

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This evening we are going to finish our study through 2 Samuel.

So, turn with me to 2 Samuel 23.

We are first going to finish up chapter 23 where we have a few details of David's mighty men and then in chapter 24, we have another event that will show us what set David apart.

Let's pray...

**[2Sa 23:8-23 NKJV] 8 These [are] the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-Basshebeth the Tachmonite, chief among the captains. He was called Adino the Eznite, because he had killed eight hundred men at one time. 9 And after him [was] Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, [one] of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines [who] were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. 10 He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder.**

Now, these last few verses give us a little insight on David's mighty men.

David was nothing without his mighty men, and they were nothing without him.

He was their leader, but a leader is nothing without followers – and David had the mighty men to follow him.

The first thing I want to remind you is that these men were not always mighty.

These guys were nobodies – they were in trouble when they came to David – who by the way, was also in the same condition as he fled Saul.

Church, this shows us that God uses ordinary people, people who struggle – like you and me, and He does great things through them.

I had you make a note of Adino the Eznite – his name means to lift up – and that is exactly what he did, as he lifted up his spear – and God did the rest and the results were amazing –

Lesson one for us is to lift up the spear; or we might say, engage.

Get involved. Step-out in faith.

Stir up the gift that is in you. Offer yourself each day a living sacrifice to God and you will see what God can do.

Eliezer was another one –

When everyone else ran away from the Philistines – Eliezer ran toward them.

And as he fought them, he cleaved to the sword so tightly, that he couldn't let go – and God gave them a great victory.

Church, lesson #2 – how tight are we holding on to our own sword?

Do we read it daily?

We must be in the Word consistently and continuously.

We cannot grow unless we are taking in consistent bible teachings and bible studies –

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom 10:17)

**11 And after him [was] Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. 12 But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.**

The Philistines would raid the crops of the Children of Israel –

And every time they came, people fled – they were scared of them.

Not Shammah – he waited for them by himself and defended the field and God gave them the victory.

Lesson #3 – Being a Christian can involve a sense of aloneness.

We might be the only believer in our family, or at work, or at school.

And sometimes society might pressure us into doing something that everyone else is doing.

So the question becomes, do we stand our ground like Shammah or do we go with the flow?

Turn with me to the book of Hebrews

Because the book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were being greatly persecuted for their faith.

They were being persuaded that all they needed to do was to let go of this “Jesus” stuff.

**[Heb 12:1-2 NKJV] 1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares [us], and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of [our] faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

Church, we don't let go of Jesus – we stand our ground.

Those times where it appears that we are all alone - The Lord designs those times to see if He is enough for you!

It is during those times that He shows you what it is, or who it is, you truly seek.

**13 Then three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14 David [was] then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines [was] then [in] Bethlehem. 15 And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which [is] by the gate!" 16 So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that [was] by the gate, and took it and brought [it] to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. 17 And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is [this not] the blood of the men who went in [jeopardy of] their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men.**

David is in a hot stuffy cave – and is heard saying that he longed for water from a well in Bethlehem – remember, Bethlehem was his home town.

The problem was that Bethlehem was behind enemy line.

So the three mighty men take it upon themselves to get David a drink of the water from the well.

How did they get through the enemy lines – we don't know, the bible doesn't tell us.

However, when they bring the cup of water back to David, David pours it on the floor.

Now, before we get angry at David – David pours it on the floor as an offering to the Lord.

He gave the most precious thing to him at the time – the cup of water.

That is what sacrifice is all about.

Now, what made these three men great was that the extreme measures that they took to serve David.

Church greatness is measured by how we serve others.

**(Mark 10:42–45 NKJV) —42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”**

You can read about Abisha and the other great men –

I want to draw your attention to Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite in verse 34 –

Eliam was Bathsheba's father.

And then in verse 39, we find Uriah – which was Bathsheba's husband who David had killed.

So not only did we read earlier of how David was betrayed, we see that he also betrayed those in his inner circle.

**[2Sa 24:1-25 NKJV] 1 Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and **He** moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah."**

Turn with me to 1 Chronicles 21

**[1Ch 21:1 NKJV] 1 Now **Satan** stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.**

I mentioned on Sunday that in the original Hebrew text – there were no capital letters.

So if you have a NKJV, the translator took it upon themselves to capitalize the H in He.

So it makes it seem that the God is the one who moved David to number Israel and Judah - when it was Satan.

Remember, God forbid the numbering of the people.

And the reason was that the Children of Israel belonged to him.

It would be like me going to my neighbor's house and deciding to count how much money they had in their bank account.

God allows a census to be done (twice) in the book of Numbers – once in the beginning and once in the end – that is it.

**2 So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who [was] with him, "Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people." 3 And Joab said to the king, "Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see [it]. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?"**

David commands Joab to go take the census – but right away even Joab knows that this might not be a good idea – and he even tries to talk David out of it.

David issues a census because he wants to take inventory of how big his army is – that was the point of the census in those days.

The problem with this is that he depending upon the number of people for strength rather than counting on God.

**4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the**



presence of the king to count the people of Israel. 5 And they crossed over the Jordan and camped in Aroer, on the right side of the town which [is] in the midst of the ravine of Gad, and toward Jazer. 6 Then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi; they came to Dan Jaan and around to Sidon; 7 and they came to the stronghold of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to South Judah [as far as] Beersheba. 8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. 9 Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king. And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

The census takes almost 10 months to be completed – so for 10 months, David had the opportunity to call it off – but he didn't.

10 And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

So when David gets what he wanted – the number of men ready to fight – he knows that what he has done is wrong.

David did not accuse God of tricking him or tempting him.

He didn't object that God had permitted Satan to stand up against Israel and influence David to take the sinful census.

No, David recognized that it was his sin and that he was personally responsible.

**God permitted David to do what was in his heart in order to show him what was in his heart and bring him to repentance.**

**11 Now when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, 12 "Go and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three [things]; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do [it] to you." ' " 13 So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me." 14 And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies [are] great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man." 15 So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died.**

When we confess our sin, God immediately and eternally forgives us our sin. But our sin may still have temporary consequences in our lives.

And that is what is happening here.

God speaking through Gad has David pick the consequences from a list of three options.

Why does David pick the plague?

1. It was the shortest one in terms of time. (compared to 7 years of famine)
2. It also put David and Israel in the merciful hands of God rather than the hands of their enemies.
3. it was the penalty that God warned would attend any census that failed to collect the required ransom. We just studied about this on Sunday morning a few weeks ago. **[Exo 30:12 NKJV] 12 "When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when [you] number them.**

David failed to collect the ransom – it was only a half shekel .

However, It was a token to remind everyone that they were a ransomed people who had been slaves to sin but were now set free to serve the Lord as He prescribed.

So because of David's sin – 70,000 men died.

Just days earlier, he was anticipating hearing the number of fighting men he had and now he hears the number of men that he lost because of his sin.

**16 And when the angel stretched out His hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "It is enough; now restrain your hand." And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.**

This justified David's wisdom in leaving himself in God's hands.

He could not trust man to relent from destruction.

**17 Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, "Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."**

David is taking responsibility for his action -

Lord, I have sinned – I have erred, Why are they bearing the brunt of my punishment.

Take it out on me.

In first Chronicles, we have more detail between David and the angel.

**(1 Ch 21:16 NKJV) Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched**

out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces.

Let's see what God has to say -

18 And Gad came that day to David and said to him, "Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the **threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite**." 19 So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. 20 Now Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. So Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground. 21 Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" And David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people."

I asked you to make a note of the threshing floor of Araunah –

Now, the threshing floor is where the people would separate the wheat from the chaff – it was usually located on top of a hill – because they would rely on the wind to blow the chaff away.

However, the scriptures also tell us that something else happened on this hill.

2 Chronicles 3:1 tells us that this threshing floor was on Mt Moriah – where Abraham offered Isaac.

The same set of hills where Jesus died on the cross.

So God tells David to buy the land and build an altar there.

This was going to be a place of sacrifice and worship – and guess what else is going to be built there – the Temple.

**22 Now Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up whatever [seems] good to him. Look, [here are] oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood. 23 "All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you." 24 Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy [it] from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which **costs me nothing**." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. 25 And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.**

Araunah wanted to give David what he needed for sacrifice and worship - but David knew that it wouldn't be a sacrifice if it did not cost him anything.

David is not about to cheat God.

I find it interesting that at the threshing floor – we find David and the angel of the Lord.

Who is the angel of the Lord – Jesus (Christophaney or Theophany)

Jesus sees David pay for his sin on top of Mt. Moriah.

And many years later, Jesus would pay the price for our sin at the same location.

Amen

Let's pray...

God was able to take David's sin of pride and turn the entire situation around so that this place became not just "a place" of worship, but "THE place" of worship.

