

II SAMUEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Samuel chapter 23 as we continue our study through the Word of God and tonight we will not finish up the book of II Samuel, it will take us a few weeks to get through these two chapters. As I said last time, the last four chapters of II Samuel are not necessarily in chronological order. They are giving to us an overview of some of the things that took place during the reign of David. And in these last two chapters that we will cover over the next few weeks, we are going to look at the last Psalm of David, his last words. Then we will look at David's mighty men and learn of some of the things they were able to do. And then we will conclude by looking at an ungodly census and the resulting plague that does lead to David purchasing some very interesting property. With that said, let's begin reading this evening in II Samuel chapter 23, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

II SAMUEL 23

VERSE 1a

1. Now please understand that David did not speak these words and then die, it was not a deathbed exhortation. But I believe it was towards the end of David's life and he wanted to leave behind words of encouragement, words to strengthen the people when he did die. It is as Clarke wrote, "I suppose the *last poetical composition* is here intended. He might have spoken many words after these in *prose* [text], but none in *verse* [poetry]."

2. We have read the farewell addresses of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. And also, Joshua, before he dies, gives his farewell address to the nation as he recounts the history of the nation of Israel before the people. He tells them how God has established them and protected them over the years. How God has given them a land flowing with milk and honey. And as he concludes he calls them to make a decision who they will serve. The choice is simple, there are only two options, to either serve the Lord or serve the foreign gods. But if you turn from the Lord, understand that He will turn against you; there are consequences for your disobedience. But if you turn to the Lord there will be blessings for your life. And as Joshua finished his exhortation the people shouted they would serve the Lord. That is what David is doing in these several verses here in II Samuel chapter 23, this little Psalm of encouragement, exhortation, to stay focused on the Lord!

VERSES 1b-2

1. David was known as the sweet Psalmist of Israel, a man who loved to worship the Lord and wrote down the words that God gave to him in song. Yes, David was a warrior, a fighting machine you might say, but he had a heart of worship also. In fact, David wrote at least 73 of the 150 Psalms in the Scriptures and maybe more! In regards to this little Psalm, listen to what Trapp wrote, “Wherein he doth, in few words but full of matter, acknowledge God’s benefits, confess his sins, profess his faith, comfort himself in the covenant, and denounce destruction to unbelievers . . . How much in a little!” The sweet Psalmist of Israel – **DAVID!**

2. Notice that David was aware of the Holy Spirit speaking to him, giving him the words of God. Remember what Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 3:16-17, “**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**” People want to know what degree I have, what kind of schooling to be a pastor and Paul tells us that we don’t necessarily need the schooling, we need to be in God’s Word because the Bible is the Word of God coming from the lips of God to us! And thus, as we read, as we study, as we meditate upon it, we are complete because we know the heart of God because He has told us!

3. I would like to take some time here and speak about the Old Testament and the New Testament because we hear so much criticism about its accuracy. Let’s start with the Old Testament. The oldest complete manuscript of the Old Testament we had came from 916 AD. That is some 1400 years after it was written, and many argued that it had to be unreliable since all that time has passed from the original writings to the manuscript of 916 AD. That was until 1947 when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.

Now the Dead Sea Scrolls is the term that is used of the manuscripts that were discovered in 1947 in caves some 500 yards from the Dead Sea, in the area known as Qumran, along the Northwestern shore of the Dead Sea.

The story goes that back in 1947 a shepherd boy was herding his goats when one of them got lost in this area. And this Arab shepherd boy named Mohammed was looking for this stray goat in the Judean wilderness when he tossed a rock into the air. When the rock landed it fell into a cave and broke some pottery that was in this cave. In hearing the breaking of the pottery, it rose his curiosity and he went into this cave, which is now called cave number 1, and to his surprise he found jars filled with ancient scrolls, which lead to the search for other caves that nearly lasted a decade, once word got out. And during that time they found 11 caves producing over 800 scrolls and scroll fragments written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, covering a time period of almost 1000 years.

One of the most important finds was discovered in cave number 1, where two scrolls of Isaiah were found, one damaged, but the other one was complete, along with other scrolls. This 24-foot leather scroll of Isaiah could tell us the accuracy of the text transmission over a 1000-year period. You see, this scroll of Isaiah dates back to 100 years before Christ and the next closest text we have dates all the way back to 916 AD!

The fascinating thing about this is you can go to Israel today, and visit the museum called the Shrine of the Book, which holds this priceless Biblical manuscript, and if you were able to read Hebrew, you would discover your New King James Bible's reading of Isaiah follows the text and this text is over 2000 years old! There is no major difference between the two. Imagine that, the book of Isaiah has 66 chapters, 1292 verses, 37,044 words, and the integrity of the text has held up all these years!

According to Norman Geisler and William Nix, in their book *A General Introduction To The Bible*, they said “Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, there are only seventeen letters in question. Ten of those letters are simply a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes, such as conjunctions. The remaining three letters comprise the word ‘light’ which is added in verse 11, and does not affect the meaning greatly . . . ***Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a thousand years of transmission - and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage.***”

After comparing the entire Isaiah manuscript from the Dead Sea Scrolls with the present Hebrew text of Isaiah, Old Testament scholar Gleason L. Archer concluded that the Dead Sea Scrolls “Prove to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.” Not bad when you consider they did not have computers, spell checking, and-so-on, as we have today.

If you had any doubt of the accuracy of the Old Testament, then the Dead Sea Scrolls should help clear that matter up right away. Yes, we don’t have any of the original manuscripts of the Old or the New Testament, but looking at the various texts it shows how accurately they were copied and passed on. As the renowned archaeologist William F. Albright has said, “There can be no doubt that Archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of the Old Testament tradition.”

And archaeologist, John Elder, offers a fitting conclusion to the issue of the Old Testament's reliability. He said, "It is not too much to say that it was the rise of the science of archeology that broke the deadlock between historians and the orthodox Christian. Little by little, one city after another, one civilization after another, one culture after another, whose memories were enshrined only in the Bible, were restored to their proper places in ancient history by the studies of archaeologists. . . . The over-all result is indisputable. Forgotten cities have been found, the handiwork of vanished peoples has reappeared, contemporary records of Biblical events have been unearthed and the uniqueness of Biblical revelation has been emphasized by contrast and comparison to the newly understood religions of ancient peoples. ***Nowhere has archaeological discovery refuted the Bible as history.***"

Now what about the New Testament? We have over 24,000 manuscript copies of the New Testament in existence today. We have 5,300 known Greek manuscripts. There are over 10,000 Latin Vulgate manuscripts. There are over 9,300 other early versions of manuscripts of the New Testament. No other document of antiquity even comes close.

Caesar, who lived 100-44 BC, we have only 10 manuscripts of his writings with the earliest copy from 900 AD. That means there was a time span of 1,000 years. The Iliad, by Homer, which is the closest in number of manuscripts, was written around 900 BC, and we have 643 manuscripts in which the earliest copy is from 400 BC, a 500 year time difference.

The New Testament has about 20,000 lines of text, and of that only 40 lines (or 400 words) of the New Testament are in doubt. Of that, only about one-sixtieth can be called “substantial variations.” Think about that for a minute. That would give us a text that is approximately 98% perfect, pure!

Now again, the Dead Sea Scrolls have helped us out once again showing us the reliability of the New Testament text. Now I want to talk about a fragment of manuscript that was found in cave number 7, fragment number 5. On this fragment were the Greek letters “nu, nu, eta, sigma”, and it was thought that this was the common Greek version of the form “egennesen,” which means to “beget” or “be father of.” The root of this word appears in our English word “generate” or “generation.”

There was a scholar by the name of Jose O’Callaghan and he tried to match these words with a Biblical passage from the Old Testament, but nothing seemed to fit. As he pondered this over and over in his mind, over a period of time, he thought of a word that may fit, Gennesaret. But the only problem was that this was a New Testament word. How could fragment number 5 be from the New Testament when this was suppose to be a Jewish separatist sect that lived in the area of Qumran, by the Dead Sea?

You see, the word “Gennesaret” is an Aramaic place name brought into the vocabulary of the early Greek-speaking Christians because of its role in the ministry of Christ. So O’Callaghan opened his Bible to Mark 6:53, which reads, “**When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there.**” To his shock, fragment 5 fit perfectly into the text!

On March 18, 1972, as the news media heard what he discovered, that fragment number 5 was part of the Gospel of Mark, and was part of the Dead Sea Scrolls, newspapers begin to print this remarkable story. The New York Times reported “*If O’Callaghan’s theory is accepted, it would prove that at least one of the Gospels, that of St. Mark, was written only a few years after the death of Jesus.*”

Well, it didn’t take long for the critics of the Bible to rise up and try to refute O’Callaghan’s claims. The problem with their complaining is that this document was dated before his revelation, and he did not date it. And we do know one thing for certain, that the people living in the Qumran community were destroyed before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. That means if the crucifixion of Christ occurred in AD 32, the Gospel of Mark was not written long after that. Thus, within a 20-30 year time frame, we have a document from Mark’s Gospel! It was not written 100’s of years after the events, like some would have you believe.

Not only that, but the book of Acts was written before the death of Paul, for the book of Acts ends with Paul still alive. And good evidence shows that Paul died in the Neronian persecution about AD 67. Thus, since Acts was the second half of a treatise written by Luke to Theophilus, Luke must have been written around AD 60.

Also, all of Paul’s letters would have to be written before his death, obviously, and he died in AD 67. Thus, we see only a 30-year time span from the death and resurrection of Christ, to all of Paul’s letters being completed.

If you refuse to trust Biblical history, then listen to the testimony of an unbeliever, for it speaks volumes. Speaking of Celsus, a man living in the second century who hated Christianity, Bishop Fallows writes: “This unbeliever, although he caused great annoyance to the believers in Christ living in his day, and seemed to be disturbing the foundations of the Christian faith, rendered more real service to Christianity than any father of undisputed orthodoxy in the Church. He admits all the grand facts and doctrines of the gospel, as they were preached by the Apostles, and contained in the acknowledged writings, for the sake of opposing. He makes in his attacks eighty quotations from the New Testament, and appeals to it as containing the sacred writings of Christians, universally received by them as credible and Divine.”

“He is, therefore, the very best witness we can summon to prove that the New Testament was not written hundreds of years after the Apostles were dust; but in less than a century and a half had been received by the Christian Church all over the world.”

The eminent archaeologist, William F. Albright, concluded in an interview with Christianity Today, from January 18, 1963: “In my opinion, every book of the New Testament was written by a baptized Jew between the forties and the eighties of the first century A.D.”

Sir Frederic G. Kenyon states: “The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant [existing] evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.”

Please remember and take into consideration that up to 500 years ago, all documents were printed by hand. And yet, when you look at the minor variations between all the texts of the New Testament, they do not change the meaning or substance of our faith. New Testament scholar F. F. Bruce put it this way. He said “The variant readings about which any doubt remains . . . affect no material question of historical fact or of Christian faith and practice.

Back in the Nineteenth Century, it was widely believed that the New Testament was an invention of the Second Century church, but as we have discussed, they were in error with this kind of thinking. Sir William Ramsay, who began his historical research toward the end of the Nineteenth Century, was taught that the New Testament was not historically reliable.

As a young historian, Ramsay was determined to develop an independent historical/geographical study of First-Century Asia Minor. To his dismay, there was little usable information regarding this area and that period of time. So, reluctantly, he consulted the book of Acts for help. What he discovered was remarkably accurate and true to First-Century history and topography.

Don Stewart, in speaking of Ramsay, stated “Since many historical details, national boundaries, and government structures in Asia Minor were different in the second century from what they had been in the first, it is reasonable to conclude that the actual author of Luke and Acts was a first-century author, not a second-century one.”

“Acts 14:1-6, for example, was in historical dispute for many years. The passage implies that Lystra and Derbe were cities in the district of Lycaonia but Iconium was in a different district. Later Roman writers such as Cicero contradicted the passage, asserting that Iconium was also in Lycaonia. For years this was used to show the historical unreliability of Acts.”

“In 1910, however, Sir William Ramsay discovered an inscription declaring that the first century Iconium was under the authority of Phrygia from A.D. 37 to A.D. 72. It was only during these years that Iconium was not under the authority of Lycaonia. Not only did this discovery confirm the accuracy of the statement in Acts 14, it showed that whoever wrote this passage knew what district Iconium was in at that time. That places the author as an eyewitness to the events.”

Thus, as we look at the New Testament we find we have manuscript copies that support the text. There are minor variations in the various New Testament texts, but they do not change any foundational doctrines of the Christian faith and practice. You see, the time span from the actual events to the original writings were some 10 to 40 years, and the copies of the originals were done shortly after. And lastly, the historical record of the New Testament is so accurate that it shows the writer had to be around during the time frame he was speaking of.

Yes, we don't have any of the original writings of the New Testament or of the Old Testament, but what we do have is an accurate record of both the Old and New Testament from the various manuscripts that have been discovered. Don't let these so-called higher critics cause you to doubt God's Word, for it gives us life by pointing us to the giver of life, Jesus Christ. It gives us hope by pointing us to the giver of hope, Jesus Christ. The Word strengthens us, the Word encourages us, we see the character of God through the Word, our heart is revealed to us through the Word, and-so-on. It is as the Psalmist said "**How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth! . . . Therefore I love Your commandments More than gold, yes, than fine gold!**" Psalm 119:103, 127.

I know, a lot of information but let me share these words with you before we move on. And these words are not from a Christian publication, nor from Christian writers, but from Time magazine, dated December 30, 1974. We read: "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived - and is perhaps better for the siege. Even on the critics' own terms - historical fact - Scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalists began the attack." I don't think you will read Time supporting the Bible today, but it did back then because the evidence proved it!

As the writer of Hebrews said **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”** God’s Word has been given to us from the lips of God Himself! Don’t forget that! Not bad, two verses!

VERSE 3

1. When you think of a rock you think of stability, you think of strength. When someone says, “the rock of Gibraltar” the illustration is that of stability and thus, when David speaks of the Lord being a **“Rock”** that is exactly what he is saying! Let me share with you a few Scriptures that speak of God being our Rock.

- In Deuteronomy 32:4, 31a we are told, **“He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. . . . For their rock is not like our Rock.”** There is no other Rock like our Rock because there is no other God like our God!
- In Psalm 18:2 we are told, **“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”** Are you going to put your trust in man or in the Lord, who can deliver you, be a fortress for you to run to?

- In Psalm 40:2 we are told, **“He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.”** There are those times that our lives are a mess and if we will only look to the Lord He will place our feet upon solid ground, upon the Rock, upon Him and we will not be moved!

- In Psalm 61 listen to how beautiful David’s Words are as he cries out to the Lord and he focuses himself back on the Lord. We are told, **“Hear my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. For You, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name. You will prolong the king's life, His years as many generations. He shall abide before God forever. Oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him! So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may daily perform my vows.”** Psalm 61:1-8. May we learn how to cry out to God in our times of need and say, **“Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”**

- Then in Psalm 94:22 we are told, **“But the Lord has been my defense, And my God the rock of my refuge.”** He understood that it is the Lord who will protect him, defend him against the enemy because He is the ***ROCK!***

- And lastly, in Matthew 16:18, and we can look at many more, but I think you get the idea, we are told, **“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”** Now the big question is this. “Who is Jesus talking about when He says that He is going to build His church upon this rock?” First of all it is not Peter for in just a few verses He is calling for Peter to get behind him for he is acting as a puppet of Satan! Jesus is saying that His church will be built upon the confession that Peter made in Matthew 16:16 regarding Jesus, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** In other words, His church will be built upon Jesus, that He is the Christ, He is God and thus, He is the Rock and not a man or church denomination!

2. Now, what is the Lord saying to David? **“He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God.”** Why was this so important? Because David was going to pass off the scene and the Lord, through David wanted not only the next king in Israel to know this, but also the leaders in Israel, that as they lead they must do so in the fear of God! In other words, your actions, the things that you do will be judged by God and thus, act accordingly!

3. Now, as we look at our government here in the United States, do you think our leaders, those who are ruling over men, are ruling in the fear of God? By their actions I would have to say no! Thus, because there is no fear of God their actions are many times unjust! We see them act in defiance of God but make no mistake about it, God is watching and He will hold them accountable just as He does us. You see, we too are leaders, in our homes, in our jobs, when we are coaching sport teams and-so-on. Thus, may we be men and women who rule with the fear of God in our hearts, knowing what He requires of us and then we must act accordingly!

VERSES 4-5

1. As David looks back over his life he sees that a wise ruler is one who is blessed when he rules and reigns with justice. And, of course, that justice must be administered according to God's Word, His standard. Yes, David's reign was not perfect, he had his problems, his failures, his sin, but he was blessed because God is gracious and He is merciful! Now, from a human perspective, David not only failed, but he failed miserably! And yet, when you look at what the Bible has to say regarding David, you see, for the most part, only praise for this man.

We see this once again in that great portion of Scripture called the Hall of Faith spoken of in Hebrews chapter 11. As you read in the Old Testament the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses for instance, you see that they were not perfect men, but had their problems, their failures, their sin and yet, when you read of them in Hebrews chapter 11 you only see praise. How can that be? Because God sees the good, He has forgiven the bad because of their faith in the coming Messiah just as He has forgiven all our sins because of our faith in the risen Lord! He sees us as perfect even though we know that in this life we are not!

2. Also, David speaks of this “**everlasting covenant**” that God has made with him and David is speaking of the Messiah. You see, the Messiah was going to come from the lineage of David and His rule and reign will be everlasting! We saw God speak through Nathan the prophet and tell David of this covenant in II Samuel chapter 7. Remember David wanted to build God a house to dwell in and God would not let him, but God ended up turning the tables on David and He told David that He would build David a house and He was speaking of the Messiah sitting on the throne forever.

In II Samuel 7:12-16 we are told of this, **“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”** What a

precious promise to David that David remembers as his life is coming to an end. May we hold on to the precious promises that God has given to us because they will bring to our lives comfort and peace because the One who has given them to us is faithful!

3. Listen to how J. Vernon McGee sums this up for us. He wrote:

What David is saying is simply this: “My house is not worthy of this. We did not receive this by merit. It did not come because of who I am.” If David had gotten his just deserts, God would never have made a covenant with him. Neither would God have saved you or me if it had been on the basis of merit. And yet He made an everlasting covenant with David. God has made a covenant with us, too. It is recorded in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Now I hold on to that. God has made that covenant. I never asked Him to make it. He did not make it because of who we are. He did not wait for you or me to make a suggestion. He did it 1900 years ago. He said, “Here it is; take it or leave it.” I take it, by the way. I rest upon that. David said that his covenant was “ordered in all things, and sure.” Friend, you can depend upon God. David says, “This is all my salvation.” Well, God’s covenant with me is my salvation. It is what I desire, friend. It should be the desire of every believer’s heart, “although he made it not to grow.”

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. II, pp. 238-239

4. One more point and then we will move on. In regards to David’s statement, “**This is all my salvation and all my desire**” David recognized that this salvation was not based upon his goodness but upon God’s faithfulness, just as it is with each of us. None of us are good enough, never will be but God is faithful and His promise to us is eternal life that is based in Jesus Christ. And yes, David’s light, his witness may have dimmed towards the end of his life, but it did not go out as Morgan tells us, “In the Divine dealing with us, there is no mistake, no lapse. Nothing has been permitted which has not been made to serve the highest purpose. This is so even of our failures, if, like David, in true penitence we have forsaken them and confessed them. It is certainly so of all our sorrows and trials.” Our God is so gracious and merciful!

VERSES 6-7

1. Here we see David painting a picture of the wicked that are like thorns. Not only are they useless, but also they are dangerous to touch, to be near. And what do weeds, thorns do? They also would choke the life of all that is good. And thus, their ultimate destination will be in the lake of fire eternally separated from God.

2. Also, David knew that God would take care of him. He trusted in the Lord to deliver him from all of his enemies, to watch over him and protect him from the wicked! You can go through the Psalms and see David speak of this theme of the wicked being destroyed and God delivering the righteous, God delivering David from his enemies. Let me just share a couple of Psalms with you that deal with this.

First of all in Psalm 7:9-17 we are told, **“Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, But establish the just; For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. My defense is of God, Who saves the upright in heart. God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day. If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready. He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes His arrows into fiery shafts. Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit and dug it out, And has fallen into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head, And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown. I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.”**

Then, in Psalm 37, starting in verse 1 we are told, “Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret — it only causes harm. For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the Lord, They shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more. But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth. The Lord laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn the sword And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay those who are of upright conduct. Their sword shall enter their own heart, And their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the Lord upholds the righteous. The Lord knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the Lord, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away.

The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives.
For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be
cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his
way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the Lord upholds him
with His hand. I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the
righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. He is ever merciful, and
lends; And his descendants are blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell
forevermore. For the Lord loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are
preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous
shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous speaks
wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice. The law of his God is in his heart; None of
his steps shall slide. The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him. The
Lord will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on
the Lord, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the
wicked are cut off, you shall see it. I have seen the wicked in great power, And
spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was
no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the blameless man,
and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace. But the transgressors
shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off. But the
salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in the time of
trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from
the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.” Psalm 37:1-40.

It is important to have a correct perspective of the situation and David did and if he didn't he meditated upon the Lord and the Lord gave him a correct perspective. The wicked will not win out; their end is set for them if they refuse to turn to Jesus. Thus, may we not lose that perspective and may it cause us to have a passion for the lost and share with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ for as Paul said, **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”**

3. As we move into verses 8-39 next week, we move into a section we can call the hall of fame of David's mighty men. We will see 37 fearless warriors that David recognizes. But understand they did not start out that way. We are told in I Samuel 22:2 that David's men were **“... everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.”** This rag tag army David trained into mighty men, mighty warriors because of the example of their captain, **DAVID!** And I again think this is important and we will spend a little time on this section looking at David's mighty men and, Lord willing, we will finish up the book of II Samuel next time.