

A Study of 2 Samuel 23

I. Outline.

1. David's Last Words (2 Sam 23.1-7).
2. David's Mighty Men (2 Sam 23.8-39).

II. Summary.

The first seven verses of this chapter are labeled as "***the last words of David***" (v. 1). Exactly how literally that label is to be taken is uncertain. It could refer to the last inspired words from David—we do not know for certain the chronology link between this chapter and the final one. The idea seems to be that David did not have many more years to live. We might think of these verses and perhaps the preceding chapter in a similar way to the way many think of Paul's second letter to Timothy. The words would be words of great sincerity and deep thought on things eternal; of course, also words guided by inspiration. Paul's words to Timothy included: 2 Timothy 4:6-8 KJV ***For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: (8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.***

In the second section there follows a listing of some of David's fellow soldiers and some of the magnificent battles and acts of great courage David observed and experienced with them. There had to have been a strong bond between these men and their king. Some of them had been with David from the beginning of his reign as king, and even prior when he was hiding from King Saul. There were various honorary positions spoken of in this section. It seems that the groups: THE THREE and THE THIRTY would have been made up of different individuals as time passed, some would have lost their lives in battle. Even Uriah, the Hittite is on this list (v. 39), and we cannot imagine how David could have done the evil thing he did to Uriah. Man is subject to powerful temptation and sometimes does yield. We can be so thankful that there was ONE EXCEPTION to that rule, the perfect God-Man, Jesus, the Son of God.

It cannot go without notice the beautiful thought expressed in verse 12: ... ***So the Lord brought about a great victory.*** David was so aware of the ways God had blessed him and the nation. In this you and I must follow David!

III. Chronology/Lists/Links.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the United Kingdom.

If you are not familiar with the **15 Bible Periods**, please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/wl79hp7>

You can read an excellent article on Chronology from Wayne Jackson here:

<https://tinyurl.com/wylvljh>

LISTS: Source: *Dake's Study Bible Notes.*

5 Facts about David

- 01. He was exalted by God (2 Sam 23.1).**
- 02. He was anointed by the God of Jacob (2 Sam 23.1).**

03. **He was the sweet psalmist of Israel (2 Sam 23.1).**
04. **The Spirit of God spoke by him (2 Sam 23.2).**
05. **The Word of God was in/on his tongue (2 Sam 23.2).**

4 Titles of God

01. **God of Jacob (2 Sam 23.1).**
02. **The Spirit of the Lord (2 Sam 23.2).**
03. **God of Israel (2 Sam 23.3).**
04. **Rock of Israel 2 Sam 23.3).**

LINKS: *These links are to the writings of men and not to inspired Scripture, thus care and caution in weighing the conclusions is always wise. Some might not be online links but listing of material commonly available in books and publications.*

01. Burton Coffman Commentary:
<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/2-samuel-23.html>
02. Albert Barnes on the Old Testament:
<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/2-samuel-23.html>

IV. Looking at the Text.

1. David's Last Words (2 Sam 23.1-7).

Verse 1: These words are last words of an inspired man. David, once a shepherd, now king over the most important nation ever formed (because of Gen 12.1-4). I have often thought that the life of a shepherd seems a lifestyle conducive of very high thoughts about God. Part of that work would involve being out in the fields with the sheep. Many times that would be at night affording the opportunity to look up into the beautiful night sky. How anyone can do that and study about it just a little, contemplating the marvel of it all, then still remaining agnostic or atheistic is hard to imagine. David mentions also being the sweet psalmist of Israel.

Verse 2: We are helped here to see what KIND of inspiration we confront when we study from the Bible. It is NOT though inspiration, but word. Bob Winton suggests two passages to study in which arguments are made by Bible writers based upon A SINGLE WORD (cf., Mt 22.31-32; Gal 3.16). Also study 2 Peter 1.19-21 and 1 Cor 2.6-16.

Verse 3: How thankful that our God can be presented to us as THE ROCK OF ISRAEL! Nothing is powerful enough to divert His will and His promises given in His word is sure and can be depended upon with certainty.

Verse 4: A righteous ruler is compared to warm sunshine on a cloudless morning and to fresh life-giving rain. How should we think of David's reign? Consider the reasoning of David Guzik: *"From one perspective David's reign was a disaster. He suffered from a dark scandal during his reign, he suffered under repeated family crisis, under an attempted insurrection from his own son, under another civil war, and from three years of famine. In contrast to David, his son Solomon's reign seemed perfect. Solomon enjoyed a reign of peace, great prosperity, prominence, and glory. Yet the Bible has nothing but praise for David and his reign, reflected in passages like Ps 89:20; Isa 55:3-4; Rom 1:3; Rev 22:16. In contrast, Solomon is barely mentioned in the rest of the Scriptures and when he is, it is almost in a*

backhanded way (Mat 5:28-29 and Mat 12:42). The difference between David and Solomon was found in their different relationships with God. David's passion in life was simply to be with God (Ps 84:10), while Solomon's passion was personal improvement (1Kgs 3:4-15). We can also say that David endured to the end, loving and serving God in the final chapters of his life (2 Sa 23:1-7), while Solomon forsook God in his later years (1Ki_11:4-8)." As for me, I tend to think or at least hope that Ecclesiastes was written near the end of Solomon's life and that he finally figured some eternal things out and repented.

Verse 5: We have to understand that the coming of the Messiah did not depend on David and those who came after him on the throne ruling perfectly. Despite the imperfections and even the gross wickedness of those who ruled after him, God would be able to bring the Messiah into the world and establish the eternal kingdom. Galatians 4:4-5 KJV ***But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*** The ultimate result of the coming of Jesus would be salvation for David and for all who would turn to God in humble obedience. The NKJV and others state the last phrase of verse 5 as a rhetorical question. That would indicate that David had confidence in his salvation.

Verse 6: Unfortunately, there will be many (Mt 7.13-14), who are unwilling to submit to God's will and they will not enjoy the blessings of that eternal kingdom that David's covenant with God will eventually produce.

Verse 7: There will be joy and rejoicing from the righteous and punishment for the wicked.

2. David's Mighty Men (2 Sam 23.8-39).

Verse 8: The parallel text 1 Chronicles 11.11 gives 300 instead of 800. It is possible that both were accomplished on different battlefields. The point of the verse is to identify one of the great men who served David—Adino, the Eznite. In 1 Chronicles 11.11, his name is given as Jashobeam.

Verse 9-10: Eleazar was next in rank to Jashobeam. On this occasion, Israel's army had retreated from battle, but Eleazar fought against the Philistines and won a great victory. The description is given of great stress on the hand of this warrior because of the fierceness of the battle. It had caused his hand to stick in its position of holding that sword. Other soldiers returned ONLY TO SPOIL. That expression seems to suggest they were the less courageous and perhaps even were cowardly.

Verse 11-12: The fact that Shammah took his stand in the field of lentils suggests that the Philistines had invaded for the purpose of stealing the produce of Israelite fields. No doubt that was a frequent occurrence.

Verse 13-17: David was at the cave of Adullam when Philistine forces camped nearby. The Philistines also had a garrison in Bethlehem. Three of David's mighty men came to him at the cave. David was thirsty and stated his desire for some water from a certain well at Bethlehem. The three men left to bring back some of that water. It would have been a round trip of about 25 miles. It would have been an exceedingly DANGEROUS trip. David's heart is displayed in this incident. After these men had risked their lives to provide water for David, he COULD NOT drink it. He would have felt like an ingrate to do so. He, instead, recognizing the powerful expression of loyalty and the possible cost of it, offered it up as a drink offering to the Lord.

Verse 18-19: Abishai, brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was another of David's mighty men. He had been able to use his spear against 300 enemies and slay them. He had been with David on the occasion he entered Saul's camp and took the king's spear (1 Sam 26). On another occasion, Abishai slew 18,000 Edomites, likely with help of those soldiers under his command (1 Chr 18.12). Verse 19 credits Abishai with greater honor than the 3 who are named in this context. He was not part of the THREE (Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah), but was captain of the group of three to which he belonged.

Verse 20-23: Benaiah is credited with killing two lion-like Moabite men. Some have considered this to be literal lions, but the more common view is that they were ferocious fighters. Killing a lion in a time of snow would be an exceptional accomplishment. He was more honorable than the THIRTY, but not on the level of the THREE. David put him in charge of his personal bodyguards, the Cherethites and Pelethites.

Verses 24-39: Names of others of David's special fighters who risked much to keep him alive and to defend the nation of Israel.

V. Questions.

True or False

- 01. ____ Priests were the only ones anointed in the Old Testament.
- 02. ____ God had made with David an everlasting covenant.
- 03. ____ It seems the victories in battle were due solely to the strength of certain mighty men.
- 04. ____ The well in Bethlehem was easily identified by something David said.
- 05. ____ Benaiah was set over David’s guard.

I Found it in Verse(s)

- 06. ____ Two lion-like men.
- 07. ____ Tender grass.
- 08. ____ Number of men who carried water to David.
- 09. ____ Chief among the captains.
- 10. ____ The people fled from the Philistines.

Short Answer

- 11. What part of Eleazar became weary in battle.

- 12. The Rock of Israel said that he that ruleth over men must be:

- 13. What the Egyptian had in his hand.

- 14. When David was at Adullam, the Philistines were where?

- 15. Who lifted up his spear against 800?

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to 2 Samuel 22 Questions... **01**—False, 5; **02**—False, 18; **03**—False, 28; **04**—False, 41; **05**—False, 2, 3, 32, 47—2x; **06**—49; **07**—35; **08**—29; **09**—19; **10**—6; **11**—in my distress (7); **12**—the Lord was his stay (19); **13**—He shows Himself merciful (26); **14**—a bow of steel (35); **15**—give thanks to the Lord and sing praises to His name (50).

VI. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL 5.82Wx6.32H

L - E B S L E W E N T I V
 T I M E S P A K E J S I N
 D R I N K I P M I G H T Y
 G J O A B P C A P T A I N
 D A V I D H H L N A M S Y
 S P E A R I I T I D M R Y
 B E T H - L E H E M A A F
 P J H A W I F O G O H E N
 J M I R H S O U Y R A L I
 V W R A E T R G P N N A J
 L O T R N I R H T I D Y L
 I R Y I A N T H I N G S O
 F D C T M E O O A G F T R
 T H R E E S T - N S A I D

ALTHOUGH	BENAIAH	BETH-LEHEM	CAPTAIN	CHIEF
DAVID	DRINK	EGYPTIAN	HAND	HARARITE
ISRAEL	JOAB	LIFT	LORD	MIGHTY
MORNING	NAME	PHILISTINES	SAID	SHAMMAH
SLEW	SPAKE	SPEAR	THINGS	THIRTY
THREE	TIME	WENT	WHEN	WORD

VII. Crossword Puzzle.

2 Samuel 23 (KJV)													
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14													

<u>ACROSS</u>	<u>DOWN</u>
<p>01) Joab's armourbearer.</p> <p>06) A piece of ground was full of them.</p> <p>07) The water David poured out, he considered to be ____.</p> <p>09) Hezrai was a ____.</p> <p>11) He was a Hushathite.</p> <p>13) A kind of covenant.</p> <p>14) A kind of fencing mentioned.</p>	<p>02) David was at a cave here when he longed for water from Bethlehem.</p> <p>03) David really liked the water there.</p> <p>04) Adino lifted his sword against ____ hundred.</p> <p>05) Brother of Joab.</p> <p>08) One of David's titles: ____ of Israel.</p> <p>10) Two ____ men of Moab were slain.</p> <p>12) David's Mighty Men numbered thirty and ____ in all.</p>