

2 Samuel 2 - The Lord's Timing & Preparation

Saul is dead - now, maybe David can step into the throne as king of Israel

Does God really hear me? Does He really answer prayers?

2 Samuel 2:1-2 In the course of time, **David inquired of the LORD**. "Shall I go up to one of the towns of Judah?" he asked. **The LORD said, "Go up."** David asked, **"Where shall I go?"** "To Hebron," the LORD answered. 2 **So David went** up there with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel.

There are some built-in assumptions [call it FAITH] when we inquire of the LORD:

- 1) He hears me - **David inquired**
- 2) He answers me - **The LORD said**
- 3) He has a plan - **Where shall I go?**
- 4) I will do what He says - **So David went**

David addressed the LORD this way - "You who answer prayer"

- Psa 65:2 NIV You who answer prayer, to you all people will come.

Sometimes prayers are answered incrementally

2 Samuel 2:3-7 David also took the men who were with him, each with his family, and they settled in Hebron and its towns. 4 **Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.**



Jabesh Gilead - Sowing and Reaping

When David was told that it was the men of Jabesh Gilead who had buried Saul, 5 he sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead to say to them, **"The LORD bless you for showing this kindness to Saul your master by burying him. 6 May the LORD now show you kindness and faithfulness, and I too will show you the same favor because you have done this. 7 Now then, be strong and brave, for Saul your master is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."**

- There were still many who were loyal to Saul
- David is giving **honor** to Jabesh-Gilead, but also maybe trying to gain **political** capital for joining Israel in the north and Judah in the south...Israel is very much aligned with Saul

Principle of sowing and reaping

- Psa 18:25-26 NIV To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, (26) to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the devious you show yourself shrewd.

Sometimes it seems like people interfere with answered prayer

2 Samuel 2:8 Meanwhile, Abner son of Ner, the commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-Bosheth son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim. 9 He made him king over Gilead, Ashuri and Jezreel, and also over Ephraim, Benjamin and all Israel 10 Ish-Bosheth son of Saul was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David. 11 The length of time David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

- **Does God hear my prayer?**
- How do things like this keep happening?
 - Ordained as king 15 years ago by Samuel
 - Spent years as a fugitive during the time Saul was trying to kill him
 - Now Saul is dead and seems like an easy path to the kingship -- but NO -- Abner comes on the scene and makes Ish-Bosheth king of Israel
- It will be another 7 years before he is ordained as king over Israel

The *plans* of the LORD linked to *timing* and *preparation of our heart*

Jeremiah 29:10-14 This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. 11 For **I know the plans I have for you,**" declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 **Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you,**" declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and **will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.**"

- **There is a plan**
- **There is a thing about timing**
 - When 70 years are completed...I will bring you back...for I know the plans I have
- **There is also a thing about the work that needed to be accomplished in them**
 - You will call upon me, you will seek me

We see God's timing and working in the hearts of men all through scripture

- David was 15 years before becoming King of Judah, then another 7 before becoming king of Israel...(nearly 22 years)
- God promised Abram and Sarai a child, but they had to wait 25 years to get him.
- God warned Noah of the flood, but it was many years before it came
- Jacob waited 14 years to get the wife he wanted
- Joseph spent years in prison before God's purpose for him was realized
- Moses was 40 years in the wilderness before leading the children of Israel out of Egypt

God's timing is perfect

- Gal 4:4 NIV But **when the set time had fully come**, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

He works in us what is pleasing to him

- Hebrews 13:20-21 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, 21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and **may he work in us what is pleasing to him**, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

God will even use unfortunate events for His purpose and plan

2 Samuel 2:12 Abner son of Ner, together with the men of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, left Mahanaim and went to Gibeon. 13 Joab son of Zeruiah and David's men went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat down on one side of the pool and one group on the other side. 14 Then Abner said to Joab, "Let's have some of the young men get up and fight hand to hand in front of us." "All right, let them do it," Joab said. 15 So they stood up and were counted off—twelve men for Benjamin and Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, and twelve for David. 16 Then each man grabbed his opponent by the head and thrust his dagger into his opponent's side, and they fell down together. So that place in Gibeon was called Helkath Hazzurim. 17 The battle that day was very fierce, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by David's men.

- Helkath Hazzurim = **Field of strong men, or field of heroes**

The civil war is bitter - Asahel tries to capture/kill Abner and is killed himself

2 Samuel 2:18 The three sons of Zeruiah [*Chronicles 2:13-16 - she was David's sister*] were there: Joab, Abishai and Asahel. Now Asahel was as fleet-footed as a wild gazelle. 19 He chased Abner, turning neither to the right nor to the left as he pursued him. 20 Abner looked behind him and asked, "Is that you, Asahel?" "It is," he answered. 21 Then Abner said to him, "Turn aside to the right or to the left; take on one of the young men and strip him of his weapons." But Asahel would not stop chasing him. 22 Again Abner warned Asahel, "Stop chasing me! Why should I strike you down? How could I look your brother Joab in the face?" 23 But Asahel refused to give up the pursuit; so **Abner thrust the butt of his spear into Asahel's stomach, and the spear came out through his back. He fell there and died on the spot.** And every man stopped when he came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died. 24 But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner, and as the sun was setting, they came to the hill of Ammah, near Giah on the way to the wasteland of Gibeon. 25 Then the men of Benjamin rallied behind Abner. They formed themselves into a group and took their stand on top of a hill. **26 Abner called out to Joab, "Must the sword devour forever? Don't you realize that this will end in bitterness? How long before you order your men to stop pursuing their brothers?"** 27 Joab answered, **"As surely as God lives, if you had not spoken, the men would have continued the pursuit of their brothers until morning."** 28 So Joab blew the trumpet, and all the men came to a halt; they no longer pursued Israel, nor did they fight anymore. 29 All that night Abner and his men marched through the Arabah. They crossed the Jordan, continued through the whole Bithron and came to Mahanaim. 30 Then Joab returned from pursuing Abner and assembled all his men. Besides Asahel, nineteen of David's men were found missing. 31 But David's men had killed three hundred and sixty Benjamites who were with Abner. 32 They took Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb at Bethlehem. Then Joab and his men marched all night and arrived at Hebron by daybreak.

- **The destructive nature of conflict**
 - Must the sword devour forever
 - Don't you realize this will end in bitterness
 - Stop pursuing your brothers

- God's purposes are not thwarted - even by unfortunate events
 - Eventually it is **Abner** who brings all of Israel under David's kingship