



Covert Operation

Scripture:

2 Samuel 23: 13-17

13 And three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim.

14 And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.

15 And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!

16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord.

17 And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

Introduction:

HAVE ON HAND: A Sword [or toy sword] and a water pitcher filled with water.

As a side note:

It is our practice to read the scripture verses directly from the Bible; then explain as we go along in the lesson. This way children learn early that the Bible is the source and not a story book. Discerning fact from fiction is a challenge and the young mind needs to be conditioned to discern the differences.

King David had an elite force that the Bible calls “three mighty men” and in 2 Chronicles they are referred to as “three mighty men of valour”. Additionally he had a large army.

The elite force has several notable battles and skirmishes recorded in the Bible. But one act is worthy of remembrance as a “covert operation.”

This operation sent a message to King David, to the Philistine enemies down in the Valley, and a message to the people overcome by the enemy in Bethlehem as well. It is so noteworthy that God had this act recorded for us to learn from it thousands of years later.

In the Valley of Rephaim

In the Valley of Rephaim the enemy, the Philistine, encamped. They stood between King David’s army and his beloved hometown of Bethlehem.

Three years of war had passed. Territorial lines had changed repeatedly. Some lands had to be retaken on more than one occasion. It had been a long war.

David and his army had setup their command post in the caves of Adullam in the bare rocky hills elevated so they could see the enemies movements and be safe for the time being. King David was a weary soul, longing for home.

There had been great victories, but there was more fighting to do, more lives would be lost, more ground to gain before the land of Israel would have peace again.

King David is facing the Valley of Rephaim between him and his hometown.

The name Rephaim means “giants” in the Hebrew. This had been the area where young David had slain Goliath the Philistine earlier.

King David is confronted with the Valley of Giants between his hideout in the caves and his Hometown where he had grown up, shepherding, and drinking water from the wells of Bethlehem.

THERE WAS A BARRIER BETWEEN KING DAVID AND HIS HOME.

Have you ever done something you KNOW was not right and HIDDEN it? Especially something you don't want your parents to know or something that even your best friend does not know because you KNOW it was wrong.

You might get a very sick feeling down in your stomach; you might be so uncomfortable that you don't sleep well or even are not hungry. This is called "conviction."

YOU CAN HANDLE "CONVICTION" ONE OF TWO WAYS. YOU CAN EITHER CONFESS TO THE LORD THAT YOU HAVE SINNED AND TAKE DOWN THE BARRIER THAT IS UP BETWEEN YOU AND HIM OR YOU CAN IGNORE IT AND HOPE THINGS GET BETTER AND NO ONE EVER FINDS OUT ANYWAY.

Thing is God always knows. He is NOT out to "get you" He is trying to get you into a right relationship with Him.

Risking All for the King

King David and his army were headquartered up in the rocks and he was so homesick!

He wanted things back to "normal"; to be like they were when life was simpler.

King David says out loud: *Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!*

When King David commented about the well, he did not expect to get a drink from it until the nation had Bethlehem back from the enemy. However, he underestimated the love of his mighty men of valor.

2 Samuel 23: 16a And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David:...

It appears from scripture that they didn't tell King David what they were planning to do. They didn't tell anyone except the very elite group of three that were going to implement the plan. What if they had failed? These were his elite forces; his top command and very best soldiers. Why would they risk all for such a seemingly insignificant matter like a glass of water? They were getting water from someplace up there in the caves. A spring perhaps, or a brook down on the edge of the valley supplied water. So why risk their lives?

[Here I use an Excalibur Sword in one hand and have a water pitcher in the other; Illustrate as you speak how awkward and dangerous it would have been to fight your way through enemy lines with a sword in one hand and a pitcher in the other; especially on the way back with the water in the pitcher.]

But nonetheless, they pull off a covert operation. With swords in hand and an empty water pitcher in a backpack the three men fight their way through the enemy lines. They get to Bethlehem, fill the pitcher with water and have to fight their way back through the enemy lines again plus not spill the water.

All of these risks were taken just to please their King! What kind of love and devotion is this?

HOW MUCH DO YOU LOVE YOUR GREAT KING?

John 10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE AND TOOK THE PUNISHMENT WE DESERVED UPON HIMSELF; YET, DO WE LOVE HIM ENOUGH TO GIVE A LITTLE OF OURSELVES, MUCH LESS OUR LIVES?

Reaction of the King

2 Samuel 23: 16b-17 ... and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

King David was astounded.

What he does next could be easily misunderstood in our culture. We might jump to the conclusion that he was angry or unappreciative of these three top mighty men risking their lives without his knowledge to “pull a stunt” like this!

After all, what if they had been killed?

David considered the Bethlehem water precious. This demonstration of love for him by these three mighty men could not be spent on himself.

King David could show no higher respect than this overwhelming act of gratitude than by what he does next. He pours the water out as a sacrifice to Almighty God.

THE THREE MIGHTY MEN COULD HAVE HAD NO GREATER THANK YOU NOR GREATER REWARD THAN THAT OF THEIR FRUITS OF THEIR SERVICE BEING SACRIFICED TO THE GOD OF HEAVEN.

THE WATER IS MORE PRECIOUS AS AN OFFERING THAN IF HE HAD KEPT IT AS A GIFT.

Conclusion:

In the Valley of the Giants there is a barrier between us and the God of Heaven.

But ONE Mighty Man of Valor, the Lord Jesus, not only risked it all, but knowingly went in and did give the ultimate sacrifice of Himself in order to give us the Living Water.

Good news, He had the power to bring Himself back to life so that you and I can have life.

Activity:

Build a “Barrier” of cardboard boxes.

On each box tape a picture of something that would be hindrance/sin/problem that can get between you and God.

Have a child pick up a box and add to the wall as you discuss the issue.

For example a box could have a picture of two children fighting over a toy. Or you could have a toy in the box or a picture on the box of a toy. Then discuss the aspect of anger or selfishness. Then have a child stack the box on the wall.

Example of boxes to represent:

- Box with crayons [Discuss how we get mad about crayons that someone else takes...what a silly matter to be selfish about!]
- McDonald’s sack [Discuss how we get ANGRY at parents when we don’t get to go to eat where WE want to]
- A Computer [Discuss how we spend too much time/distraction & end up being disobedient about time limits.]
- A box of dirty clothes [Clean up your room.—obedience].
- Plus more!

Keep adding as many boxes as you like.

Add enough boxes until there is a wall built big enough to hide behind. Then discuss ways to get down the wall/barrier:

- Keep building more boxes on it
- Ignore it
- Knock it down
 - By praying for forgiveness
 - Don’t be a repeat offender [This is an introduction to repentant behavior!]