stand alone when others fall back? That's what it means to be faithful and true. God desires us to take our stand and not to be swept along with all the flotsam and jetsam of the world as it continues to slide toward darkness.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

Luke 16:10, “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”

Illus – This reminds me of the cover of an album by Keith Green called, “No Compromise.” In it, King Nebuchadnezzar is carried out in front of a crowd of men who are

kneeling in worship, but there is one who remains faithful and true – what a powerful picture for us today!

II. Pour Out Your Life to God

- 1 The next verses tell us about one of the great exploits of three of the 30 mighty men with David. This took place back when David was at the cave of Adullam and the garrison of the Philistines was in Bethlehem.
- 2 It was harvest time which means it was a hot and dusty time of year. At some point, David happens to sigh, "Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem."
- 3 That's when the three mighty men took action. They heard the desire of the king's heart and they wanted to show their love and devotion for him by giving him the drink that he desired.

A. Lead this generation to honor God

- 1 What happens next in the story is really a declaration of David's heart after God. We know that he is called a man after God's own heart, and it was times like these that made that saying famous.
- 2 The three mighty men broke through the Philistine garrison, at great risk of their own lives, so that David could have a drink from the well that was by the gate of Bethlehem.
- 3 When they gave it to David, he was amazed and he would not drink it, instead, he poured it out as a drink offering to God. It was to say; "only God deserves this kind of love and devotion."
- 4 But I am convinced that this was a transforming moment, for what they saw caused them to love David all the more and to honor the God whom he served.

Acts 13:36, For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers,

- 5 In 1 Samuel 22, we read that when David first set out on his own a small band of men came with him. These were men who were distressed, angry, in debt, discontented and bitter of soul. But by the time we get to 2 Samuel 23, these same men are mighty men of God.

Psalm 34:8-15 David taught them to honor God.

B. Be satisfied only with Living Water

- 6 David wouldn't drink of this water, because it wouldn't have been right. It

belonged to God. It was part of David's worship. He knew that having his soul satisfied by the Spirit of God was much more important than that drink of water.

John 4:13-14 Jesus gives Living Water

Psalm 42:1, As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You, O God.

Illus – They train Arabian horses by their thirst...