

ABISHAI – WHO WAS GREAT, BUT NOT GREATEST

Abishai – Who Was Great, But Not Greatest (2 Sam. 23:18-19; 1 Cr. 11:20-21)

- A. Abishai was a brother of Joab and has been mentioned before.
 - 1. 1 Samuel 26:6-9 – He went with David into Saul's camp by night and encouraged him to kill his enemy, the King.
 - 2. 2 Samuel 2:24; 3:30 – He and Joab pursued and eventually killed Abner, who had killed their brother.
 - 3. He also will be mentioned several times in future battles of Israel.
- B. The great deed of Abishai that described him as one of David's mighty men was the killing of 300 enemies with just a spear.
- C. As a result, he was made captain of the second triad of David's mighty men.
- D. However, it is stated that even though he was "chief among the three" he did not attain "unto the first three."
 - 1. Remember that Adino had killed 800 enemies with one spear (vs. 8).
 - 2. Abishai was great, but he was not the greatest.
- E. This is not stated to disparage or disrespect Abishai.
- F. Rather, it demonstrates an important truth – we all must serve to the best of our abilities, in spite of what others may do.
 - 1. Abishai was not Adino, but he was not required to be.
 - 2. Abishai was not Joab, but he was excused from service.
 - 3. Abishai was not David, but he was not exempted from giving his all.
- G. We must learn to serve God without comparing ourselves to others (2 Cor. 10:12; Luke 18:11; Rom. 15:18-20).
- H. We must learn to serve God with our whole hearts (Mark 12:30; cf. 12:41-44; 2 Cor. 8:5).
- I. We must learn to serve God with our every ability (Matt. 25:14-30).
- J. We must learn to serve God for His glory, not our own (Prov. 25:27; Matt. 5:16; 23:5; John 5:44; 2 Cor. 10:18; Gal. 1:24; Phil. 2:3; 1 Pet. 4:11).