

# 1 Chronicles 11:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: howbeit he attained not to the first three.

## Analysis

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**Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: howbeit he attained not to the first three**—This verse addresses Abishai, who commanded 'the second three' but couldn't match the legendary exploits of the first triad. The Hebrew nikkabad ('honoured') indicates earned respect through deed, not inherited status.

This ranking system reveals how God's kingdom values both exceptional achievement and faithful service in one's assigned place. Abishai didn't resent his position but excelled within it, becoming captain. Paul later echoes this principle: different gifts, same Spirit, each member essential (1 Cor 12:4-11). God's economy rewards faithfulness in our calling, not comparison with others.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern military hierarchies often featured elite units with ranked warriors. Israel's system under David mirrored these structures while emphasizing that all strength comes from Yahweh, not human prowess alone. These rankings preserved military history for future generations.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How can you serve faithfully in your role without comparing yourself to those with different gifts?
2. What does this verse teach about accepting our God-given place in the body of Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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|--------------------------|---------------------|----|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------|-----------------|----|----------|-----------------|-----|-------------|-----------------|--|
| הַלּוּ                   | מִתְּהִלָּה         | וְ | בַּשְׁלֹשׁ          | הַ                  | מִן                           | בַּשְׁנַׁי                 | וּמְ | בַּשְׁנַׁי      | וְ | נִכְבֵּד | וְ              | לֹא | מִתְּהִלָּה | וְ              |  |
| H4480                    | <b>Of the three</b> |    | <b>than the two</b> |                     | <b>he was more honourable</b> |                            |      |                 |    | H1961    |                 | H0  |             |                 |  |
|                          | H7969               |    | H8147               |                     | H3513                         |                            |      |                 |    |          |                 |     |             |                 |  |
| לֹא                      | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם     | וְ | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם     | וְ                  | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם               | וְ                         | לֹא  | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם | וְ | לֹא      | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם | וְ  | לֹא         | בְּאַנְשָׁוֹתָם |  |
| for he was their captain | H8269               |    | H5704               | <b>Of the three</b> | H3808                         | <b>howbeit he attained</b> |      |                 |    | H935     |                 |     |             |                 |  |
|                          |                     |    |                     | H7969               |                               |                            |      |                 |    |          |                 |     |             |                 |  |

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