

MIGHTY MEIN

IT'S NOT THE MIGHT OF THE MAN
BUT THE MIGHT OF HIS GOD.



MIGHTY MEN

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Written by Frank Hamrick, Jr.

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INTRODUCTION

Young men love heroes. They often idolize sports champions or fictional conquerors from books or movies. Most of these young men have dreamed of being as strong, smart, or powerful as these individuals. This desire to be mighty is not wrong at its heart. In fact, this study is designed to show your students that God wants to make them mighty. The danger is not the desire. The danger lies in the motives behind the desire and the methods used to achieve success.

Mighty Men teaches that it is not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God. It focuses the young men's desire to be mighty into pursuing a humble walk with the Mighty God. As your students grow in their walk with Him, God will powerfully use them in His service.

This study is built around monthly meetings in which you will introduce to your group spiritual disciplines such as Bible reading, memorization, and prayer. Each month you will present the biblical teaching concerning these relationship-building exercises to encourage the group in a closer walk with God. Between each session, the teens will be given exercises to help them put into practice the particular discipline you have introduced.

We at Positive Action For Christ believe that God's plan for the church is to build upon godly male leadership. It is our prayer that this study will help train a new generation of young men who know, love, and serve their Mighty God.

USING YOUR TEACHER'S MANUAL

The following paragraphs explain the various sections contained in your teacher's manual and how to use them. We have tried to provide you with more than enough teaching tools, so don't feel that you must use everything. Use your own discretion about how to teach the lesson. Remain flexible and allow God to use the time that you spend with your students each month in the way that most glorifies Him.

REVIEW

Excluding Lesson 1, every lesson will begin with a list of review questions that cover the material from the previous lesson. You may use this list of questions, which have been carefully selected to represent the summation of the content of the last lesson, to quiz your students orally. Whether you choose to use a handful of questions from the list or all of them, this list should help you facilitate a lively discussion of the past month's subject matter.

Quizzes, which cover much of the same content, may be used in place of the review questions if you prefer a written format. Masters for the quizzes have been included in the teacher's manual for you to copy for your students. You may quiz students individually or let them work together in pairs. Quiz answers are provided at the end of each lesson in the teacher's manual.

The review questions and quizzes are to be used as an evaluation tool to help you see how much of the material your students have retained. They are not intended for grading unless you are using them in a setting in which a grade is required.

CORE TRUTHS

Core truths are key points that have been pulled from the lesson to represent the lesson as a whole. These are mainly for the benefit of the teacher to give him an overview of what the lesson covers, but they may be shared orally with the class or displayed visibly for the students if you choose.

INTRODUCTION

Each lesson begins with an attention-grabbing introduction designed to engage students in a discussion pertaining to the new material. This discussion will lead directly into the teacher's lesson and is to be used as a springboard into the new topic for the month.

TEACHER'S NOTES

Notes for the teacher comprise most of the lesson in the teacher's manual. The subheadings in the teacher's manual match the subheadings in the student's manual point by point. The students will follow along in their books, filling in the blanks of the outline as the information is taught by their group leader. The teacher's notes contain explanations of difficult materials, biblical support, and ideas for making your discussions more interactive.

QUIZ ANSWERS

Quiz answers are provided to assist with evaluating the quizzes, should you choose to use them. While some questions will have one definite answer, other questions may have several answers or may be thought questions (e.g., "What do you think..." or "In your opinion..."). Use the answers given as a guide, but be aware that some students may remember overall concepts better than specific key words.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR MONTHLY STUDY TIME

- **Share your experiences with the spiritual disciplines.** With the exception of the first class, the students will have worked for a month with a particular spiritual discipline. You may want to begin by sharing what you've learned over the past month first; then let the students share their own experiences. Encourage your students to be open about their successes and their failures. This time of sharing is likely to become the most special part of your time together, so don't rush it.
- **Review previous material.** Either use the oral questions provided at the beginning of the lesson or the written quiz to review the content of the last lesson. This will refresh the memories of those who were present during the last class and give those who weren't present a foundation for the new material.
- **Introduce the lesson.** Each lesson in the teacher's manual contains ideas for introducing the new information. Use these ideas or your own to whet the students' appetites and give them a taste of what is to come.
- **Read the story.** The student's manual contains an ongoing fictional account of two of David's mighty men. Before each new lesson is a section of the story to be read before beginning the new information. The story can be read individually or aloud with your students following along in their books. This story will set the tone for the lesson, as well as offer an introductory glance at the spiritual discipline covered in the lesson.
- **Discuss the main lesson.** Using the teacher's notes, conduct a discussion with your students of the main content of the lesson. Have them fill in the blanks of their student's manual as you teach. The completed outline will be a reference tool to help them remember what was taught and a study aid for next month's quiz.
- **Discuss the homework assignments.** As part of this study, your students have committed to complete assignments on their own five days of each week. The assignments will correspond with whatever spiritual discipline was most recently learned, though they may incorporate past disciplines as well. It will be important that the students clearly understand what you are asking them to do in order for them to reap the most benefit from their personal studies.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Below are some important "housekeeping" issues you will want to address at the first meeting:

- Get each student's home address, e-mail address, and phone number (cell if they have one). If possible, get their parents' information as well. This will help you when you need to communicate.

- Stress the importance of attending every meeting. Remember, you only meet once a month, so attendance is crucial. Make sure you have sent out the meeting dates to everyone ahead of time. There is a place in the introduction of the student's manual for the students to write down the date and time of each meeting. You may also want to plan a celebration or awards night at the conclusion of the study.
- Remind the students that they are required to bring a Bible, their student book, and a pen to every session.
- Give the students your contact information. This way, they have no excuse for not letting you know if they are going to miss.
- Congratulate your students on volunteering to be a part of a unique group. Tell them that your expectation, desire, and prayer is that this group of young men will someday be the mighty men (leaders) of your youth group.

L E S S O N # 1 :

GOD WANTS TO MAKE YOU MIGHTY

CORE TRUTHS

- God is still looking for mighty men through whom He can show that He is mighty.
- It's not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God.
- God's mighty men have new hearts that are completely devoted to Him.
- God wants to make you mighty so the world can see that He is mighty.

WHY "MIGHTY MEN"?

After opening the class in prayer, ask: "Why do you think the name of this group is *Mighty Men*? Where did that name come from?"

After a few guesses ask your students to turn in their Bibles to 2 Samuel 23:8–23 and read the exploits of some of David's mighty men.

NAMED FOR DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

After reading the passage, ask them again, "Do you now have a hint as to why the name of this group is *Mighty Men*?" We named this group after David's mighty men. They were spectacular warriors who served God under King David. Although David had more than thirty mighty men, that number was small compared to the number of men in the whole army of Israel.

MAIN PASSAGE: 2 SAMUEL 23:8–23

Be prepared to describe the exploits of a few of David's mighty men. Remember, young men love stories of battle and heroism. Be sure that you are prepared to give these stories all the dramatic flair they deserve.

- **Josheb-Basshebeth (Adino):** He killed 800 men with a spear in one battle! Can you think of anyone in the Bible who, in one battle, killed more men than Josheb-Basshebeth? There is only one: Samson. He slew 1,000 men during one battle using just the jawbone of a donkey.
- **Eleazer the son of Dodo:** Israel was in a battle with the Philistines, and they were losing the fight. As the Israelites began to retreat, one man, Eleazer, refused to run away. He stood his ground and fought alone against the Philistines. He fought so

hard, for so long, and with such intensity that his hand was frozen to the sword. He single-handedly turned back the Philistine army.

- **Josheb, Eleazer, and Shammah:** They were with King David in the Cave of Adullam near Bethlehem, David's hometown. The Philistines had captured the city of Bethlehem and were guarding it. David was thinking about his hometown in the hands of the enemy. When he recalled the well by the city gate, from which he used to drink, he said nostalgically, "O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!" Upon hearing this, his three most trusted warriors took off running towards Bethlehem. They broke through the camp of the Philistines, fought their way to the well, got some water, and brought it back to David. They risked their lives to get David a cup of water. David was so overcome that he did not think himself worthy to drink the water. Instead, he poured it out as a drink offering to the Lord.
- **Benaiah:** This man was famous for killing two well-known warriors of Moab. Another time he went down into a pit on a snowy day to kill a lion. Most impressive of all, with only a club for a weapon (probably a staff), he fought a 7 1/2 foot tall Egyptian (1 Chron. 11:23) who was armed with a massive spear. Benaiah fought the Egyptian, took his spear, and then killed the man with his own weapon. He fought a giant with only a staff and won!

Ask your students which of the mighty men they would want to be and why. Be sure to tell them who you would want to be and why. You may have to go first.

GOD GIVES US A DESIRE TO BE MIGHTY

Men and boys have a desire to be great. We want to be mighty. We want our lives to matter. We want our lives to count for something big. We love stories about battles and heroic deeds. Every young man wishes that someday he could come through in a desperate situation and prove that he is a great man.

This is not wrong. In fact, God has given us those desires. However, those desires can become focused totally on us—what we can do and be. They can produce pride and arrogance in us, keeping us from becoming mighty in God.

If we are to allow our God-given desire for "mightiness" to flow in the right direction, then we must know something that David's mighty men knew. It's found in verses 10, 12, and subtly in verse 16. Can you tell what it is?

If you will read carefully, you will see that in two of these heroic acts (vs. 10, 12), the Bible tells us that it was "the LORD" who brought about a great victory. In verse 16, you read that David poured out the water from the well of Bethlehem "to the LORD."

What did these mighty men know? They knew that it wasn't their might that mattered but the might of their God. You see, the point of telling us about the mighty men of David is not so that we will admire the mighty men of David but so that we will admire their God. These men were not nearly as mighty as some of the men they killed, right? The story of David and Goliath serves as a perfect illustration of that fact. They were not mighty because of who they were but because of whom they served.

GOD IS LOOKING FOR MIGHTY MEN

CORE TRUTH: GOD IS LOOKING FOR MIGHTY MEN THROUGH WHOM HE CAN SHOW THE WORLD THAT HE IS MIGHTY.

The whole *Mighty Men* study is built around one core belief: God is still looking for mighty men through whom He can show the world that He is mighty. Bring out this truth every week as you meet with the young men to encourage them in their pursuit of God.

It's not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God.

If you have a mighty God, you can be a mighty man. It isn't about us, our ability to be mighty. It's about God and His might. It's about His desire to show the world His glory and power through men like us. Remember, the mighty men of David were not as mighty as many of the men they killed. Their mighty deeds were done only because they had a mighty God working in and through them. He won the battle through them. Again, it's not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God.

Illustrations of God's might

The Bible is full of illustrations of God doing incredible works through men. Let's look at some examples.

David defeats Goliath (1 Sam. 17:45–46)

David did not defeat Goliath—God did. Read 1 Samuel 17:45–46. God did mighty things even though David was not as mighty as Goliath.

Moses parts the Red Sea (Exo. 14:13–21)

Moses may have raised his hands just before the Red Sea parted, but it was God who parted the waters. Moses himself gave God the credit. Notice the might, power, and glory that Moses attributes to God in Exodus 14:13a, 14a, and 21a. God did mighty things through Moses even though Moses was not as strong as the deep waters.

Gideon defeats the Midianite army with 300 men (Judg. 7)

In the eyes of the Israelites, Gideon's army was of respectable size, but God tells Gideon that there are too many men. God gives Gideon the instructions to reduce the army from 32,000 to a mere 300 men. In Judges 7:19–22, Gideon's 300 with trumpets and pitchers in their hands are given victory over the Midianites by the *sword* of the Lord. God once again shows Himself to be mighty through Gideon's army even though their numbers were few.

BIBLICAL TEXT: 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

Read the first half of 2 Chronicles 16:9 and have the students write it in their student books.

THE HEARTS OF MIGHTY MEN

God delights in showing His power and glory, and He does that through us. It isn't about our might but His might. So, how do we become one of God's mighty men? How do we become the kind of men through whom God will do great things?

GOD'S MIGHTY MEN HAVE NEW HEARTS THAT ARE COMPLETELY DEVOTED TO HIM

If you are to become one of God's mighty men, then you must have a new heart that is completely devoted to Him.

David, the leader of the mighty men, is described in Scripture as a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). David had a heart like God's. This is what set him apart, and this is why he is remembered to this day. David's great exploits began in his heart. The Bible is very clear that God doesn't look at the outward appearance. If He did, He would've chosen Goliath, not David, right? God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). If you are to be one of God's mighty men, then you must have a heart like David's, which is to say, you must have a heart like God's. What kind of a heart do you have?

Everyone is born with a deceitful and wicked heart (Jer. 17:9)

According to Scripture you are born with a heart that is not at all like God's. In fact, the Bible says you have a heart that is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). So how does a heart that is "desperately wicked" become a heart like David's heart...like God's heart? It can't. You cannot change your heart. You have a hard heart that is desperately wicked. You need a new heart. You can't change your heart, but God can.

**God gives man a new heart at salvation
(Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 5:17; Heb. 8:8–12; 10:16–18)**

The good news—the gospel—is that when you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God gives you a “new heart” and begins a work of renewal in you. He takes your heart of stone and changes it into a heart of flesh. He writes His law on your heart and draws you to Himself. So, the first step in becoming one of God’s mighty men is not something you do but something He does. It’s not your might that makes you mighty but His might. He gives you a new heart, a heart like His.

**God shows Himself mighty on behalf of those whose hearts
are devoted to Him (2 Chron. 16:9)**

Have the students recite the first half of 2 Chronicles 16:9, which they have written in their student books.

Once you have a new heart, you are able to devote that heart completely to God. God will always come through for men whose hearts are completely His. He wants to show to the world His glory and power through men whose hearts are devoted to Him. If you devote your new heart completely to Him, He will show Himself mighty on your behalf. You can count on it. Remember: it’s not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God.

**We have an enemy who seeks to keep us from devoting
our hearts completely to God, our King**

What is it that keeps us from devoting our hearts completely to God? The enemy. You have an enemy without and within, and these enemies fight against your new heart. The enemy without is called “Satan,” and the enemy within is called “the flesh.” You either live from your new heart, or you live from your flesh. Your new heart is born into a world at war. As soon as God gives it to you, Satan begins to assault it from without and within. Satan’s desire is to destroy your new heart, and he uses the temptations of the world and the desires of your flesh to accomplish his goal.

If you are to become one of God’s mighty men, then you must learn to live from your new heart and resist these enemies. We are in the middle of a holy war, and the stakes are very high. Satan is real, and the flesh is strong. Our enemies are cunning, so we must be trained for battle.

WE MUST TRAIN OUR BODIES TO LIVE FROM OUR NEW HEARTS

You do have a new heart. God has given it to you. The battle of your life is a battle to live from that new heart. You must train your body to live from your new heart. Paul is very clear that we must “exercise or discipline” ourselves for “godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7). Interestingly enough, the Bible has lots to say about training.

Our training is like the training of an athlete (1 Cor. 9:24–27; 1 Tim. 4:7–9)

In 1 Cor. 9:24–27, Paul compares our spiritual training to the training an athlete goes through who competes in the Olympics (track and field and boxing). These athletes go through agonizing practice to train themselves to compete. We are called to something much greater, so our training will be even more difficult.

Read 1 Timothy 4:7–9. If you want to be in shape physically, you have to do physical exercises, and if you want to be in shape spiritually, you have to do spiritual exercises. As the saying goes, “No pain, no gain.”

Our training is like the training of a soldier: it’s agony
(1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7)

Soldiers undergo intense training. Boot camp is mandatory for every soldier, and it requires incredible discipline and hard work. When Paul compares our training to that of a soldier, he uses the word “agony.” Ask anyone who has been to boot camp, and I’m sure they would say it was agonizing. It is certainly rewarding, but it’s still a difficult and challenging process.

- 1 Timothy 6:12 – The word *fight* is the Greek word from which we get our English word *agony*. So we could read it, “Agonize the good agony...”
- 2 Timothy 4:7 – The same thing applies here, it could literally read, “I have agonized a good agony.” The training of the heart is a difficult process. It is hugely rewarding, but it is hard work nonetheless.

Our training requires self-discipline (2 Tim. 1:7; Gal. 5:22–23)

- 2 Timothy 1:7 – God has given us the Spirit of discipline for a reason. He knows we will need it. The Spirit keeps our heart and mind focused in the midst of a world full of distractions.
- Galatians 5:22–23 – One part of the fruit of the Spirit is temperance or self-control. If we are to train our hearts to be the kind of men through whom God’s power and glory are displayed, then we will need the fruit of self-discipline.

If you are to be one of God's mighty men through whom God will show His glory and power to the world, then you must be a man who has trained himself to live from his new heart. You get your new heart at salvation and then train yourself to live from your new heart so that you can overcome the enemy as one of God's mighty men. God's work of renewal is a process, and our training is at the center of that process.

GOD WANTS TO MAKE YOU MIGHTY SO THAT THE WORLD WILL SEE THAT HE IS MIGHTY

DAVID'S SONG (2 SAM. 22:33–36)

2 Samuel 22 records one of David's last songs. In this song, David recounts all that God has done for him and all the great victories he has won through God. In verses 33–36, we find something very interesting.

In verses 33–36a, David talks about who God is and what He has done for David:

God is David's strength

God is David's strong refuge or fortress. God makes his feet secure like a deer upon high places. God prepares David's hands for war with power to bend a metal bow.

God gives David the shield of salvation

- God saved David. God gave many victories to David, saving him from defeat both physically and spiritually. Today's battles also require the armor of God as mentioned in Ephesians 6:10–20.

RESULT: GOD MADE DAVID GREAT (2 SAM. 22:36)

After all of this, David makes a very interesting observation. He says, "...your help makes me great."

God protected David, gave him amazing abilities, trained him, and guaranteed him the victory so that...David could be great. Why? Why did God want David to be great? Because in making David great, people would see that God is great. David was not mighty without God. In fact, he was a little forgotten shepherd boy whom Goliath called a dog. Without God, David was nothing. With God, David was mighty.

God wants to make you mighty so that people will see that He is mighty. He will show the world His might through you.

It's not the might of the man that matters but the might of His God.

As God trained David’s hands to bend a metal bow, so He is now ready to train you to do the same. In this class we are going to learn about the things God uses to train our hearts. We are going to do more than just learn about them; we are actually going to do them. During the next nine months, you will be in a spiritual “boot camp.” The purpose of this boot camp is to train you to live from your new heart.

This course was designed with your training in mind. Each month you will learn about and practice a spiritual discipline. These disciplines have been used by God’s mighty men for centuries and have proven effective in the spiritual warfare we must fight. It will take time for you to understand how to use these disciplines, and you may fail to see their importance at first. However, if you stick with it—if you embrace this training—you will see God use these disciplines to transform your life and give you victory in this holy war.

OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, YOU WILL LEARN TO:

LISTEN TO GOD SPEAK THROUGH HIS WORD

COMMUNICATE WITH GOD IN PRAYER

REMEMBER GOD IN THE SCRIPTURES

BEHOLD GOD IN THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

FOLLOW THE WORK OF GOD IN THE MIGHTY MEN OF THE PAST

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN THE COMPANY OF OTHERS

TURN TO GOD AS YOU ARE BROKEN OVER YOUR SIN

As you can see, your training is all about God. We need Him above anything else, and these seven areas are designed to take us to Him and create an increasing desire for Him.

God is ready to show His might through you. He is ready to make you mighty.

This is the beginning. I believe you are ready.

You may want to review the following course expectations with the group. They are printed in the introduction of the student manual.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course will be hard work: “No pain, no gain.”

- Be faithful in attendance.
- Bring your Bible, your student book, and a pen to every session
- Do assignments on time and be ready to be held accountable.
- Example: Do daily devotions, memorize Scripture, read assignments, be prepared for quizzes, etc.

What can you expect from me?

- I will pray for you.
- I will not ask you to do anything I won't do.
- I will help you by reviewing assignments with you.
- I will hold you accountable.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. David's mighty men
2. 2 Samuel 23:8–23
3. c
4. a
5. b
6. to admire their God
7. the world that He is mighty
8. Answers will vary. Examples from the lesson include the following: God used David to defeat Goliath; God used Moses to part the Red Sea; and God used Gideon to defeat the Midianites.
9. He had a heart like God's.
10. God gives us a new heart at salvation.
11. who are devoted to Him
12. without—Satan; within—the flesh
13. to destroy your new heart
14. temptations of this world and the desires of your flesh
15. live from your new heart
16. He is mighty

LESSON 1

GOD WANTS TO MAKE YOU MIGHTY

- **Why “Mighty Men”?**
 - Named for David’s mighty men
 - Main passage: 2 Samuel 23:8–23
 - Josheb-Basshebeth (Adino): Killed 800 men in one battle
 - Eleazar the son of Dodo: Refused to run away
 - Josheb, Eleazar, and Shammah: Risked their lives to get David a cup of water
 - Benaiah: Fought a giant Egyptian with only a staff and won
 - Your favorite mighty man: Answers will vary.
 - God gives us a desire to be mighty
- **God Is Looking for Mighty Men**
 - Core truth: God is still looking for mighty men through whom He can show that He is mighty
 - It’s not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God!
 - Illustrations of God’s might
 - David defeats Goliath (1 Sam. 17:45–46)
 - Moses parts the Red Sea (Exo. 14:13–21)
 - Gideon defeats the Midianites army with 300 men (Judg. 7)

- Biblical text: 2 Chronicles 16:9

- Write out the first half of this verse on the lines below.

Answers will vary depending on translation.

- **The Hearts of Mighty Men**

- God's mighty men have _____ **new hearts** _____ that are completely _____ **devoted** _____ to Him
 - Everyone is born with a _____ **deceitful** _____ and _____ **wicked** _____ heart (Jer. 17:9)
 - God _____ **gives** _____ man a _____ **new** _____ heart at salvation (Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 5:17; Heb. 8:8-12; 10:16-18)
 - God shows Himself _____ **mighty** _____ on behalf of those whose hearts are devoted to Him (2 Chron. 16:9)
 - We have an _____ **enemy** _____ who seeks to keep us from devoting our hearts completely to God, our King
 - Enemy without: Satan
 - Enemy within: the flesh
- We must _____ **train** _____ our bodies to live from our new hearts
 - Our training is like the training of an _____ **athlete** _____ (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Tim. 4:7-9)
 - Our training is like the training of a _____ **soldier** _____: it's _____ **agony** _____ (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7)
 - Our training requires _____ **self-discipline** _____ (2 Tim. 1:7; Gal. 5:22-23)

- **God wants to make** you **mighty so that the world will see that** He **is mighty**
 - David's song (2 Sam. 22:33–36)
 - God is David's strength
 - God gives David the shield of salvation
 - Result: God made David great (2 Sam. 22:36)

*God wants to make you mighty so that people will see that He is mighty.
He will show the world His might through you.*

- **Over the next few months, you will learn to:**
 - Listen to God speak through His Word
 - Communicate with God in prayer
 - Remember God in the Scriptures
 - Behold God in the story of the Bible
 - Follow the work of God in the mighty men of the past
 - Fellowship with God in the company of others
 - Turn to God as you are broken over your sin

THIS MONTH'S ASSIGNMENT

The Bible is full of examples of God using ordinary men to make God's name great. Spend time this month reading about two of these mighty men and how they glorified God with their mighty acts. If you spend two weeks studying each mighty man, you will be done before next month's meeting.

MOSES

Even though Moses was the child of Israelite slaves, he grew up in a palace raised by an Egyptian princess. He had everything he could want, but the Egyptians hated God. Moses had to make a hard decision. Read Hebrews 11:24–26.

- What did Moses do? **He refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.** _____
- Why? **Moses chose to be mistreated along with the people of God. He** _____
regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ more valuable than Egypt's treasure. _____

Moses left Egypt to live in the desert. After spending many years caring for his father-in-law's sheep, Moses received a special visit from God. Read Exodus 3:1–4:17 and answer the following questions.

- In your own words, describe what Moses saw (3:1–6). **Answers will vary.** _____
- What was God going to do for His people (3:7–9)? **God was going to deliver** _____
His people from the Egyptians. _____
- How was God going to deliver them (3:10)? **through Moses** _____
- Was the power to deliver Israel dependent on God or Moses? **God** _____

At this point, Moses began to make excuses why he isn't mighty enough. Look at each verse below and write out the excuse given, or how Moses tried to get out of serving God.

- 3:11— **Who am I that I should go before Pharaoh?** _____
- 3:13— **What if the Israelites ask me Your name?** _____
- 4:1— **What if they do not believe me or listen to me?** _____
- 4:10— **I don't speak well.** _____
- 4:13— **Please send someone else to do this job.** _____
- What does Exodus 4:11–12 teach us about where the might of God's people truly comes from? **the LORD; God would help Moses speak and tell him what to say** _____

The ten plagues are the best-known part of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. Look up the following verses and list the ten plagues that God brought on Egypt. Notice how often the Lord is mentioned in these passages.

- Plague 1—Exodus 7:14–21 **water turned to blood** _____
- Plague 2—Exodus 8:1–6 **frogs** _____
- Plague 3—Exodus 8:16–17 **gnats** _____
- Plague 4—Exodus 8:20–24 **flies** _____
- Plague 5—Exodus 9:1–6 **death of livestock** _____
- Plague 6—Exodus 9:8–10 **boils** _____
- Plague 7—Exodus 9:17–26 **hail** _____
- Plague 8—Exodus 10:3–15 **locusts** _____
- Plague 9—Exodus 10:21–23 **darkness** _____
- Plague 10—Exodus 11:1–6 **death of firstborn** _____
- What was God's purpose in doing all these mighty works (Exo. 9:16)?
to show His power so that His name would be proclaimed everywhere _____

After God led Israel out of Egypt, He did many more mighty works through Moses. Look up the following passages and describe the ways God used Moses to display God's glory.

- Exodus 14:21–31 **God used Moses to open the Red Sea so that the Israelites could safely cross on dry land.** _____

- Exodus 16:4, 13–18 **God used Moses to explain His provision of manna for the Israelites.**

- Exodus 17:1–6 **God used Moses to provide water from a rock for the Israelites.**

- Exodus 17:8–16 **God used Moses to defeat Amalek.**

- What did you learn about the mighty works of God through the life of Moses?
Answers will vary.

JOSHUA

As Moses drew to the end of his life, God appointed a new leader for the people of Israel. Joshua would be another mighty man for God and would spread the glory of the Lord. Even before he took over as the leader of Israel, God was using him in mighty ways.

- You have already read of Joshua’s first mighty act recorded in Exodus 17:8–16. What did God enable Joshua do in this passage? **God enabled Joshua to have victory over Amalek and his people.**

- How do you know that the victory came by God's power and not Joshua's ability? **When Moses held up his hands to God, Israel prevailed. But when he lowered them, Amalek prevailed.**

- Joshua appears again in the story of Israel in Numbers 13–14. Read 13:1–20. What was Joshua's mission? **Joshua's mission was to spy out the land and people of Canaan.**

- What were the people in the land like (Num. 13:28–33)? **They were powerful giants.**

- How did the Israelites respond to this news (Num. 14:1–4)? **They wept and grumbled that it would have been better to have stayed in Egypt.**

- Why did Joshua and Caleb tell the people they should attack the land (Num. 14:6–10)? **They believed that the LORD was with the Israelites.**

The Israelites refused to listen to Joshua and Caleb. As a result, God judged the unbelief of the people by making them wander in the wilderness for forty years. When Moses died at the end of those forty years, Joshua took his place as the leader of Israel. God appointed him the task of leading the Israelites into the land that God had promised them. The history of this conquest is recorded in the book of Joshua.

- Deuteronomy 31 records the transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua. After reading verses 1–8, summarize the mission that Moses gave to Joshua. _____
Moses gave Joshua the mission of leading the Israelites into Canaan.

- By whose power would Joshua and the Israelites conquer the land? **the LORD's**

What phrase in each of the following verses shows whose power would be needed?

- Deuteronomy 31:3 **The LORD your God Himself will cross over ahead of you.**

- 31:4 **The LORD will destroy your enemies just as He did the kings of the Ammonites.**

- 31:5 **The LORD will deliver your enemies to you.**

- 31:6 **The LORD your God goes with you.**

- 31:8 **The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you.**

- In Joshua chapter 1, God speaks to Joshua as the new leader of God's people.

Read verses 1–9 and record the promises that God made to Joshua.

I will give you every place you set your foot.

No one will be able to stand against you.

I will never leave you or forsake you.

God did many mighty works in the land of Canaan as Joshua led the people in the conquest. Read the passages below and write down the works that God did.

- Joshua 3:7–17 **God parted the waters of the Jordan River.** _____

- 6:1–21 **God caused the walls of Jericho to collapse and gave Israel victory over the people of the city.** _____
- 10:1–15 **God caused the sun to stand still over Gibeon.** _____

At the end of Joshua’s life, he reminded the people one last time that all they had accomplished was due to the mighty power of their God. Read Joshua 24:1–18.

- Who had done all the mighty works in verses 1–13? **the LORD** _____
- What choice did Joshua give the people in verses 14–15? **Joshua gave the people the choice of whom to serve—God or idols.** _____
- Why did the people choose to serve God (24:16–18)? **He had delivered the Israelites and given them victory over their enemies.** _____
- What did you learn about the mighty works of God through the life of Joshua?
Answers will vary. _____

LESSON 1 QUIZ

17. Where did the name *Mighty Men* come from? _____

18. Where is the story of David's mighty men found in the Bible? _____

Match the following men with their mighty deeds.

19. ____	Josheb-Basshebeth (Adino)	a. refused to run away during battle; single-handedly turned back the Philistine army b. killed a 7 1/2 foot tall Egyptian with the Egyptian's own spear c. killed 800 men with a spear in battle
20. ____	Eleazer the son of Dodo	
21. ____	Benaiah	

22. If the point of telling us about David's mighty men is not for us to admire the men themselves, then what is the point? _____

23. Complete the following core truth: God is looking for mighty men through whom He can show _____.

24. Name and describe one Biblical character that God used to display His might. God used _____ to _____.

25. According to the Bible, what set David apart? _____

26. How does a heart "desperately wicked" like ours become like David's? _____

27. Complete the following core truth: God shows Himself mighty on behalf of those _____
_____. (2 Chron. 16:9)

28. What two enemies keep us from devoting our heart completely to God? _____

29. What is Satan's desire for you? _____

30. What does he use to accomplish his goals? _____

31. If you are to become one of God's mighty men, then how must you learn to live? _____

32. Complete the following core truth: God wants to make you mighty so that the world can see that _____.

L E S S O N # 2 :

WHAT IS YOUR “TOP PRIORITY”?

DISCIPLINE #1: BIBLE READING

NOTE: You will begin each lesson (starting with this lesson) with a review of the previous lesson. You can do this in written quiz format (see previous lesson) or quiz the young men orally using the questions below.

REVIEW

- Where did we get our group’s name, “*Mighty Men*”? (David’s mighty men)
- Where are David’s mighty men mentioned in Scripture? (2 Sam. 23)
- How many mighty men did David have? (37)
- Finish this statement: “It’s not the might of the man that matters but...?” (...the might of his God)
- Why is God still looking for mighty men? (He wants to show the world through them that He is mighty.)
- What must we have if we are to become mighty men? (We must have a heart like His that is completely devoted to Him.)
- How do we get a heart like God’s heart? How do we, like David, become men after God’s heart? (God must give us a new heart, and He does this at salvation.)
- Who are our enemies without and within? (Satan and the flesh)
- How can you overcome your enemies? (You must live from your new heart.)
- How do you live from your new heart? (You must train your bodies.)
- According to Paul, what is your training like? (like the training of a soldier or athlete)
- Why does God want to make you mighty? (to show that He is mighty)

CORE TRUTHS

- There is a cosmic war for your heart.
- Whoever gets your “ear” will eventually get your heart.
- If there is enough noise in your life, you will be totally distracted and unable to focus on what is important.
- If we are to hear from the King, then we must learn to slow down and be quiet.
- The primary means of God’s communication with us is through His Word.
- Listening to the King must be our top priority.

INTRODUCTION

The last time we met, we talked about David's mighty men. That entire lesson can be summed up in a couple of phrases that will show up over and over in our study. Can you tell me what they are?

- It's not the might of the man that matters but the might of his God.
- God wants to make you mighty so that the world will see that He is mighty.

Remember, we are in a war. It is a war in which God is looking for mighty men like those who surrounded David. I believe you are some of those men. The enemy is very clear about his goal: he wants to steal from, kill, and destroy you (John 10:10). Jesus is very clear about His goal as well: He came to give us life to the fullest (John 10:10). There is a cosmic war for your heart. One seeks to bring you life, and the other seeks to bring you death.

Our enemy uses the temptations of the world and the desires of our flesh to accomplish his goal. Our Savior gives us a new heart and fills us with His Spirit to accomplish His goal. The spiritual war being waged over your heart is serious and intense. You must fight mightily. If you are to fight mightily, then you must be like David, a man after God's own heart, and you must train your body to live from your new heart. Paul was very clear that godliness requires discipline and training.

Our group is entering that training. This is our boot camp. In this spiritual boot camp you are going to learn how to use some of the weapons that mighty men of old used to fight against the same enemies you are fighting now. Today, we begin our training.

OUR LIVES DEPEND ON OUR HEARING FROM THE KING

AN ANALOGY: THE IMPORTANCE OF A RADIO IN WARFARE

If you were in a battle and you were attacking the enemy, what are some important things you think you would need? (E.g., a gun, helmet, grenades, tanks, planes, etc.)

What about a radio? Would you need that? Why?

When you are in a battle, it is crucial that you be able to hear from your commander. If you get cut off from the rest of the forces, you could risk losing the entire battle. You may end up attacking when you need to be retreating, attacking in the wrong direction, or firing on your own troops. Hearing from the General is crucial to the success of any battle.

It's the same with us. We are in an intense battle every day. Do you know that? Every day when you wake up, you are at war. Now, be honest, do you really feel that and think about that when you wake up? The enemy doesn't rest. He is intent on one purpose: your destruction. He hates your King, and he is cunning and wants to destroy you.

If Jesus needed to hear from His Father, then so do we.

What is the first thing we need to do every day? We must hear from the King (our commander). Why? Because our lives depend on it. In fact, did you know that Jesus said that He did only what He saw the Father doing and said only what He heard the Father saying (John 5:19, 12:49)? Jesus was God's Son, and He needed a vital connection with the Father. If He needed it, you know we do. In fact, the strength of your new heart depends on your hearing from the King. Like Jesus, your very life depends on hearing from the Father. Someone gets your "ear" every day, and whoever that is will eventually get your heart.

We must hear the voice of the Shepherd

In John 10:10, Jesus makes it clear that He came to give us life to the fullest. He also makes it clear in John 10 that your life depends on hearing His voice. Jesus uses the image of a shepherd and says that He is the Good Shepherd. How important is it for the sheep to hear the Shepherd's voice? When a sheep gets to the point where he doesn't hear or recognize the Shepherd's voice, that sheep is in big trouble. In the same way, we must hear His voice if we are to have the life He offers. The life of your new heart depends on hearing from your King, your Good Shepherd.

THE STRATEGY OF THE ENEMY: DISTRACTION AND BUSYNESS

What keeps us from hearing the voice of our Shepherd? (Discuss with the group.) All these things can be narrowed down into two categories that keep us from hearing from the King: distraction and busyness.

Our enemy distracts us with the noise of life

Have you ever thought about noise? Just stop with me and think about all the noises you hear on a daily basis. Give me some examples. (E.g., alarm clock, water running, opening and closing of drawers, car starting, trucks, horns, bells, voices, T.V., music, etc.) Some people are so accustomed to noise that they can't sleep without it. Are you like that? Who likes noise? Doesn't it seem weird when you are somewhere and it is deafeningly quiet? How long can you stand the silence? Let's see. (Let the students sit in silence for a couple minutes.) Isn't it amazing how awkward that feels?

You know what noise is? It's a distraction. If there is enough noise in your life, you will be totally distracted and unable to focus on what is important. Our enemy knows how to distract us. As the noise level of our lives increases, our ability to hear from our commander decreases. It's really rather simple, isn't it? The enemy doesn't have to have a secret strategy. All he has to do is distract us. Noise is one of his choice weapons.

Our enemy keeps us from hearing the King by keeping us busy

How many of you are busy? Do you live a busy life? Tell me about it. Describe a typical day for me. (Discuss with the group.) It seems like we are always running: running to school, running to the store, running to the game, etc. We rarely get to slow down.

Let me ask you a few true or false questions: (Discuss each answer.)

T or F? The unexamined life isn't worth living. (Plato)

- What is an "unexamined life"?
- Why would Plato say this?

T or F? There is more to life than increasing its speed. (Ghandi)

- What is the purpose of technology?
- How does this idea fit in with the idea of resting or Sabbath?

T or F? The wise man knows how to run his life so that contemplation is possible. (Gabriel Marcel)

- We tend to always be saying, "Things will be better when..." We tend to all be arranging for our lives but seldom living them.

All of this can be summed up in a quotation of Socrates, "Beware of the bareness of a busy life." I'm afraid too many of us are living a barren life. We are busy, and we don't know why. We are barren; we are dried up. We just get up and rush to get stuff done so we can get up and rush to do more stuff tomorrow so we can get up and rush to get stuff done so we can... you get the picture. Ever felt like you were in the rat race? It's a race you can't win, and its consequences are disastrous.

In order to keep us from hearing from the King (our commander), the enemy has a simple strategy: keep us busy and distracted.

If we are to hear from the King, our lives must change. Specifically, the pace of our lives must change. We can't keep doing what we've always done and expect things to be different.

What must change? How can we hear from the King every day?

IF WE ARE TO HEAR FROM THE KING (OUR COMMANDER), THEN WE MUST LEARN TO SLOW DOWN AND BE QUIET.

Slowing down and being quiet probably sounds boring, right? I mean, the games we play and the stuff we like to do isn't quiet. Fun is usually noisy, right? Is basketball slow and boring? No. Are video games slow and boring? No. So, I'm telling you that this first habit is about doing something that doesn't sound fun. If you're just looking for "fun," then you don't know that you are in a war. War isn't fun, but victory is satisfying.

Running to get in shape for athletic events isn't fun, but when your team wins because you were in better condition than your opponent, it certainly is satisfying. Learning to spend time listening to the King speak is similar. In time, you will love it, just like some people love running, but it's an acquired skill. It isn't always fun spending time with someone you don't really know, but in time, as you get to know him, you value his company. It's the same way with our King. He is a great King, the fiercest and most loyal friend you will ever have, but it takes time to get to know Him. It may not begin very fun, but it will end in deep satisfaction.

We must hear from the King every day. If we are to hear from Him, we must contend against the two weapons of the enemy: distraction and busyness. How can we slow down and be quiet? This first thing you must do is very simple: you must build a daily time into your lives when you are quiet, undistracted, and focused on being with the King so you can hear what He has to say to you.

WE HEAR FROM THE KING IN HIS WORD

WE MUST SPEND TIME LISTENING TO HIM IN THE BIBLE

Let me ask you a question: why did God give us the Bible? God did not give us the Bible so we would have a giant rulebook and know what to do. God did not give us the Bible to teach us what we should believe. God did not give us the Bible to tell us how to get to heaven. It's not a map, it's not a textbook, it's not self-help guidebook, and it's not a magic book.

The Bible reveals the glory and grace of God

The Bible is a mirror designed to do one thing: reveal the person of God. Outside of Jesus Christ the Bible is the primary revelation of who God is. We would have very little idea of what God is like, how He acts, or what He is up to if we didn't have the Scriptures. When it comes to knowing God—which Jesus said is the source of life (John 17:3)—the Bible is indispensable.

God gave us the Bible so we could know Him

God gave us the Bible so we could know Him. I did not say that God gave us the Bible so we could know about Him. Now, if we read the Bible, we will definitely learn things about God, but that is not the primary purpose. The primary purpose is for us to know Him as a Father, Friend, and King. Knowing someone requires communication. So, God speaks to us through His word.

God speaks to us through His Word

The primary means of God's communicating with us is through His Word. Let me say it again: the primary means of God's communicating with us is through His Word. If we are to hear from the King (our commander), we must listen to Him in the Word.

God's Word is unlike any other book

The Bible is absolutely unlike any other book ever written. Here are a few facts about the Bible (Read each passage.):

- The Bible is "God-breathed" or inspired – 2 Timothy 3:16
- The Bible is like a hammer – Jeremiah 23:29
- The Bible is like a double-edged sword – Hebrews 4:12

According to Psalm 19:7–10 the Bible:

- Restores the soul
- Gives us wisdom
- Brings joy to our hearts
- Enlightens our eyes
- Is more desirable than gold

The Word of God is precious; it is a treasure. The reason it is called a treasure is that through it, we come to know God. We learn about Him, we experience Him, and we hear from Him. If the life of your new heart depends on hearing from your King and He speaks to you through His word, then spending time with Him in His Word must become your top priority.

Have the students finish the quotation below by filling in the underlined words.

Our top priority must be spending time every day listening to our King as He speaks through His Word.

LISTENING TO HIM IN THE WORD MUST BE OUR TOP PRIORITY DAILY.

A priority is an activity we place over other activities

What is a priority? According to *Webster's Dictionary* a priority is “something given...attention before competing alternatives.” Rank the following in order of “priority”:

- ___ Playing video games
- ___ Doing homework
- ___ Talking with friends online
- ___ Practicing a sport or talent (guitar, piano, basketball, etc.)
- ___ Going to church

You get the idea. The things that are more important deserve to receive time and attention above or before the things that are less important. What you value is revealed in your priorities. What could be more important than spending time each day listening to your King speak to you through His Word? What is more important than sustaining the life of your new heart? Nothing.

If you are to make spending time every day with the King, listening to Him speak to you through His Word your “top priority,” then you must:

Pick a consistent time and place to meet alone with God

It would be nice to think that if we decided to make spending time listening to God in the Word our top priority, it would just happen. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. You know why it doesn't work that way? Because we have an active enemy who will do everything he can to distract us and make us so busy that we give our time and attention to things that are less important. Over time, your heart that was new and alive...begins to die and harden... why? It dies or hardens because you are not listening to your Shepherd, your Commander, your King.

You must make an appointment with the King: same time, same place, every day. Now, there is no particular time or place that is more spiritual than any other, but there are a few things to consider in picking your time and place.

Find an early time

First, if you don't spend time with the King at the beginning of your day, you run the risk of not spending time with Him at all. You think you'll do it before you go to bed, but homework

takes longer than expected, you're tired, or you end up spending time on the computer or talking on the phone, and before you know it, you've missed your appointment.

Find a quiet place

Second, you must pick a place where you can limit noise and distractions. The family room or sitting in front of a TV or between video games is probably not the best place. You need a place where you can be alone and focus and listen.

Use a format: know what you're going to do

Once you've picked a time and place, you need to make sure that you know what you are going to do. You need a format. There is not one format that you must use, but the following format will help you as you begin your training in this area.

- Pray and ask the King to help you listen to Him as you read your Bible.
- Read the assigned passage, listening for the King to speak to you.
- Write down the verse that "speaks" to you and record what you hear the King saying to you in that verse. Keep these verses and thoughts together in a notebook.
- Finish by writing down any special prayer requests that you have and then close in prayer.
- Keep your notebook with you throughout the day and read over your verse two or three times during the day. Write down any new thoughts the King gives you about your verse or a way the verse was especially useful in your life.

Remember, this is hard work. This is not going to be easy. We have an enemy fighting us from without (Satan) and, on top of that, one of his allies is our very own flesh. I once had a boss who would say, "Easy don't pay." His point? The things that are worthwhile in life take hard work. The most worthwhile thing in all of life is your heart. Proverbs 4:23 tells us to guard our hearts diligently because our life, what we really are, flows from the heart. The enemy's assault is always aimed at our heart, so we must diligently train ourselves to nourish our new heart by listening to the King in His Word.

God wants to make you mighty so that the world will see that He is mighty. The first step in becoming one of God's mighty men is listening. We must train ourselves to listen to Him speak every day through His Word. Let's make this our top priority this next month.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. to steal, kill, and destroy
2. to give us life to the fullest
3. d. talk to your King
4. Our lives depend on it.
5. Yes. Answers will vary.
6. heart
7. distraction and busyness
8. It causes a person to be distracted and unable to focus on what is important.
9. slow down and be quiet
10. to build a time when you are focused on listening to the King
11. Any of the following would be acceptable: The Bible is not a rulebook, a map, a textbook, a self-help guidebook, or a magic book.
12. so we could know Him
13. Answers will vary.
14. the Bible
15. A priority is an activity we place over other activities.
16. time and place; format

LESSON 2

WHAT IS YOUR TOP PRIORITY?

THE SCOUT

Today could be the day I die, he told himself, although he had no intention of dying. It was, he thought, what a soldier should always think if he is to act with courage. All around him the air was thick with dust created by a horde of marching Philistine soldiers. The dust mixed with his sweat to create a sort of camouflage as he blended into the canyon walls, only his piercing blue eyes betraying him.

Tucked away in the corner of a crevasse in the Judean wilderness, Josheb¹ sat motionless as the Philistine Army passed less than 100 yards beneath him. He had been sent to scout out the enemy troops on behalf of King David. He knew he must report back both the strength of the enemy and the direction of their movements. By nightfall, he expected to complete his mission.

He had kept himself hidden well. He knew this countryside like the back of his hand. Not too many years previous, he had played among these rocks and crevasses, fighting the battle of David and Goliath over and over again. He, like all the other boys in Israel, idolized their young king. *What must it feel like to kill a giant?* Josheb had often wondered. And so, because he knew these hills like only a shepherd boy could, he had been chosen for this mission.

All day he avoided enemy patrols and raiding parties. From what he could tell, the Philistines had divided their forces into three groups. The largest group was just below him. After scouting the other two groups he concluded that they were small, diversionary parties of no more than 200 men. The group below him was no doubt the main force although he

¹ The Tachmonite. or, Josheb-bassebet, the Tachmonite, head of the three (1Chron. 11:11,12 27:2,32; 2 Sam. 23:8), he lifted up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.

could not yet determine their numerical strength. He knew it was a large group, but he would have to wait and use the cover of the setting sun to get a final count.

This was his chance to prove himself. He knew that Captain Joab had not approved of David's sending him out as a scout. According to Joab, Josheb was too young and inexperienced for this sort of thing. Joab didn't much like shepherds, a sentiment he kept to himself seeing that he served a shepherd king. Josheb had overheard the conversation between the King David and Joab.

"He has only been in the army for 6 months, my Lord. The situation is critical. Our intelligence has been so sketchy that we really don't even know which general is leading this attack. We must send someone who is skilled in reconnaissance! I mean, what if it's one of *his* brothers who's leading the assault? I don't think you want to meet him unprepared."

"Joab, I am very aware of the situation. Your concern has been noted. Let me ask you a question, Joab. Did you grow up in the wilderness chasing sheep, fighting off mountain lions, and shivering in the cold?"

"No, my Lord, I live in Jerusalem."

"And how many scouts come from Jerusalem? A place of learning and worship is seldom the haunt of scouts, unless, of course, you happen to be from the ranks of the poor and must learn the ways of subtlety early. Are you from the ranks of the poor, Joab?"

"No, my Lord, you know I come from a wealthy family."

"And that is why you underestimate the skills of a shepherd. When you live in the wilderness, you learn things. You learn every nook and cranny where you can hide your sheep from the wolves. You know the location of every bear den, and you know the smell of a mountain lion. You learn to read the winds and the clouds like a book. A shepherd could hide his flock of sheep for months if he had to, and the most trained military scout would never find him. You would be amazed what you learn when your life depends on it. All of your senses become sharper. A shepherd, Joab, is a born scout. Send him. He will not fail."

"Yes, my Lord."

And so, the king himself had ordered that Josheb be sent to scout the enemy troops. It was rumored that one of "his" brothers was leading this attack. Perhaps this is why the

king was wearing Goliath's sword. Why the Philistines had come, no one knew. Perhaps Dagon, their god, was displeased and they sought blood to appease him. Perhaps the fishing season had not gone so well and they needed supplies for the winter. Perhaps Lahmi, the brother of Goliath, was hoping that David would choose to fight him with a sling. Either way, it did not matter. What mattered was that the Philistines were in Judah, and Josheb was charged with the most important task of scouting out their strength and their strategy. *I cannot fail, Josheb reminded himself, for if I do, I have failed the king, and my family . . . and my God.*

Josheb was a devout youth. He was young and, like David, had spent many years in the wilderness as a shepherd. Also, like David, he was the youngest in his family. Most importantly, during his days in the wilderness, he had developed the most important friendship of his life, his friendship with Adonai². Like David, Josheb knew Adonai as a friend. He knew the Psalms of David by heart and would sing them in worship of Adonai, although his voice, unlike David's, was anything but pleasant. The sheep, however, did not seem to mind.

As he crouched in a crevasse just out of sight of the Philistines, Josheb remembered the first time his father sent him out into the fields to watch the sheep. It was a clear, cold winter night.

He remembered how he sat under the stars, shaking with cold. He remembered the worry in his mother's eyes before he left. He remembered the twinkle in his father's eyes and the laughter of his brothers, who told him of the ghosts that waited for him in the dark. He remembered sitting alone, imagining that every shadow was a wolf, or a bear, or . . . a ghost.

He remembered hearing the snap of a twig. Then came another, and at once he became very aware of a presence, a large presence moving stealthily through the undergrowth. Josheb grasped his staff. He had heard many stories of mountain lions and bears, but he had never encountered either face to face. He waited. He could hear his heart beating in his head; he could see his every breath as the cold air stung his lungs and formed smoke as it burst out of his mouth. He tried to hold his breath so as not to reveal his position.

"Josheb, is that you? My goodness, son, you are breathing as if you just hiked up a mountain! What's wrong? You aren't afraid, are you?"

² Adonai is the Hebrew word for "the Lord"

It was Papa. Josheb let out a loud sigh of relief.

"Yes, it's me. You can release your death grip on that staff."

"Papa, I didn't know you were coming. I was, uh, just making sure you weren't a bear."

"Good thing I wasn't, or I'd have spotted your breathing a mile away! Perhaps you thought I was one of those ghosts your brothers told you about." His father let out a laugh, and Josheb noted that the twinkle was not gone from his eye.

"I knew your mother was worried, so I promised her I would check on you. I also figured you would want this."

At that, Josheb's father tossed him a quilt.

"Thank you, Papa. It's so cold! I didn't think to bring an extra cloak."

Josheb and his father sat in the darkness for what seemed like forever, neither one speaking. The sky was littered with a million stars. They were so bright, and there were so many that they looked like a million shinning pebbles that someone had scattered across the sky.

"Josheb. You see those stars? You know who made them?"

"Yes, father, Adonai made them."

"He did. And you know what else, Josheb? Adonai, blessed be He, made you. When I look at those stars, I can't help but wonder how it is that Adonai is mindful of someone as small as I am. Yet, I know He knows me, and I know He knows you. More than that, I know that even the angels, as mighty as they are, are not made in Adonai's image. We alone are His image bearers. He made us a little lower than Himself.

"And that means He made us, my son, to rule over all of His creation. The sheep, the cows, the bear, the lion, the wolf—these are our subjects. A king, my son, does not fear his subjects; therefore, you need not fear. When the bear comes, or the lion, or whatever enemy it may be, remember that you, my son, are a king, a ruler, one of God's *mighty men*. Remember this, my son, and it will serve you well: it's not the might of the man that matters, but the might of his God. There is no God like our mighty God."

Josheb sat in stunned silence. He felt that he should say something, but nothing would come out. He was a king, a ruler, one of God’s mighty men? Is that what his father had called him? Finally, to break the awkward silence, he mumbled, “Adonai, blessed be He, has made all things.”

His father smiled, knowing that Josheb had much to learn, but confident that Adonai would teach him well.

Suddenly, Josheb’s father began to sing robustly:

*“O Adonai, our Adonai, how majestic is Thy name in all the earth,
Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens!
From the mouth of infants and nursing babes Thou hast established strength,
Because of Thine adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease.
O Adonai, our Adonai, how majestic is Thy name in all the earth!”*

When he finished, the echoes of his thunderous voice slowly faded to absolute silence. No noise. The sheep did not bay, the crickets did not chirp, and the trees stood perfectly still. Josheb imagined that Adonai himself had even hushed the angels to listen to his aged father’s psalm of praise.

And with that, his father stood, and left . . .

It seemed like only yesterday in Josheb’s memory . . . and yet, it felt like a lifetime ago, for at the moment, Josheb, a king, and one of God’s mighty men, sat alone, camouflaged in dirt, overlooking a canyon through which the enemies of Adonai marched.

SESSION NOTES

- Our Lives Depend on Our Hearing from the King
 - An analogy: the importance of a radio in warfare
 - If Jesus needed to hear from His Father, then so do we
 - We must hear the voice of the Shepherd
 - The strategy of the enemy: distraction and busyness
 - Our enemy distracts us with the noise of life
 - Our enemy keeps us from hearing the King by keeping us busy
 - T or F — “The unexamined life isn’t worth living.”
 - T or F — “There is more to life than increasing its speed.”
 - T or F — “Life is what happens to you while your busy making other plans.”
 “Beware of the bareness of a busy life.” —Socrates
 - If we are to hear from the King, we must learn to slow down and be quiet
- **We Hear from the King in His Word**
 - We must spend time listening to Him in the Bible
 - The Bible reveals the glory and grace of God
 - God gave us the Bible so we could know Him
 - God speaks to us through His Word
 - God’s Word is unlike any other book
 - The Bible is God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16)
 - The Bible is like a hammer (Jer. 23:29)

- The Bible is like a double-edged **sword** (Heb. 4:12)
- Listening to Him in the Word must be our **top priority** daily
 - A priority is an **activity** we place **above** other activities
 - _____ Playing video games
 - _____ Doing homework
 - _____ Talking with friends online
 - _____ Practicing a sport or talent (guitar, piano, basketball, etc.)
 - _____ Going to church
 - Pick a consistent **time** and **place** to meet alone with God
 - Find an **early** time
 - Find a **quiet** place
 - **Use** a **format**—know what you’re going to do
 - Pray and ask the King to help you listen to Him as you read your Bible.
 - Read the assigned passage, listening for the King to speak to you.
 - Write down the verse that “speaks” to you and record what you hear the King saying to you in that verse. Keep these verses and thoughts together in a notebook.
 - Finish by writing down any special prayer requests that you have and then close in prayer.
 - Keep your notebook with you throughout the day and read over your verse two or three times during the day. Write down any new thoughts the King gives you about your verse or a way the verse was especially useful in your life.

Listening to the king speak to you through His word must become your top priority.

THIS MONTH'S ASSIGNMENT

Read the section entitled "How to Make the Most of Your Devotions." Then spend time each day reading through the devotional passages provided at the end of this book. Record the things that you learn, noting verses that have an impact on your relationship with the Lord. Be prepared to discuss some of your observations next month.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR DEVOTIONS

WHAT ARE DEVOTIONS?

Having devotions simply means spending time with God in the Word and prayer. When you "have your devotions," you spend time alone with God praying, reading the Bible, and thinking about what God is saying to you through the Word.

WHY SHOULD I HAVE DEVOTIONS?

The goal of life is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut. 6:5). Having your devotions is one of the best ways to help you get to know God, and as you get to know Him, you will begin to love Him. Having your devotions helps you fulfill the purpose for which God created you!

WHEN SHOULD I HAVE MY DEVOTIONS?

Many people choose to have their devotions in the morning to start the day off thinking about God. Giving your devotions first priority in your day also protects you from getting so busy during the day that you forget to spend time with God. However, this is not a hard and fast rule. People have their devotions at many different times of the day: morning, afternoon, and night. The important thing is to have a set time when you will have your devotions. Think about your schedule and plan a time to have your devotions when you are alert and unhurried. Also, pick a place where you will not be interrupted so you can focus on being with God.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I HAVE MY DEVOTIONS?

For the purpose of this study, we have provided five days of devotions per week. Certainly we need to seek God every day, but on some days you may spend extra time in corporate worship at your church or in Bible study with others. As with any priority, you will want to spend time with God as often as possible. Don't be surprised if you find yourself wanting to spend time in prayer and reading the Word multiple times in a single day.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL IT TAKE?

How long your devotions take will vary. It could take as long as an hour, or it could take only a few minutes. How long or how short your devotions are should not be your focus. However, it does take time to build a relationship with God. Don't approach your devotions as something you do so you can check it off your to do list. If anyone deserves our quality time, it is God!

HOW DO I HAVE DEVOTIONS?

There are many ways to have your devotions, but in this study you will be following two different formats. The first format is entitled "Read with Your Heart." An explanation of how to fill out the form can be found at the beginning of the devotional section at the end of this book. The second format is simply working through a book of the Bible and is self-explanatory.

If you find yourself having trouble understanding how to do your devotions, ask your parents, your small group leader, or your pastor for help. Once you have completed this study, these same people can give you suggestions of additional resources to help in your devotions.

LESSON 2 QUIZ

1. According to John 10:10, what is Satan's goal? _____
2. According to that same verse, what is Jesus' goal? _____
3. _____ What is the first thing you need to do every day?
 - a. eat breakfast
 - b. brush your teeth
 - c. make your bed
 - d. talk to your King
4. Why is important that we hear from our King? _____
5. Was talking to the Father important to Jesus? (John 5:19; 12:49) _____
What makes you say this? _____
6. Complete the following core truth: Whoever gets your "ear" will eventually get your _____.
7. What two strategies of the enemy keep us from hearing the voice of the King?
_____ and _____
8. Why do you think that noise is one of the enemy's choice weapons? _____

9. If we are to hear from the King, then what two things must we learn to do?
_____ and _____
10. What is the first step in learning to slow down and be quiet? _____

11. List three things the Bible is *not*.
It is not _____.
It is not _____.
It is not _____.
12. Why did God give us the Bible? _____
13. What do you think is the difference between "knowing" God and "knowing about" God?

14. What is the primary way in which God communicates with us? _____
15. What is a priority? _____
16. What two things must you do if you are to make listening to God speak through His Word a "top priority"?
 - a. Pick a consistent _____ and _____ to meet alone with God.
 - b. Use a _____: know what you're going to do.