



June Sermon Series: Mighty Men of God

Message #1 – Mighty Men of Devotion

Getting the Nod

Video: **Men of God**

Last month we took time to study three women who had met Jesus and how it forever changed them. This month our emphasis will be on manhood and we will be studying the Mighty Men of Valor on which David depended upon in his exile from Israel as Saul chased him. Their names are Josheb, Shammah, and the one we study today is Eleazar. **Hopefully we will see the biblical view of Godly men and their role in life, family, and the Kingdom of God. But sometimes men and fathers get a bad rap...**

Illustration of the Arrow Shirt Company and Fathers: The Arrow shirt company ran an ad in magazines for Father's Day. It used an acrostic using the word FATHER. It is a takeoff on the acrostic for mother: "M is for the miracle of Being. O is for its origin in love. T is for the tenderness of seeing. H is for a home no wind can move, and so on." The ad, however, was not quite as tender toward dads. It read:



F - is for your favorite occupation.



A - is for the anniversaries you blew.



T - is for the wonderful talk and sparkling conversations.



H - is for the helpful things that you do.



E - is for every time you were forgetful.



R - is for the recitals that you willingly attended.

The ad concludes by saying: "He may not be a perfect father, but he does deserve a perfect gift. Give him an Arrow shirt for Father's Day."

This ad is not alone in the media's portrayal of men as **bumbling fools** who never quite get it. The message is that usually **men may mean well, but they rarely do well**. They are either **absent** from

the lives of those in their family, or you are made to **wonder if the family would be better off** if they were absent.

Transition: But the Bible has high expectations of men and calls on them to be leaders in the home... and we can find these expectations in Christ...

Connecting us to our story:

What does biblical manhood look like?

1. True manhood is marked by sacrifice.

- NLT | Eph 5:25 **For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her.**
- Christ sacrificed His life for the Church. Godly men sacrifice their lives for wives and families. That is a part of their leadership!

2. True manhood is marked by faithfulness.

- NLT | 2 Ti 2:13 **If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is.**
- Jesus never stops being faithful to His Church and the world. Godly men are not only faithful when being treated well... but even when being treated poorly.

3. True manhood is marked by responsibility.

- NLT | 1 Ti 5:8 **But those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers.**
- Godly men take seriously the responsibility of caring for their families and their own faith.

Thoughts and Stats: Ninety percent of the men who live in the United States say they believe in God. Five out of six men in the U.S. refer to themselves as Christians. Yet only 35% of the men in the United States attend church. Only 35%! Only one out of five women will have their husband sitting beside them in church today. It's a startling statistic! I refuse to believe that Jesus Christ, one of the toughest men ever to walk this earth, is not relevant to the 21st century man.

Transition: Our faith is adventurous! It's about taking risks, trusting God, being watchmen and fierce leaders. Jesus preached, **"The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force"** (Matthew 11:12). Faith means guts! Faith means walking on water if need be. Faith means slaying a giant with a small stone. Faith means fearlessness! And the Lord says, "Wake up the mighty men." We need you. Your family needs you and you have a place and a role to play in the 21st century church!"

God's Word on Eleazar:

NKJV | 2 Samuel 23:9-10 **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 for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. 10 He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder.**

Background:

- Eleazar is particularly remembered for his heroic deeds in a battle with the Philistines. In **1 Chronicles 11:12-14** we are told a little more about this occasion.

- The battle scene was at a place called “Pasadammim” - “the dell of bloodshed”. It is, interestingly, the same place where David (years before) had defeated Goliath.
- This place seems to have been a recurring headache for Israel - Saul had been held up there by the Philistines until David stepped in, and now David is returned there facing the same enemy (the Philistines) in another confrontation.
- Here at Pasadammim again then, the Philistines arrayed themselves against the forces of David’s army. It seems that the Philistines posed a formidable foe, because “ALL THE MEN OF ISRAEL WERE GONE AWAY” (they had fled in fear!). But David and this man Eleazar took up position in a barley field and there took on all the might of the Philistine opposition. They routed the Philistine army completely, so that when the other men of Israel returned, all that was left to do was the looting of dead men!

Transition:

Our Response

Takeaways from Eleazar’s Life:

1. Be on guard - the enemy will often take mighty men back to old battlegrounds.

- As I look back on my Christian walk, my greatest battles have been fought over the same things time and time again - things that I’d already dealt with. BE ON YOUR GUARD!

2. Stand your ground – mighty men still fight when others won’t.

- Here at Pasadammim again, the Philistines posed a formidable foe, because “ALL THE MEN OF ISRAEL WERE GONE AWAY” (they had fled in fear!).
- But David and this man Eleazar took up position in a barley field and there took on all the might of the Philistine opposition. Together with God’s help they routed the Philistine army completely, so that when the other men of Israel returned, all that was left to do was the looting of dead men!

3. Be confident with your weapon – the one that God has placed in your hand.

- He had, no doubt, fought many battles with it before. It had been a reliable sword to him - he cared for it himself, sharpening and oiling it continually, so that he knew it would not fail him in the heat of battle.
- What is your weapon?
- **Illustration of the U. S. Army:** I understand that one of the first things an Australian soldier is issued with when he enlists is his automatic rifle. Each soldier is taught to know everything about his weapon - before long he can dismantle and reassemble it blindfolded in seconds. He is the only one allowed to clean his rifle, and if he misplaces it he is severely disciplined. The point of all this training is so that when he goes into battle the soldier is not concerned about whether or not his weapon will fail him - he trusts it because he knows it completely and has proven it in many repeated drills.
- Eleazar wielded his sword with confidence - it had proven reliable to him time and time again.

4. Be welded to your weapon – by becoming one with your weapon you are transformed.

- NOTE THIS WORD “CLAVE”: The Hebrew word implies two meanings, both of which are significant I believe...

- **“PURSUING”**, “clinging onto”, “grasping”. If we take this meaning, Eleazar “went after” the sword - he clung to it for dear life. A sword with a life of its own.
- **“WELDING”**, “soldering”. The sword was “welded” to Eleazar’s hand! What a great picture that is. In the heat of the battle, Eleazar and his sword BECAME ONE INSTRUMENT!

5. Be consumed with God – because it is only in Him that the victory comes.

- NKJV | 2 Co 10:4 **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds...**
- Do you know what the name “Eleazar” means? It means - “God (is my) helper”. How appropriate! God indeed helped him to overthrow the enemies of Israel.
- God was the securer of Eleazar’s victory.

Transition: God’s weapon in the hand of God’s man or woman is a formidable thing! I close with this story...

Drawing the Net

Final Illustration **HOLD THE FORT, FOR I AM COMING: Story told by D. L. Moody...**

I am told that when General Sherman went through Atlanta toward the sea, through the southern states; he left in the fort, in the Kennesaw mountains, a little handful of men to guard some rations that he brought there.

After Sherman had been long gone, an enemy squad got into the outer rear and attacked the fort, and for a long time the battle raged fearfully. Half of the men in the fort were either killed or wounded; the general who was in command of this small band of soldiers was wounded seven different times; and when they were about ready to run up the white flag and surrender the fort, Sherman got within fifteen miles, and through signaling on the mountain he sent this message, **“Hold the fort; I am coming. W. T. Sherman.”** That message fired up their hearts, and they held the fort till reinforcements came, and the fort did not go into the hands of their enemies.

Mighty men of valor, our task is great and our families... our church... our nation... and our God is worth fighting for. So,

- Be on guard
- Stand your ground
- Be confident with your weapon
- Be welded to your weapon
- Be consumed with God

And Hold the Fort!!! Christ is coming!!!