

The Mighty Men of David

(II Samuel 23:8-39; I Chronicles 11:10-47)

By

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We all like heroes, don't we?! Well, today we're going to talk about some real heroes, ones who really lived! And they are all heroes that the Bible tells us about. These heroes were all mighty soldiers under King David, and they are called the mighty men of David.

Now, you remember King David in the Bible, don't you? He had started out as a shepherd boy, the youngest of 8 brothers. Then the Lord had let David kill the giant Goliath with just a sling, remember? Well, some years later David became the second king of the children of Israel, the Jews. The Lord calls David His friend. David was a great king and a great soldier, and he had many other great soldiers who were in his army. But some of these soldiers were especially good soldiers and were called David's mighty men. But even before David became king, he had an army, and these mighty men had helped David then, too.

There were over 30 of these special soldiers, David's mighty men, but there were 3 that were the mightiest ones. Let me tell you some of the things that some of these men did, okay? It's exciting!

One of the mightiest of David's mighty men was named Ja-sho'-be-am. He killed at least 300 of the enemies of Israel at one time with a spear! We aren't told anything more about this! I wish we were, don't you?!

Now one story about David's mighty men sounds to me as if it had been near harvest time, and their enemies, the Philistines, had come to fight them and steal the food. They were at a field of either barley or lentils. David and his men were gathered together to fight the Philistines and defend the crops. But then nearly all of David's army ran away! Only Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah, the 3 mightiest of David's mighty men stayed! But just these few men fought the Philistines and won! They were very brave, weren't they?! I don't know if this was when Ja-sho'be-am killed the 300 men with a spear or not. Oh, and the Bible says that Eleazar used his sword and killed so many Philistines that afterwards he had trouble unclenching his fist and letting go of his sword! But it was the Lord Who had let them have a big victory, wasn't it?! After the battle was over, then the rest of David's army that had run away came back -- but just to take what the Philistines had left!

Another time David was in a cave. It seems to me that this was before David was king. Three of his mighty men went to where he was. It was harvest time, and the Philistines were camped in the valley and also in David's home town of Bethlehem. (We aren't told, but I wonder if the Philistines were going to steal the food that was being harvested.) Now, evidently there was a really good well at the gate of Bethlehem, and David sounds as if he were thirsty. David said, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well at the gate of Bethlehem!"

Now, David was just talking, but these 3 of his mighty men heard what David had said, and they went out to get the water for him! But David didn't know they were going. The 3 men broke through the line of the Philistines, got some of the water from the well at the gate of Bethlehem, then got back to David and gave him the water.

Well, when they got back with the water, it sounds as if David was really shocked that these men had risked their very lives just to get him a special drink of water! So what do you think he did?! Why David took the water and poured it out onto the ground as an offering to the Lord! He said, "God forbid that I should drink this! It would be as if I were drinking the blood of you men who risked your lives!"

Now, that may seem strange to us that David would react this way after those 3 men had gone through all of that danger to get it. But David had just been talking when he said he wished someone would get him the water, hadn't he? He hadn't really meant it, and he certainly didn't want (or expect) anyone to get himself in danger or maybe even get killed just for a drink of water for him! Also, by not drinking it, that made sure that no one else would risk his life just for something small like that, too, wouldn't it? By not drinking the water David was being a good leader, wasn't he? He was putting the safety of his men as being more important than just something he himself might like to have. After all, a person's life is worth more than some little thing we might want, isn't it?

Another of the mighty men of David was Abish'ai, one of David's nephews. It sounds as if Abishai were one of the 3 men who went to get the water. Anyway, once Abishai was where there were some enemies. Abishai had a spear, and he fought with his spear and killed 300 of the enemies. And that's all we're told about that fight, too! But Abishai became a general in David's army and was always very loyal to his Uncle David. In fact, once when David was older, there was another battle with the Philistines, and the Philistines had a giant with them. This giant seems to have been the son of Goliath whom David had killed many years before. Anyway, David was getting tired, and Abishai came to help David and killed this giant.

Another of David's nephews, Abishai's brother A'sahel was also one of David's mighty men.

And there was another mighty man named Bena'iah. He was another of David's generals and he became the leader of King David's bodyguards and was a very brave and loyal man. The Bible tells us that once when there was snow, Benaiah went down into a pit and killed a lion! (I wish the Bible gave us more details about this, don't you?! But it doesn't.) Another time there was an Egyptian giant who had an enormous spear and was evidently fighting against them. Well, Benaiah just had a staff (a big stick), and Benaiah went down to the giant, grabbed the big spear out of the giant's hand, and killed the giant with his own spear! Later after David had died and when his son Solomon had become king, Solomon made Benaiah to be the leader of the whole army.

Another of David's mighty men was Uriah the Hittite who was married to Bathsheba. He was a very brave and loyal man and fought in many battles. After Uriah was killed in a battle, David married Bathsheba, and she became the mother of Solomon who later became the king.

I wish we knew a lot more about these mighty men of David, don't you?! However, there is one more mighty Man who is even mightier than the ones I just told you about. In fact, He is the very mightiest of all mighty men! And the Bible tells us quite a bit about Him. Would you like to hear about Him?! It's really exciting! Okay.

Now, who do you think this most mighty Man of all is? I'll give you a hint. This most mighty Man is a descendant of King David. Who is He? Yes, He is the Lord Jesus Christ!! But how is the Lord Jesus a mighty man? Well, let me tell you!

You see, the Lord Jesus did some conquering when He was here on earth. Now, you're probably thinking, "Huh?? We don't read in the Bible that when Jesus came to earth that He fought in any battles!"

Well, let me explain. Why did Jesus come to earth? That's right. Jesus is not only a man, but He is also God the Son. And Jesus loves us so much that He came to earth and died on the cross for our sins so that we can some day go to heaven and be with Him. Right? But did Jesus stay dead? No! Three days later Jesus was alive again, He rose from the dead, and the Bible says that in rising from the dead, the Lord Jesus conquered death!!! (That was really being mighty, wasn't it?!) Yes, Jesus died on the cross for our sins and then rose from the dead to give us everlasting life. And if we trust in the Lord Jesus to forgive our sins, then not only will we be able to go to heaven someday, but we will also someday be resurrected ourselves! Then we'll have new glorious bodies that will never be sick nor die again! Death has been conquered by King Jesus!

Yes, someday the Lord Jesus, the mightiest of all mighty men, is coming back, isn't He? And He will be coming that time as a conquering King!! The Bible tells us that He will come charging out of heaven on a white horse on the clouds of heaven, and He'll have an army on white horses following Him! His eyes will be as a flame of fire, and He'll have many crowns on His head, and by simply speaking, He will destroy a very wicked army! And He will then be King of the whole world, bringing peace, and He will rule from Jerusalem!!

In fact, 3,000 years ago King David wrote a song in which he talked about this. He wrote this song to the city of Jerusalem where King Jesus will someday come after destroying the wicked army and there in Jerusalem He will be King of everyone and everything. David wrote to the city of Jerusalem, "Lift up your heads, O you gates and everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!! Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty!! The Lord mighty in battle!! Lift up your heads, O you gates and you everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!! Who is this King of glory? The Lord of armies, he is the King of glory!!"

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is the King of glory -- the mightiest of all mighty men!!!

