

all nations; Zion shall blossom as a rose, and the nations flock to her standard, and the kingdoms of this world shall soon become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (*History of the Church*, 3:397).

When that glorious day comes, may each of us have some part in it, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir sang "Praise to the Man."

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### President Monson

We have just heard from Elder David B. Haight of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, followed by the choir singing "Praise to the Man."

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "I Stand All Amazed," following which we shall hear from Elder Monte J. Brough, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy.

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The choir and congregation sang "I Stand All Amazed."

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## Elder Monte J. Brough

### David's mighty men

As a young man in one of my first Primary classes, I was fortunate enough to have a leader introduce me to the Old Testament story of David's mighty men. This is a detailed account of the actions of the finest soldiers under David's command. At one time, only thirty-seven men of the huge armies of Israel were considered good enough to receive the coveted title of "mighty man" (see 2 Samuel 23:39).

Let us learn more about the qualities of this outstanding group of soldiers. In 1 Chronicles we read, "They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of a bow" (1 Chronicles 12:2).

They were men "fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains" (1 Chronicles 12:8).

These mighty men had developed the skills of a warrior to a very high degree. They were determined and, as with the faces of lions, completely without fear. They were prepared for any battle.

The impression upon me, as the achievements and exploits of these

mighty men were explained by my teacher, was profound. In fact, while my friends played their fantasy games as cowboys or spacemen or athletic stars, I imagined that I had been selected by King David as one of his mighty men. I even fashioned wood swords out of plaster laths and spears out of long willow sticks and pretended to go to war against the enemies of the king. Funny—as I think about it, the enemy was just about always my two little brothers. The story of the preparation and devotion of these mighty men has been a source of inspiration to me since my early years.

### Men of loyalty and initiative

One inspiring account tells of three of these mighty men who overheard King David long for a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem. Apparently, in Bethlehem at that time was a well of particularly refreshing water of which the king wished for a drink. The king did not place a demand or order for the water; he simply expressed a desire for a taste of the cool, refreshing liquid from the Bethlehem well.

Without command or assignment or even duty, three of the mighty men

broke through enemy lines, at great personal risk, to travel to Bethlehem. They drew water out of the well and returned, again at great risk through the enemy lines, to bring the wonderful refreshment of Bethlehem water to David. David was so overcome by this demonstrated act of personal, unsolicited service that he refused to drink the water. He considered the act so brave and wonderful that he poured the water upon the ground. The scripture says, "He . . . poured it out unto the Lord" (2 Samuel 23:14-17; see also 1 Chronicles 11:17-19).

Isn't that an inspiring story of dedication and volunteer service? Such an act of loyalty and initiative without command was common among these men. Is it any wonder that these mighty men would become heroes to a young boy? Let us examine other qualities and contributions of these mighty men.

#### **Men who understood the times**

They were "men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chronicles 12:32).

This special understanding of the times and the resultant ability to know what Israel ought to do are most significant. In other words, these mighty men were informed and educated in matters relating to the conditions of their times. How did they gain this understanding? Many of the tribes or states of Israel were numbered among the thirty-seven. They brought additional strength through their cultural diversity to the armies of Israel. Tempered by difficult personal experiences, several of which are accounted in the stories of the thirty-seven, they had come to understand their times. This allowed them to better know the needs of their people and the solutions to many of the challenges of the times. So with this understanding, they came to know what Israel ought to do.

#### **Men of single heart and pure motives**

They were men "which could keep rank: they were not of double heart" (1 Chronicles 12:33).

These mighty men understood the need for an organization which would stay in place during difficult and challenging times. These men did not have a "double heart" which compelled them to seek their own personal interest ahead of that of Israel. Because of their single heart, manifest by pure motives, they did not aspire to a different position or rank within the armies of David. Each of the thirty-seven could absolutely depend upon the others to fulfill the assignment which came to them, whatever their rank. They understood their responsibilities and kept that place.

#### **Men of perfect hearts**

The final quality to which I wish to refer is one which we might assert as the most important quality of these mighty men. Again we read:

"All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king" (1 Chronicles 12:38).

This quality was the condition of their "perfect heart," which was demonstrated by complete devotion to building the ancient kingdom of Israel. They had no agenda, personal or otherwise, which was separate from their commitment to the king and the building of Israel. They understood the divine nature of David's station and offered their complete loyalty and devotion to him. Theirs was a perfect heart. So were the mighty men of Israel!

#### **Other mighty men and women**

Later I learned the stories of others whose character would make them mighty men. Consider the story of the

development and growth of mighty Peter. He was carefully nurtured by the Lord to gain the skills and commitment which would allow him to become a mighty man. His ultimate achievement of a perfect heart is made manifest by his response to the third question:

"Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee" (John 21:17).

And there is mighty Apostle Paul, whose courage and initiative are summarized in these words of more sure prophecy:

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:6-7). What mighty men!

Lest anyone misunderstand, let us also include one of the most beautiful examples of the qualities of the mighty men. This statement was offered by a woman with mighty qualities, Ruth:

"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried" (Ruth 1:16-17). What a mighty woman!

David himself, as a youth, provided an example of the qualities of the mighty men he would later lead. As he faced the giant warrior, he affirmed:

"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel" (1 Samuel 17:45). What a mighty youth!

Of mortal men, Joseph Smith may best exemplify the qualities of the mighty men. His story of sacrifice and commitment can also be summarized in one of his final statements:

"I am going like a lamb to the slaughter; but I am calm as a summer's morning; I have a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all

men" (D&C 135:4). What a mighty, mighty man!

### Modern mighty warriors

Even now I am searching for additional examples of mighty men and mighty women. Let me tell you what I know about the General Authorities and general auxiliary leaders of the Church—men and women. I'm not sure they can throw a spear with either hand, as did the mighty men, but they bring to their assignments a lifetime of excellent preparation. The families of these modern mighty warriors have not been spared the challenges of life and living. Through life's experiences, which include tragedy, sickness, accident, poverty, and, in some cases, even infirmities of age, these mighty servants have come to an understanding of the times.

These men and women, including their valiant and supportive spouses, have achieved high levels of experience in law, medicine, homemaking, education, business, and agriculture. While certainly not without challenges, they have been remarkably successful in their roles as parents and heads of households. They have contributed collectively many years of full-time service in the Church. They have served as members of state legislatures, city governments, school boards, and national and international professional organizations. Their years of community service include service with humanitarian and educational organizations and raising voluntary funds for a great variety of community causes.

As with the mighty of ancient days, these modern mighty come from many states or nations and bring a great diversity of experience and culture. This collective experience includes hundreds of years of service living in countries other than the one of their birth. Some, as they sit before you, are suffering the ravages of jet lag and fatigue from the enormous travel requirements which are

part of their assignments. Many have gathered from all over the world and, in a few days, will again disperse to most of the nations of the earth. In most cases they will leave their children and grandchildren behind as they pursue the demands placed upon them by their single heart. I assure you that these mighty have come to an understanding of these modern times and of what the Church and the membership of the Church ought to do. This understanding and knowledge are not achieved through their substantial intellect alone but through the development of their "perfect hearts."

I suggest that all who listen to my voice would benefit by an examination of the lives of those we sustain as general officers of the Church. You will find some important examples among them and come to know those who have a "perfect heart." What mighty men and women!

### He who is mightiest of all

Please know that I stand as a witness of Him who is mightiest of all and

whom we most want to emulate. Review again the Book of Mormon record of His mighty declaration of devotion and obedience to His Father:

"I am Jesus Christ. . . I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning" (3 Nephi 11:10-11).

Brothers and sisters, during this conference please listen to the voices of the modern mighty. They speak with a single, perfect heart which, I promise you, gives them an understanding of our times and of what the Church ought to do.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Monson

A mighty man, Elder Monte J. Brough, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

We'll now have the privilege to hear from another mighty man. Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

## Elder L. Tom Perry

The chorus of Joseph L. Townsend's stirring hymn text provides timeless advice about what to do when we come to a fork in the road of life. We should always

Choose the right! Choose the right!  
Let wisdom mark the way before.  
In its light, choose the right!  
And God will bless you evermore.  
["Choose the Right," *Hymns*, no. 239]

### An inspiring CTR tie tack

On a recent trip to New Zealand, I met with a mission president who wore a beautiful tie tack with the inspiring

CTR, or "Choose the Right," emblem. I had the impression that there must be a story behind this unique CTR pin. When I returned home, I wrote him a thank-you letter and asked him about his tie tack. I received this answer:

"You are very perceptive. Yes, there is a story behind the tie tack I'm wearing. I have a number of tie tacks I really prize. They have been gifts from my children, my wife, and friends. However, I choose to wear this beautiful silver shield inlaid with lovely blue turquoise, with the inspiring CTR emblem of our Primary.

"Why? I suppose it started back when I was a bishop and had an inter-