



One of God's Mighty Men

by Carl McMurray

In one of the Bible reading schedules that we are following this year, this past week brought to a close the reign of David. Recorded near the end of his reign are what he calls his "last words" and an honor roll of David's men. I would like to note two things.

One is that David takes notice of God's everlasting covenant with him. He thanks God for his "house" that rules over Israel in order and peace and security.

The second thing I note is that David did not reach this place on his own. Recorded for all eternity are the names of his generals: Adino, Eleazar, and Shammah as well as Abishai, most honored among his "chief thirty" and commander of the "thirty" as well as Benaiah, likened unto a Lieutenant with David's mighty men. Then each of that fearsome band of warriors is named in 2 Samuel 23. David might be known as the greatest warrior king of Israel who carved Israel into an international power before he handed the reins to Solomon. But not even David could have done the job on his own.

Sometimes the pre-king David was on the run for his life, and his warriors ran with him. Sometimes the Bible records that he wept and when he did he was surrounded by followers who also cried out. When David was blessed with victory his men divided up the spoils and when he marched out of Jerusalem in shame to avoid doing battle with his own son, he marched out surrounded by faithful soldiers. What does this mean to us? Only this, that none of us also are intended to "go it alone."

The New Testament speaks of the church as an army, a family, a kingdom, and a body. A recent Barna report speaks of the growing sentiment in America that says belonging to a church group is unnecessary to a commitment to a Savior. I beg to differ. The church was not an accident of happenstance where some likeminded folk just happened to meet up and want to spend time together. We are formed and joined together and none of us can do this thing on our own. The elders can't do it alone. The preacher can't do by himself. The teachers can't teach on their own. New Christian or old, strong or weak, male or female, parent or child, all are needed. From time to time "mighty ones" will arise, but even then they will need our support and encouragement. As we give thanks for God's help and blessing, let us also note from time to time that the way He helps and blesses us is often through the agency of others around us. All are needed. All are important.