

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of The Chronicles: God's Preservation Of His Davidic And Levitical Covenants

V. David's Mighty Men: A Lesson In Strengthening Ourselves In The Lord

(1 Chronicles 11:4-12:40)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

In an era of intense, divisive conflicts due to godless ideologies, we need to be strengthened in the inner man:

(1) Last Thursday on my way to the office, I heard a caller on the talk radio show "The Talk of Connecticut" ask show hosts Brad Davis and Gary Byron if they were not bothered over having to talk so much about the conflict between the Democrats and President Trump that has marked our politics since Trump won the presidential election!

(2) Believers in Christ face this challenge, too: (a) last Sunday after the morning service, a member told me he had turned off his television midweek since he was so upset at the presidential impeachment hearings. (b) A Christian in California recently e-mailed me, urging us to keep teaching Bible truth that applies to unsettling issues in the nation and posting it on our Church website, adding, "We need it!" (c) Last week, another member reported that a married couple drove for an hour and twenty minutes to fellowship with others of like faith here in Connecticut from up in "Bernie Sanders country" with its unbiblical socialist mindset. (d) Another member claims he faces errant ideologies at work, and he comes to Church feeling drained and in need of spiritual nourishment. (e) To be honest with you, the sermons I prepare are initially for my own needs as I myself feel pressured over exposure to today's troubled world.

(3) This drain on the inner man over intense, divisive issues affects many people worldwide: Rich Lowry's column ("Don't listen to Greta Thunberg," *Ibid.*, September 25, 2019, p. 10A) told of the "celebrity teen activist" Greta Thunberg who addressed the United Nations demanding international action on "climate change," and Mr. Lowry reported, "According to National Geographic, 'More than a few teens who began as fervent activists have dropped out, citing depression, anxiety and other fears that the world's leaders will not act in time to prevent their lives -- and the lives of their children -- from being irretrievably altered by climate change.'"

We have often and recently addressed these and other issues of unbiblical ideology in our sermons, but we need to go further to address how to handle the drain one experiences in his inner man upon facing such things.

Need: *So, we ask, "What can we do to see our inner man strengthened in an era of intense, divisive conflicts?!"*

- I. In striking contrast to their past actions of weakness in the inner man, following David's coronation, Israel's army under Joab successfully conquered the previously invincible Canaanite fortress of Jebus:**
 - A. Since the day the nation had invaded the Promised Land, Israel had not driven out the Canaanite Jebusites from their fortress city of Jebus that was located in the tribal territory of Benjamin, Judges 1:21.
 - B. This stalemate continued into the reign of Saul though Jebus was located in Saul's tribal land of Benjamin!
 - C. Yet, after David was crowned, he promised the man who led the successful invasion of Jebus would be the army commander, so Joab led Israel's army to capture the citadel (1 Chron. 11:4-6), heeding David's advice to gain access to the city by climbing up its water shaft from the Gihon spring below it, 2 Samuel 5:6-8 ESV.
- II. 1 Chronicles 11:7-9 adds that David then made this fortress Israel's capitol of Zion, or "Jerusalem," that he further fortified the fortress and grew ever greater as Israel's king because the Lord was with him.**
- III. Significantly, 1 Chronicles 11:10a in view of the wide context of Scripture reveals that David's men had developed into mighty men, that they had strengthened themselves to become mighty with David:**
 - A. The Hebrew participle rendered "strengthened" (KJV) is in the intensive-reflexive Hithpael stem that means, "who greatly strengthened themselves." (*mithazqim*, B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 305)
 - B. Thus, in view of their prolonged history, Israel's men had **shifted** from being men who had fled at the threat of the giant Philistine Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:1-11, 23-24 to greatly strengthening themselves in support of David and conquering the previously long-unconquered Canaanite fortress of Jebus in 1 Chronicles 11:1-6.
- IV. This strengthening of themselves was evidenced by their great feats reported in 1 Chronicles 11:4-12:40:**
 - A. Joab boldly led Israel's army up the city water shaft to conquer the formerly impregnable Jebus, 1 Chr. 11:4-9.
 - B. Jashobeam slew 300 enemy soldiers with a spear in a single combat event, 1 Chronicles 11:11b.
 - C. Eleazar joined David in taking a stand to protect a barley field from the Philistines when the rest of Israel's had army fled, and together they two slew the attacking Philistine army in a great victory, 1 Chron. 11:12-14 NIV.
 - D. Three of David's mighty men invaded enemy held territory around Bethlehem to fetch a container of water for David, and David poured out the water in worship to the Lord for their great bravery, 1 Chronicles 11:15-19.
 - E. Abishai, Joab's brother, speared 300 enemy soldiers to death in a single combat event, 1 Chronicles 11:20-21.

- F. Benaiah slew two mighty Moabite foes, he went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion there and he slew a 7 1/2 foot Egyptian giant, snatching the spear from his hand and killing him with it, 1 Chron. 11:22-25.
- G. Some of even Saul's tribal men from Benjamin joined David when he hid from Saul at Ziklag, men who could function as archers and sling stones with either the left hand or with the right hand, 1 Chronicles 12:1-7.
- H. Men from the Transjordan tribe of Gad joined David, men who were bold and swift and could each defeat far larger numbers of enemy soldiers in combat, 1 Chronicles 12:8-15.
- I. When more men from Saul's tribe of Benjamin sought to join David when he hid from Saul, and David wondered if they truly came to help or harm him as secret agents of Saul, their leader Amasai was moved by the Holy Spirit to speak prophetic utterance that persuaded David that they truly followed the Lord in siding with him. David thus made these men leaders over his band of soldiers, 1 Chronicles 12:16-18.
- J. The men of Manasseh sided with David even as he hid from his countrymen in Philistia, 1 Chron. 12:19-22.
- K. The men of Issachar, who understood their era and knew what the nation Israel should do, men who were thus led of the Holy Spirit, joined David's band of soldiers, 1 Chronicles 12:32.
- L. Indeed, men from all 12 tribes joined David (1 Chronicles 12:23-37) and came to him at Hebron to make David king over the entire nation in great celebration and joy, 1 Chronicles 12:38-40.
- V. **Just HOW these men came to strengthen themselves is revealed in the Scripture record (as follows):**
 - A. A significant turning point for Israel's men from weakness to strength in the inner man occurred when young David defeated the giant Goliath: Israel's army had first fled at Goliath's challenge (1 Samuel 17:23-24), but David's slaying of the giant emboldened this same army to pursue and defeat the Philistines, 1 Sam. 17:50-53.
 - B. As for David's inner strength, from his testimony prior to fighting Goliath, David claimed he would slay the giant since he with God's might had already slain a bear and a lion while shepherding sheep, 1 Sam. 17:34-37.
 - C. David's confidence that he as even a youth could successfully attack a lion, a bear or a giant Canaanite in God's might was in turn based on his application of God's promise in Deuteronomy 7:20-22 (as follows):
 - 1. God promised to let Israel conquer the Canaanites in stages lest the land's wild animals overcome them.
 - 2. That promise along with Deuteronomy 28:1, 7 that assured blessings in war for obeying God meant that if David as a shepherd in Israel obeyed God, the Lord would not let wild animals that threatened his sheep overcome him. When a lion and a bear threatened his sheep, David in faith thus attacked and slew them.
 - 3. Using these same Scripture passages in Deuteronomy, David was thus assured that he could trust God to give him victory over any Canaanite such as Goliath who threatened him or his nation, 1 Samuel 17:36.
 - D. David's **faith** in God and His Word *eventually* led to God's enabling David to advance against an enemy troop and scale a wall, run like a deer, train his hands for combat, build his strength for battle, cause his enemies to flee, preserve him from attacks even by his own people and cause his enemies to fear him. (2 Samuel 22:1-46)
 - E. Israel's onlooking men learned from David's example to trust the Lord and His Word so that God worked in them to provide blessings, explaining their similar growing abilities, confidence and track records as warriors!

Lesson: *By trusting and applying Scripture as a young shepherd facing wild animals, David grew to trust God to defeat Goliath and exemplified to Israel's men how to strengthen their inner man so that they became great warriors.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we realize that as in David's case, our inner man is built up by trusting and applying Scripture for blessing in our spiritual walk, that we then trust and apply God's Word in our lives to edify our inner man in today's world that is marked by draining, intense conflicts!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The author of the book of Hebrews at Hebrews 5:13-14 explained three elements needed for us Christians to mature and become strong in the inner man: (1) first, we must realize that maturity takes **time**, Hebrews 5:12; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Hebrews 5:14. David learned over time that God's Word was to be trusted to kill a lion and a bear en route to his slaying Goliath and later whole enemy armies, so we need time to realize the value of trusting and applying Scripture in our experience. (2) Second, we must grow in our **knowledge** of **Scripture**, Hebrews 5:13a, Ibid. God may use trials to enhance our appetite for Scripture and speed up our learning of it, but we need time to get an edifying, working knowledge of the Word to address issues of need. (3) Third, we need **experience** in **applying Scripture** so as to **discern good from evil**, what is essential for spiritual strengthening as we learn to reject what is false and that weakens our inner man from what is true and edifies our spirit, Hebrews 5:13b-14; Ibid. In today's world full of false ideologies and conflicts over them, discernment is essential for guarding the inner man!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we then trust and apply Scripture over time for our nurture.