

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

INTRODUCTION

Introduction:

1. The Bible records David's many victories in battle against the enemies of Israel (2 Samuel 8, 10, 21:15-22; 1 Chronicles 18, 19, 20).
 2. Obviously, God blessed David with success and triumph.
 3. However, the Bible also reveals that David was victorious because of the men who stood and fought with him and for him.
 4. They are sometimes referred to as David's "mighty men" (2 Sam. 10:7; 16:6; etc.).
 5. By studying these men, we can learn valuable lessons about leadership, courage, loyalty, and sacrifice.
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- I. David's Devoted Followers (1 Sam. 22:1-2; 1 Chron. 12)
 - A. David was chosen by God, and anointed by Samuel, to be King while Saul was still alive and reigning over Israel.
 - B. As Saul drifted away from God and failed as a ruler of the nation, more and more people began to look to David for leadership.
 - C. Saul was bitterly jealous of David and sought to kill him, causing David to flee into the wilderness around Judea.
 - D. During this time, David came to the cave of Adullam, which became his hideout.
 - E. Here, David began to gather a group of devoted followers.
 1. First, David was joined by his family – his brothers and his father's household.
 2. Next, he was joined by 400 men who were discontented with Saul's reign.
 - a. Some were in distress – anguished over the tyranny of Saul.
 - b. Some were in debt – due to the neglect of God's law (Ex. 22:25).
 - c. Some were in doubt – bitter in soul over the state of the nation.
 3. David became their captain, demonstrating true leadership.
 4. The Pulpit commentary states: "*Had Saul's government been just and upright David would have had no followers.... The Israelites had in him the very king they had desired, but they found that a brave general might at home be a ruthless tyrant.*"
 - F. Soon, the number of David's men had grown to 600 (1 Sam. 23:13; 27:2).
 - G. Under the leadership of David, these outcasts of society had become a well-trained, tough, and courageous fighting force – yet, a force for good (25:13).
 - H. As time went on, many joined David from the tribes of Gad, Benjamin, and Judah (1 Chron. 12:8-18).
 - I. At Ziklag, more joined David from the tribes of Benjamin and Manasseh (1 Chron. 12:1-7, 19-21).
 - J. "*For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God*" (1 Chronicles 12:22).
 - K. Lessons to be learned...
 1. Men seek righteous leadership.
 2. Integrity produces loyalty.
 3. Courage begets courage.

1 Samuel 22; 2 Samuel 23; 1 Chronicles 11 – 12

- II. David's Mighty Men (2 Sam. 23; 1 Chron. 11)
- A. Out of this group of loyal followers, several men distinguished themselves as soldiers of great character and bravery.
 - B. "As a whole, they were heroic in battle and unflinching in loyalty, even remaining at David's side during the rebellions of Absalom (2 Sam. 16:6; cf. 17:8) and Adonijah (1 Kings 1:8-10)." {Cliff Goodwin, *David's Mighty Men*}
 - C. Initially, there were 37 fighters who were known as David's "mighty men."
 - D. In the book of Chronicles, this number grows to at least 50.
 - 1. It is possible that some mentioned in 1 Chronicles 11:10-47 replaced others who had fallen in battle.
 - 2. Or, perhaps some of lower rank were included in this list.
 - E. The organization of David's mighty men:
 - 1. "The Thirty" – a term for David's elite soldiers and captains (2 Sam. 23:13, 23-24; 1 Chron. 11:15).
 - 2. The Second Three – a triad of elite warrior superior to the 30, but second to the highest triad (23:19, 22-23; 1 Chron. 11:21).
 - a. Abshai
 - b. Benaiah
 - c. *Unnamed warrior*
 - i. Some suggest Joab
 - ii. Possibly a traitor
 - 3. The First Three – a triad of the most elite of David's captains (23:8-17).
 - a. Adino (aka Josheb-basshebeth)
 - b. Eleazar
 - c. Shammah
 - 4. Commander-in-chief – Joab (2 Sam. 20:23; 1 Chron. 19:8; 27:34)
 - F. Of these mighty men, only 5 are discussed in any detail in Scripture.
 - G. These are the men of the First Three and the Second Three – who will be the focus of this study.