

2 Samuel 23

Verses 1 - 4

**Now these are the last words of David.
David the son of Jesse declares,
The man who was raised on high declares,
The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the sweet psalmist of Israel,
²“The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me,
And His word was on my tongue.
³“The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spoke to me,
‘He who rules over men righteously,
Who rules in the fear of God,
⁴Is as the light of the morning *when* the sun rises,
A morning without clouds,
When the tender grass *springs* out of the earth,
Through sunshine after rain.’**

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

His father's house was of no particular significance in Israel and David was the youngest in that family. He was a keeper of the sheep and his brothers saw him in a negative light.

However, God led this obscure person to the kingship of the Chosen People making him a renowned monarch of that time and for all of history.

David is renowned among God's people for composing holy songs. David wrote at least 75 psalms. Seventy-three bear his name.

In addition, Acts 4:25 confirms he wrote Psalm 2

²⁵ who by the Holy Spirit, *through* the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, ‘Why were the nations insolent, and the peoples plotting in vain?’

And Hebrews 4:7 confirms he wrote Psalm 95.

⁷ He again sets a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, “Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.”

² “The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue.

Peter declared that David was a prophet in Acts 2:

²⁹ “Brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ So because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹ he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.

**³ “The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spoke to me,
‘He who rules over men righteously,
Who rules in the fear of God,**

Here is the most important principal for a king to follow. Showing justice toward men knowing God would judge him according to his judgment of others.

Verses 5 - 7

**⁵ “Truly is not my house so with God?
For He has made an everlasting covenant with me,
Ordered in all things, and secured;
For all my salvation and all *my* desire,
Will He not indeed make *it* grow?**

**⁶ “But the worthless, every one of them will be thrust away like thorns,
Because they cannot be taken in hand;**

**⁷ But the man who touches them
Must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear,
And they will be completely burned with fire in *their* place.”**

⁵ “Truly is not my house so with God?
For He has made an everlasting covenant with me,
Ordered in all things, and secured;
For all my salvation and all *my* desire,
Will He not indeed make *it* grow?

God made an everlasting covenant with David when He informed him that one of his descendants would be the Messiah and that His kingdom would have no end.

⁶ “**But the worthless, every one of them will be thrust away like thorns,
Because they cannot be taken in hand;**

This describes the condition of all the enemies of God that will set themselves against the kingdom of His son (the Christ).

⁷ **But the man who touches them
Must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear,
And they will be completely burned with fire in *their* place.”**

Unbelievers will suffer in a place called Hell, which is depicted as a place of outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth and a lake that burns with fire and sulfur.

Verses 8 - 12

⁸ These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: **Josheb-basshebeth**, a Tahchemonite, chief of the captains; he was *called* Adino the Eznite because of eight hundred who were killed *by him* 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 to battle and the men of Israel had withdrawn. ¹⁰ He rose up and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary and it clung to the sword, and the Lord brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder *the dead*. ¹¹ Now after him was **Shammah** the son of Agee, a Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered into an army where there was a plot of land full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines. ¹² But he took his stand in the midst of the plot, defended it, and struck the Philistines; and the Lord brought about a great victory.

1. Josheb-basshe-beth was chief of the three (captains)

He wielded his spear against eight hundred whom he slew at one time

This is close to the feat performed by Samson when he killed 1000 men with a jawbone of a donkey. This could only be done by a miraculous power from God.

2. Eleazar

David, Eleazar and a force of men fought the Philistines but when the men of Israel withdrew David stayed with Eleazar and they won a great victory.

¹⁰ **He rose up and struck the Philistines until his hand was weary and it clung to the sword, and the Lord brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder *the dead*.**

The Scriptures make it clear that as great as the ability and bravery of David's mighty men was, it was the Lord who gave them the victory.

3. Shammah

The Philistine army gathered near a plot of land full of lentils. Lentils are a bushy annual plant known for its lens-shaped seeds.

See pics 2305 thru 2307



Pic 2306



Pic 2307



The purpose of the Philistine raid was to rob Israel of their crops.

Again we are told that it was the Lord that gave them the victory.

Verses 13 - 17

¹³ Then three of the thirty chief men went down and came to David at harvest time to the cave of Adullam, while the army of the Philistines was camping in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ David was then in the stronghold, while the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. ¹⁵ And David had a craving and said, “Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!” ¹⁶ So the three mighty men forced their way into the camp of the Philistines, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem which was by the gate, and carried *it* and brought *it* to David. Yet he would not drink it, but poured it out as an offering to the Lord; ¹⁷ and he said, “Far be it from me, Lord, that I would do this! *Should I drink* the blood of the men who went at *the risk of their lives?*” So he would not drink it. These things the three mighty men did.

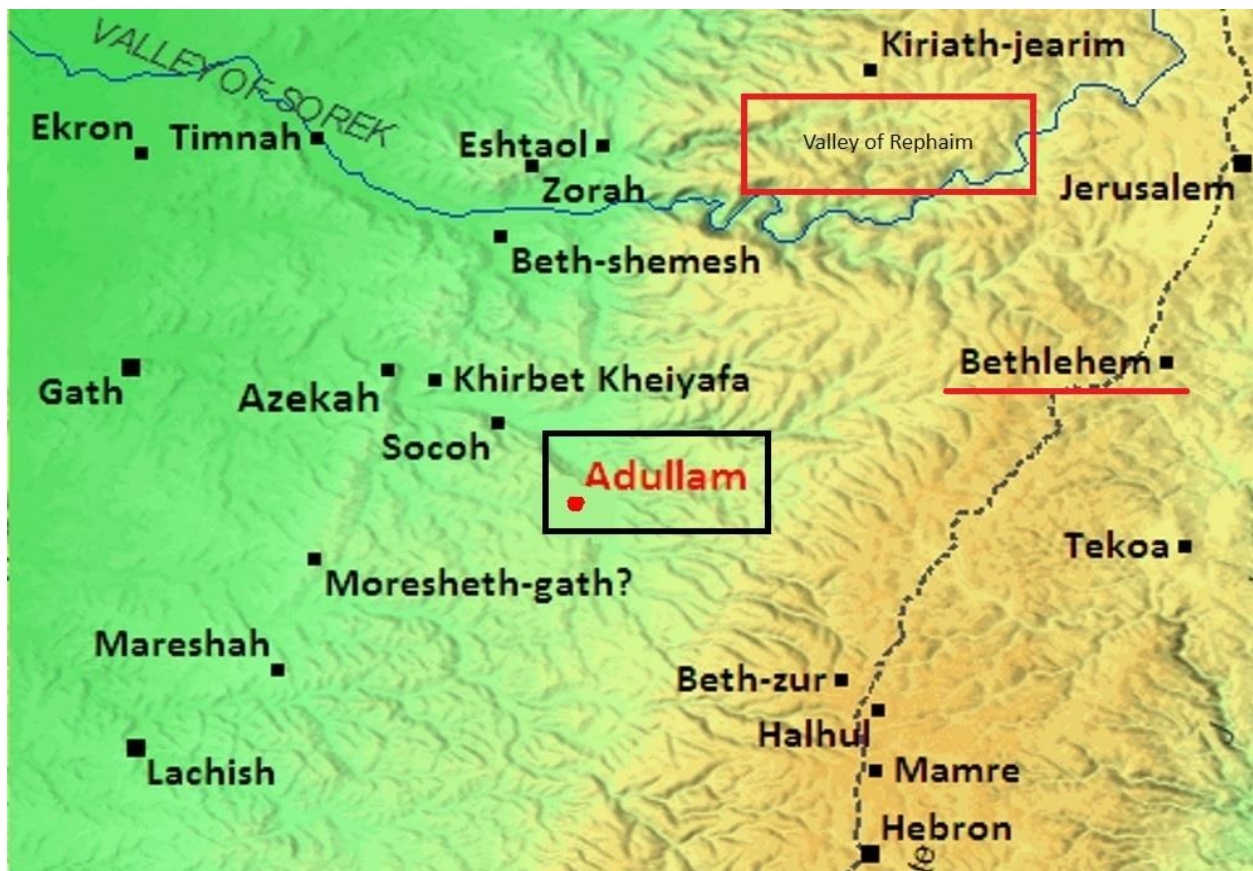
¹³ Then three of the thirty chief men went down and came to David at harvest time to the cave of Adullam, while the army of the Philistines was camping in the Valley of Rephaim.

This event took place in 1 Samuel 22. See verses 1&2.

So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's household heard *about it*, they went down there to him. ² Then everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Now there were about four hundred men with him.

The Valley of Rephaim is west of Jerusalem and Adullam is southwest of this valley.

See map 2310



¹⁴ David was then in the stronghold, while the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.

A garrison is a fortified military post where troops are stationed.

¹⁵ And David had a craving and said, “Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!” ¹⁶ So the three mighty men forced their way into the camp of the Philistines, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem which was by the gate, and carried *it* and brought *it* to David. Yet he would not drink it, but poured it out as an offering to the Lord;

This story emphasizes the loyalty that David’s men had for him and their ability to war against the strongest of enemies (the Philistines).

One commentator wrote that this revealed the contrast in David's life before and after his fall. “Before his fall, David refused to drink water, which could have cost these men their lives but after his fall, David had one of the thirty killed on the battlefield in order to cover his adultery”. While this is a great insight concerning David and how he had lost his way many years later, but it’s probably not the point being made in this section of scripture.

Verses 18 - 19

¹⁸ Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruah, was chief of the thirty. And he swung his spear against three hundred and killed *them*, and had a name as well as the three. ¹⁹ He was the most honored among the thirty, so he became their commander; however, he did not attain to *the reputation* of the three.

4. Abishai

Abishai was the leader of the thirty because he was the most honored among them but his exploits did not live up to that of the other three.

1. Abishai accompanied David into Saul's camp when David took Saul's spear. See 1 Samuel 26:6-11

2. He also saved David's life.

See 2 Samuel 21:15 -17

¹⁵ Now when the Philistines were at war with Israel again, David went down, and his servants with him; and when they fought against the Philistines, David became weary. ¹⁶ Then Ishbi-benob, who was among the descendants of the giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred *shekels* of bronze in weight, ¹⁷ had strapped on a new *sword*, and he intended to kill David. But Abishai the son of Zeruah helped him, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then David’s men swore to him, saying, “You shall not go out again with us to battle, so that you do not extinguish the lamp of Israel.”

Verses 20 – 23

²⁰ Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done great deeds, killed the two *sons of Ariel* of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in the middle of a pit on a snowy day. ²¹ And he killed an Egyptian, an impressive man. Now the Egyptian *had* a spear in his hand, but he went down to him with a club and snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²² These *things* Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and had a name as well as the three mighty men. ²³ He was honored among the thirty, but he did not attain *the reputation* of the three. And David appointed him over his bodyguard.

5. Benaiah

Benaiah smote the two sons of Ariel of Moab and slew a lion in a pit on a snowy day. He also disarmed and slew an Egyptian (7 1/2 feet tall) with his own spear. His height is not mentioned here but it is in 1 Chron. 11:23.

²³ **And he killed an Egyptian, a man of great stature five cubits tall.**

In addition he was the head over David's body guard.

Like Abishai he was honored among the 30 but his exploits did not live up to that of the other three.

Verses 24 – 39

²⁴ Asahel the brother of Joab was among the thirty; *and there was* Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, ²⁵ Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite, ²⁶ Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, ²⁷ Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, ²⁸ Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, ²⁹ Heleb the son of Baanah the Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the sons of Benjamin, ³⁰ Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, ³¹ Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, ³² Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, (the son of) ³³ Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Ararite, ³⁴ Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maacathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, ³⁵ Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, ³⁶ Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, ³⁷ Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armor bearers of Joab the son of Zeruiah, ³⁸ Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ³⁹ *and* Uriah the Hittite; thirty-seven in all.

These verses enumerate the other 32 men that belonged to this group of 37.

6. **Asahel** the brother of Joab was among the thirty;
7. **Elhanan** the son of Dodo of Bethlehem,
8. **Shammah** the Harodite,
9. **Elika** the Harodite,
10. **Helez** the Paltite,
11. **Ira** the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite
12. **Abiezer** the Anathothite,
13. **Mebunnai** the Hushathite,
14. **Zalmon** the Ahohite,
15. **Maharai** the Netophathite,
16. **Heleb** the son of Baanah the Netophathite,
17. **Ittai** the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the sons of Benjamin,
18. **Benaiah** a Pirathonite,
19. **Hiddai** of the brooks of Gaash,
20. **Abi-albon** the Arbathite,
21. **Azmaveth** the Barhumite,
22. **Eliahba** the Shaalbonite,
- 23 & 24. **The sons of Jashen,**
25. **Jonathan (the son of) Shammah** the Hararite,
26. **Ahiam** the son of Sharar the Ararite,
27. **Eliphelet** the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maacathite,
28. **Eliam** the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,
29. **Hezro** the Carmelite,
30. **Paarai** the Arbite,

31. Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah,

32. Bani the Gadite, ³⁷

33. Zelek the Ammonite,

34. Naharai the Beerothite, armor bearers of Joab the son of Zeruiah, ³⁸

35. Ira the Ithrite,

36. Gareb the Ithrite, ³⁹ *and*

37. Uriah the Hittite;

There were thirty-seven men in all.

Asahel (#6) the brother of Joab was one of the thirty

He was one of the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister. He lost his life when he tried to kill Abner. Joab avenged Asahel's death by murdering Abner

Some of these men were monthly captains over 24,000 men

They commanded one of the 12 divisions that were called on a monthly basis to serve the king.

See 1 Chronicles 27:1-15

Shammah the Hararite (#8) 5th month

Abiezer of Anathoth (#12) 9th month

Maharai of Netophah (#15) 10th month

Heleb of Netophah (#16) 12th month

Benaiah of Pirathon (#18) 11th month

Eliam of Gilo (#28)

He was the father of Bathsheba

Her grandfather Ahithophel was David's principal counselor

Igal of Zobah (#31)

Zobah was a part of Syria. A number of foreign countries were represented among David's top ranking soldiers.

Zelek the Ammonite (#33)

Here is another foreigner.

Naharai of Beeroth (#34)

He was the armor-bearer of Joab

Beeroth was one of the four cities of the Hivites who tricked Joshua into a treaty

Uriah the Hittite (#37)

Uriah the Hittite was a foreigner.

He was the husband of Bathsheba who David had murdered by Joab. Some have marveled that Joab is not in this list of the 37 mighty men. However, he was David's commander-in-chief who stood prominently above the 37.