



41: All the King's Men (2 Samuel 23)

*David's mighty men accomplished incredible feats of courage and loyalty
—but why does the chapter end with the name **Uriah**?*

Join us as we discover how 2 Samuel 23 celebrates David's greatest warriors while ultimately pointing us to the greater King, Jesus Christ, who alone can save.

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* All Scripture is from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) and English Standard Bible (ESB).

2 Samuel 23:1 ESV

Now **these are the last words of David**: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel:

- The Hebrew word translated as **oracle** is used regarding a declaration from God.
- David points to his humble beginnings, simply calling himself the **son of Jesse**, the shepherd boy from Bethlehem.
- David notes how God chose to make him **the man raised on high, anointed by the God of Jacob way before he ever carried the title or privileges of "king"**.
- David is noted and quoted as **the sweet psalmist of Israel**, the writer of many psalms/songs about Yahweh.

2 Samuel 23:2-5 CSB

The **Spirit of the LORD** spoke through me, His word was on my tongue. The **God of Israel** spoke; the **Rock of Israel** said to me, "The one who rules the people with justice, who rules in the fear of God, is like the morning light when the sun rises on a cloudless morning, the glisten of rain on sprouting grass." Is it not true my house is with God? [NLT = *Is it not my family God has chosen?*] For **He has established a permanent covenant with me**, ordered and secured in every detail. Will he not bring about my whole salvation and my every desire?

God gave David the picture of a righteous ruler who **fears God**, *refreshing and inspiring others* under his leadership.

NLT = **Is it not my family God has chosen?** Yes. Not only would God be faithful to David until his death, but it would be through David's family that the Messiah would come.

2 Samuel 23:6-7 CSB

But all **the wicked are like thorns raked aside**; they can never be picked up by hand. The man who touches them must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear. **They will be completely burned up on the spot**.

The wicked raked aside and burned up is the ultimate outcome for those who stood against God's anointed king, and it's the ultimate outcome for those who stand against **Jesus - GOD'S ANOINTED KING**, when He returns.

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

David's mighty men were predominantly Israelites, but **his elite warriors also included foreigners**—who attached themselves to David and his kingdom. In fact, many of these men joined David when he was on the run from enemies - while he was an outlaw. These guys stuck it out when times were tough, and were later honored for their faithfulness to the king.

- Just before the death of Jesus, things got tough. At one point many who claimed to be disciples walked away from Jesus and He asked the others if they wanted to leave too (John 6:60-69). But they stuck it out when times were tough, and were later honored for their faithfulness to the king - their names forever recorded in the Gospels as the apostles.

2 Samuel 23:8-10 CSB

These are **the names of David's warriors**: Josheb-basshebeth the Tahchemonite was chief of the officers. He wielded his spear against eight hundred men that he killed at one time.

After him, **Eleazar** son of Dodo son of an Ahohite was among the three warriors with David when they defied the Philistines. The men of Israel retreated in the place they had gathered for battle, but Eleazar stood his ground and attacked the Philistines until his hand was tired and stuck to his sword. **The LORD brought about a great victory that day**. Then the troops came back to him, but only to plunder the dead.

When everyone else retreated, Eleazar stood his ground against the Philistines. The author then makes it clear that Eleazar did not do this on his own. The mighty men fought faithfully, but the victory ultimately belonged to Yahweh.

2 Samuel 23:11-14 CSB

After him was **Shammah** son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had assembled in formation where there was a field full of lentils. The troops fled from the Philistines, but Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field, defended it, and struck down the Philistines. So **the LORD brought about a great victory. Three of the thirty leading warriors** went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam, while a company of Philistines was camping in Rephaim Valley. At that time David was in the stronghold, and a Philistine garrison was at Bethlehem.

At some point in David's reign, probably early on, he was hiding in **the cave of Adullam**, where David hid from Saul as well (1 Samuel 22:1-2). The Philistines have blocked their escape by **camping in Rephaim Valley**.

Further, we are told that **Bethlehem**, David's hometown, had been invaded and taken over by the **Philistines**, who built a **garrison** there. Obviously, this would have been a HUGE concern for David.

2 Samuel 23:15-16a CSB

David was extremely thirsty and said, "If only someone would bring me **water** to drink **from** the well at the city gate of **Bethlehem**!" So three of the warriors broke through the Philistine camp and drew water from the well at the gate of Bethlehem. This was about 25 mile journey. What kind of commitment is THAT!

2 Samuel 23:16b-17 CSB

They brought it back to David, but he refused to drink it. Instead, **he poured it out to the LORD**. David said, "LORD, I would never do such a thing! Is this not the blood of men who risked their lives?" So he refused to drink it. Such were the exploits of the three warriors.

David realizes that sharing his thoughts put his men in danger. Instead of drinking the water he longed for, **he poured it out to Yahweh** - a sacrifice - grateful that his men's blood was not poured out instead.

2 Samuel 23:18-19 CSB

Abishai, Joab's brother and son of Zeruiah, was leader of the Three. He wielded his spear against three hundred men and killed them, gaining a reputation among the Three. Was he not more honored than the Three? He became their commander even though he did not become one of the Three.

Abishai, the nephew of David and **brother of Joab**, accompanied David in a stealthy night mission into Saul's camp and offered to kill Saul with Saul's own spear (1 Sam 26:6-12). Abishai often commanded many of David's forces in battle.

He **killed 300 men with his spear** in one battle. And as honored as "the three" - Josheb, Shammah, & Eleazar were - **Abishai**, their leader, was honored even more!

2 Samuel 23:20-23 CSB

Benaiah son of Jehoiada was the son of a brave man from Kabzeel, a man of many exploits. **Benaiah killed two sons of Ariel** of Moab, and he went down into a pit on a snowy day and **killed a lion**. He also **killed an Egyptian**, an impressive man. Even though the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, Benaiah went down to him with a staff [NET & NIV = **club**], snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and then **killed him with his own spear**. These were the exploits of **Benaiah** son of Jehoiada, who had a reputation among the three warriors. **He was the most honored of the Thirty**, but he did not become one of the Three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

Benaiah was the son of a levitical priest (1 Chr 27:5), which means he would have been expected to serve as a priest. Instead, he becomes a mighty warrior with many impressive victories. But his character must have been even more impressive, as we are about to note.

Of interest, David had played the same role for Saul (1 Sam 22:14), a trusted leader over David's secret service.

* **Verses 24-28 names the rest of the men** - check out on your own.

2 Samuel 23:39 CSB

and **Uriah** the Hethite. There were thirty-seven in all.

Uriah...the same man David murdered - the husband of Bathsheba - and...one of the king's mighty men! The author intentionally leaves Uriah for last, reminding us that *even the MOST HONORED of them all* (i.e. David), was flawed.

🕒 As great as King David was, the author leaves the audience wanting MORE from God's anointed king. The author refuses to let us romanticize David. One name exposes the king. One name reminds us that even Israel's greatest king was a sinner.

✝ David needed forgiveness just as much as the rest of us. David sacrificed an innocent man to cover his own sin, but Jesus became the innocent Man who willingly gave His life to cover OUR SIN.

David points us to Christ—*not because David was perfect*, but because David leaves us longing for the perfect King.

The best king Israel ever had...still needed a Savior. And so do we.

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!
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Discussion questions

These questions are designed to help you LIVE what you LEARN with your family, friends, or small group.

1. What stood out to you most from 2 Samuel 23 or this week's teaching? Why?
2. David described the ideal ruler as one who "rules with justice" and "rules in the fear of God" (2 Sam. 23:2-4). What qualities do you look for in a leader? How does Jesus perfectly fulfill this description?
3. David celebrated God's everlasting covenant with his family (2 Sam. 23:5). How have you personally experienced God's faithfulness to His promises?
4. David's mighty men remained loyal to him when life was difficult and dangerous. What does faithful loyalty to King Jesus look like today when following Him becomes costly or unpopular?
5. The three warriors risked their lives simply to bring David a drink of water. What does their example teach us about sacrificial love, devotion, and serving others?
6. Throughout this chapter we repeatedly read that "the LORD brought about a great victory." Why is it important to remember that our victories ultimately come from God rather than ourselves?
7. Benaiah used the gifts and opportunities God gave him to faithfully serve David. What gifts, abilities, or experiences has God given you that you can use to serve Christ and His kingdom?
8. The chapter ends with the unexpected mention of Uriah the Hethite, reminding us of David's greatest failure. Why do you think the author intentionally ended the list this way? What does it teach us about David—and about ourselves?
9. David arranged for an innocent man to die to cover his own sin, but Jesus willingly died as the innocent One to cover our sin. How does that contrast deepen your appreciation for the gospel?
10. After studying 1-2 Samuel, what have you learned about God, about human nature, and about why we need a greater King than David?