

Living for God

2 Samuel 23 & 24

Key Bible Texts

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Key Bible Verse(s)

“Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.” (2 Samuel 23:5)

Background to the Study

David spent his life writing songs and poetry celebrating God's faithfulness and deliverance, living with a heart of gratitude. His life of thankfulness earned him the loyalty of soldiers and military leaders, who gladly served him as their "commander in chief." After David's final words about God's faithfulness, the deeds of his warriors are listed, a departure from the custom of kings claiming credit for victories. A similar list is found in 1 Chronicles 11:10-47. David's elite warriors were called "the Three," followed by "the Thirty," a group likely replenished when members died. Notably, Uriah the Hittite is included, and Benaiah, leader of David's bodyguard (2 Samuel 20:23), later became commander of Solomon's army. Verses 13-17 highlight David's deep love for God and his soldiers, as well as the soldiers' devotion to their righteous leader. During a time of drought, David expressed a longing for water from Bethlehem's well, and three men risked their lives to bring it to him, breaking through enemy lines. Moved by their devotion, David poured the water out as an offering to God, seeing it as the life blood of the men who had risked their lives for him. This roll of valiant warriors is a testimony to David's leadership ability. These men began to follow him for various reasons, but he was able with God's help, to mold them into a mighty group.

David's leadership is further demonstrated in Chapter 24, where, after God's anger with Israel, David orders a census of the people despite knowing it was wrong, even after Joab's warnings. God offers three punishments: disease, famine, or war. David chooses pestilence, a punishment for both the house of David and Israel, in response to the nation's sins. When the plague reaches Jerusalem, David pleads with God to spare Israel and take the punishment himself. God commands David to build an altar, symbolizing his repentance and foreshadowing the need for sacrifice to atone for sin. David purchases a threshing floor from Araunah, a Jebusite convert, who offers it freely, along with oxen for sacrifice. David insists on paying, purchasing the land for 50 shekels of silver and later acquiring the surrounding area for 600 shekels of gold. This site later becomes the location of the Temple, now marked by the Dome of the Rock, an Islamic mosque. The Temple Mount still retains traces of the

original threshing floor, and Orthodox Jews are preparing for the future rebuilding of the Temple there.

TESTIMONIES FROM OUR DAY

As the anniversary of September 11, 2001, approached, I challenged my sixth grade class to participate in a school-wide “Acts of Kindness” project to honour those who died that day. I encouraged them to do something they wouldn’t normally do, making the act more meaningful. The pledges poured in—some students promised to spend time with elderly neighbours, others to do chores for their mothers or siblings. Each pledge was a sacrifice, and the more they sacrificed, the better they felt.

David understood that God requires more than just outward actions—He wants a whole heart. Taking the easy way out would have devalued his sacrifice. In a still, small voice, He tells each of us what He wants. Faithfully being in our place every day is a sacrifice.. Similarly, God calls each of us to sacrifice in different ways: to serve others, give up distractions, or contribute to the spread of the Gospel. While sacrifice doesn’t earn us salvation, it symbolizes our submission and humility before God. As Romans 12:1 teaches, offering our whole lives to God is our reasonable service, in response to His mercy. If we offer Him less, we offer nothing at all. What has God asked of you? His forgiveness is a gift—let us be willing to give our time, energy, resources, and hearts in return.

A Closer Look

Question 1

What were the names of the first three of David’s mighty men? Using David as an example, what are the characteristics of a good leader? II Samuel 23:8-12

Question 2

II Samuel 23 speaks of mighty men. What things can we do today to be as supportive of our leadership as the mighty men were to David in his day?

Question 3

In II Samuel 24, David commanded that a census be taken, which brought the anger of the Lord against Israel and a pestilence resulting in 70,000 deaths throughout the land. When David pled with God for “these sheep,” God commanded him to make an offering in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Araunah offered to give David the property and the necessities for the offering. What was David’s response, and what can we learn from it? 2 Samuel 24:24

Question 4

What are some things God might ask us to sacrifice to Him?

Take Home

David’s appreciation for God and his warriors reminds us of what is truly important: to thank God and remember all He has done for us. Jesus sacrificed everything to purchase our salvation. If we sacrifice our lives to God, we can make a difference for souls tragically dying in sin. How can we do anything less for Him?