

# The Mighty Men

## 2 Samuel 23 v 8-17

### Context:

The story of David's rise from shepherd boy to King of Israel is one of the most exciting and inspiring in the Old Testament and there is much for us to learn from his life and experience. As leader of God's people, one of David's responsibilities was to protect and defend the Israelites against those who wanted to attack and destroy them, those who regarded themselves as God's enemies. In the New Testament (Ephesians 6 v 10-20), Paul tells us that *our* struggle and fight as Christians, unlike that of David, is not against *flesh and blood* but against the *spiritual powers* of evil led by Satan, and, therefore, the weapons of *our* warfare are *spiritual* (2 Corinthians 10 v 3-6). In David's day, however, the battle was often against *people* and required great courage and worldly weapons such as sword and spear. To assist him in defending God's people, David appointed a band of brothers, a group of mighty warriors, and we will meet some of them in today's study.

### Observation:

1. What was the name of the first mighty warrior (v 8a)?
2. Where did he rank in the group and what mighty exploit did he perform (v 8b)?
3. Who was the second mighty man mentioned (v 9a)?
4. What exploit of his is recorded in v 9b-10a?
5. Who is given credit for his victory in v 10b?
6. Who is the third mighty man mentioned in v 11a?
7. What mighty exploit of his is mentioned in v 11b-12 and who is credited with the victory?
8. What time of year was it in v 13a and where did the three mighty men go?
9. Where was the Philistine garrison stationed in v 14?
10. What did David express a longing for in v 15?
11. What did the three mighty men do in response (v 16a)?
12. What did David say and do on their return (v 16b-17)?

### Meaning:

1. Why do you think David chose a band of brothers to be with him?
2. From reading of their exploits, what characteristics do you think David's three mighty men possessed?
3. What do their exploits indicate about their relationship with David and with God?
4. Why do you think David refused to drink the water from Bethlehem? What does the pouring out of this water indicate about David's heart?
5. David had a larger group of 30 mighty men (see v 24), but from them he chose an inner circle of 3 (v 8). Jesus did something similar (contrast Mark 3 v 13-19 with Mark 5 v 37 & 9 v 2). Why do you think they both did this?

6. Looking at Ephesians 6 v 10-20 & 2 Corinthians 10 v 3-5, what are the similarities and differences between the way Christians are told to fight and the way David and his mighty men fought? How do we account for the differences?

#### **Application:**

1. "Our starting point is less significant than where we are heading." How does this Bible passage illustrate this truth?
2. "It's hugely important who we choose as our intimate friends. We become what/whom we worship, we are the mean average of our 5 best friends." To what extent do you agree with this principle and how do we see it play out in today's passage?
3. "Cowardice is a superbug, courage is contagious!". In what ways is courage necessary as a follower of Jesus and how might cowardice hold us back from pursuing the life Jesus calls us to?
4. "If we celebrate other people's 'stories' of faith, we'll find our own." How far do you agree with this statement?
5. At St James we are planning a mission in partnership with Through Faith Missions (TFM) at Harvest this year. The best results come when we surround ourselves with people who have committed to it too, in prayer/time/faith. Evangelism can work for an individual, but the people who prefer to do it alone are normally examples of what we want to avoid. So, in what ways is God calling you to respond and prepare to be involved in our mission this autumn?

#### **Pray:**

- For God to surround you with people who will encourage your growth in faith.
- For our Harvest Mission in October and your part in it.