



Sons of Saint Joseph™

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SOSJ Accountability 3: Our Need for Support Saturday, September 7th, 2024

Samuel: 23: 8-23

These are the names of David's warriors.* Ishbaal, the son of Hachamoni, chief of the Three. He brandished his spear over eight hundred whom he had slain in a single encounter. Next to him was Eleazar, the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the Three warriors with David at Ephes-dammim, when they insulted the Philistines who had massed there for battle. The Israelites had retreated, but he stood there and struck down the Philistines until his hand grew tired from clutching the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory on that day; the army turned back to rejoin Eleazar, but only to strip the slain. Next to him was Shammah, son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had assembled at Lehi, where there was a plot of land full of lentils. The people were fleeing before the Philistines, but he took his stand in the middle of the plot, kept it safe, and cut down the Philistines. Thus the LORD brought about a great victory. Such deeds as these the Three warriors performed. Three of the Thirty chiefs went down to David in the cave of Adullam during the harvest, while a Philistine clan was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. David was then in the stronghold, and there was a garrison of Philistines in Bethlehem. Now David had a craving and said, "If only someone would give me a drink of water from the cistern by the gate of Bethlehem!" Thereupon the three warriors broke through the encampment of the Philistines, drew water from the cistern by the gate of Bethlehem, and carried it back to David. But he refused to drink it, and instead poured it out* to the LORD, saying: "The LORD forbid that I do such a thing! Could I drink the blood of these men who went at the risk of their lives?" So he refused to drink it. Abishai, the brother of Joab, son of Zeruiah, was the chief of the Thirty; he brandished his spear over three hundred whom he had slain. He made a name among the Thirty, but was more famous than any of the Thirty, becoming their leader. However, he did not attain to the Three. Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, a valiant man of mighty deeds, from Kabzeel, killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab. Also, he went down and killed the lion in the cistern on a snowy day. He likewise slew an Egyptian, a huge man. The Egyptian carried a spear, but Benaiah came against him with a staff; he wrested the spear from the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with that spear. Such deeds as these Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, performed; and he made a name among the Thirty warriors but was more famous than any of the Thirty. However, he did not attain to the Three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

Questions

1. Today's reading illustrates the warrior not only in battle but also as an inspiration of elite skills. How can this passage teach us about virtue building from battle examples? What about the true goals of friendship and building up one another for supernatural battle?
2. King David set up a clear army hierarchy to maximize efficiency in battle and exploit the soldiers' best skills. This is the key to friendship. In terms of friendship, do we try to surround ourselves with the best people to encourage and lead us to God? How can we teach our kids to choose the best (most virtuous) friends?
3. Friendship and support also means recognizing the weaknesses we have and others have as well. How do we react to faults in others, especially in close friends? Have there been moments when we found it difficult to choose Christ when an influential friend was inclining us towards a poor choice? Do our children talk openly of such an experience?
4. Have we ever felt betrayed by a close friend? How did we react and what is the best way to react?