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May memory verse: Romans 6:14 (NKJV) For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Commentary on 2nd Samuel chapter 23, by Chuck Smith 5.4.22

In chapter twenty-three,

These are the last words of David. The son of Jesse, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed [of God,] of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel. [I like that last title, "the sweet psalmist of Israel."] The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue ([2Sa 23:1-2](#)).

So David acknowledges that God spoke by him. It was God's word that was in his tongue. These words are confirmed in the New Testament. Peter in quoting one of the Psalms of David said, "And David by the mouth of the Holy Ghost spake saying..." attributing the words of David actually to the Holy Spirit. David here himself is attributing his words to the Holy Spirit. As you read the Psalms you realize that surely they must be inspired of God, the worship of God that is actually inspired by God. "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me. His word was in my tongue."

The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God ([2Sa 23:3](#)).

Oh, I wish that they would put that somewhere in the swearing-in ceremonies of every leader in our country. Anyone who rules over men must do so in justice and the fear of God. What a whole different climate would exist in the United States today if our leaders were each of them just ruling in the fear of God. The problem with man is that he cannot really handle authority.

I am absolutely appalled at the corruption that exists in the local level of government. What we see in the local levels of government is only just so little compared to what you see when you get further up in the government, because man is totally incapable of ruling over men because he fails to do it in the fear of God. You see, you begin to think that you are the authority, because people are coming to you constantly for favors. People are constantly telling you how wonderful you are, building you up, in order that they might get favors from you and you begin to take the position of making the decisions in authority, not taking into account God, and the fact that you're gonna have to answer to God one day, for each decision that you've made. Because if you are in a

position of leadership, you actually are representing God, because you're ruling over people's lives. Every man who rules over men should do so in justice, in the fear of God.

David said, "came to me powerfully from the Lord." David's rule was marked by justice and in the fear of God. David made his mistakes, true. But yet he was aware of his accountability to God, and that is something every leader, every ruler over man needs to be keenly aware of his accountability to God. Someday he's gonna answer to God.

You know there are so often the desire to escape this urban life. "Oh, if I could only live in the country. Oh, if I could only move up into central California into one of those little country towns where things are so clean, and pure and all."

He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun rises, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by a clear shining after a rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, and he has ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. But the sons of Belial [or Satan] shall all of them be thorns that are thrust away, because you cannot take them up with your hands: But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall utterly be burned with fire in the same place ([2Sa 23:4-7](#)).

Now you have David's hall of fame. These are the mighty men that were with David, the men that fought in his armies.

Among the chief captains was Adino: [Sounds like Italian] in one time he lifted up his spear against eight hundred men, and killed them. [He was a tough cookie.] After him was Eleazar, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were gathered together against Israel: He arose, and he smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and the hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to the spoil ([2Sa 23:8-10](#)).

This guy was fighting so long that he couldn't tell where his hand ended and the sword began. He just, his hand was locked, and he just kept wailing away until the guy just came in and took the spoil after them, and he did all of the battle. A mighty, one of the three mighties of David.

And after him was Shammah. And the Philistines had gathered together unto a piece of ground that was full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the middle of the ground, and defended it, and he slew the Philistines: and the Lord wrought a great victory ([2Sa 23:11-12](#)).

Then it tells of another three who, when David was battling against the Philistines, and the Philistines had taken Bethlehem.

David out there in that hot sun said, Oh if I only had a drink of water from that well that is there near the gate of the city of Bethlehem. ["Oh, I'm so thirsty."] So these three guys

went in and they broke through the Philistine lines, and they got David a drink of water from that well, and brought it back out to David, wiping out several Philistines in the task. And they brought David this water from the well, and David took the water and poured it on the ground, said, Man this water cost blood, I won't drink it. These were numbered as a part of David's mighty men ([2Sa 23:15-17](#)).

So it goes on and tells of the mighty men and of their acts. Then it just gives a list of the names of the men finally, the thirty men who were numbered with David, who were the mighty men of David.

Who Were King David's Mighty Men? (from biblestudy.org)

Who were the mighty men who supported David before and after he became king? Who were "the three mighties?" What made their exploits especially heroic and unique?

King David, while he was avoiding Saul's wrath, attracted a motley crew of malcontents and dissatisfied men (1Samuel 22:2, 1Chronicles 12). Some of them, however, would mature into courageous fighters and perform astonishing acts of bravery.

There were thirty-seven elite warriors, divided into three groups, collectively known as the "mighty men" (1Chronicles 11:11). They were the king's most prized fighters who had distinguished themselves on the battlefield (1Chronicles 11, 2Samuel 23). The first and greatest of the three groups, composed of Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah, were labeled "the three mighties" (1Chronicles 11:12, KJV).

The second group, composed of Abishai (1Chronicles 11:20 - 21, 2Samuel 23:18 - 19) and Benaiah (1Chronicles 11:22 - 25, 2Samuel 23:20 - 23), also carried out heroic deeds but were not considered by David to be one of the three mightiest.

The third group of men consisted of thirty-two others, the last of which was Uriah the Hittite (2Samuel 23:39). Uriah is the man David had killed in battle in order to cover up his sin of adultery with his wife Bathsheba (2Samuel 11:3 - 5).

The mighty three

Jashobeam (Josheb-Basshebeth in 2Samuel 23:8) was considered the greatest of the three mighty men. He was the "chief of the captains" (1Chronicles 11:11) and led a division of 24,000 soldiers (1Chronicles 27:2). He gained a reputation for his prowess in battle by withstanding and killing three hundred at one time.

Eleazar gained recognition by fighting with David at Pas Dammim. The Philistines, Israel's fiercest enemy, had attacked God's people and caused many of them to flee. Eleazar, however, stood firm in the middle of a field and defended it. He courageously fought for such a long period that his hand grew weary and clamped tightly around his

sword. With God's help, he turned the tide of battle and won a great victory (2Samuel 23:9 - 10, 1Chronicles 11:12 - 14)!

Shammah became one of the three mighty men when, during a particular battle with the Philistines, he stood his ground as the Israelites fled. During his brave fight in the middle of a lentil field, he slaughtered the enemy and won the day (2Samuel 23:11 - 12)!

The most famous act

The most well known heroic act accomplished by any of the king's special forces was the daring retrieval of water from a Bethlehem well.

The Philistines, after hearing David was made king of a united Israel (2Samuel 5:17, 1Chronicles 14:8), begin to seek him out to battle. Wary of an attack, he travels to a secure area referred to as the cave of Adullam (2Samuel 23:13) to plan his response.

Three of David's mighty men (commentaries disagree on which of the thirty-seven they were) visit him during harvest time. They overhear the king, who was born in Bethlehem, lament that he longed for a drink from one of its wells. The problem was that the Philistines not only had troops nearby they also had a military garrison in the city (2Samuel 23:14)!

The three men, unbeknownst to the king, immediately set out on a quest to retrieve water from his hometown. After they break through a Philistine camp in the valley of Rephaim (valley of the giants) they arrive at Bethlehem. They then quietly gather some of its water and bring it back to King David. Profoundly moved by the mighty act of bravery, he refuses to drink the water and instead pours it out as an offering to God (2Samuel 23:16 - 17).