

2nd Samuel Ch 4-5

The drama of David's life just never seems to quit. Even as we turn to these pages tonight, as if there hasn't been all kinds of situations gone south in his life, high times and low, though now he's right with God and tuned in to the Spirit of God, he finds himself in a twisted triangle of murder and deception. People plotting and scheming according to whatever they conceive to be in their own best interests regardless of the expense that it may be to another. And it's crazy the lengths that man will go to in order to get ahead in this life, but, "*What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*" Mark 8:36. And so often the cost isn't counted in advance, the process by which I approach a matter isn't considered or weighed in the balance, I just see a situation that looks good to me, and I go for it. And so often when placed in the scales in retrospect and weighed in the balance I'm found wanting. My motives weren't right, there was an undercurrent of this agenda that simply served my own personal interests. And that's the type of things that are swirling around David's life right now, not so much from David himself (again by God's grace he's tuned in right now) but all about him is cunning craftiness, and deceitful plotting.

Last week we seen both Asahel's death, and Abner's murder, Abner had killed Asahel in a combat situation after seeking to reason with him to turn him away but he refused to turn back and so Abner jabbed him with the blunt end of his spear. And Asahel was running upon him so fast that as the spear was held out against him, he just impaled himself so that it went out the back side of his body and he died on the spot. Now Asahel was Joab's brother (and Joab was basically the general of David's army), now in the meantime Abner had opted to defect to David's army (not only because it was the will of God for David to be king) but because Ishbosheth (Saul's only surviving son) had accused Abner (who had placed him in power) of sleeping with one of his father's concubines. Now that was a serious offence because for one man to take the concubine of another man was to say, I'm now in his place, so Ishbosheth basically accused Abner of treason. So Abner said, "I don't have to take this, I placed you over Israel, and I can take Israel out from under you!" And so he held a meeting with David whereby the nation could come together under David's reign, David made a feast for him and the meeting was resolved in peace. Now, no sooner than Abner left, Joab came in from a raid and when he found out that Abner (who had killed his brother) had been there in David's courts and David let him go in peace, he went berserk.

And he said, "David, what are you doing, don't you know that Abner is nothing but a liar, all he wants to do is come into this place, spy out your weaknesses and take you out!" And so what did Joab do? He called to Abner to return to settle out some last minute details of the negotiation and since Abner believed things to be resolved between him and David, he felt no threat regarding Joab's invitation, turned around, Joab took him outside the city gates and killed him exactly as Abner had killed his brother.

Now I bring all that up again for one reason, look at vs 25 of ch 3 (read). Joab accuses Abner of being a liar, and a deceiver, he says, "Abner, came to deceive you." Now look at vs 26 (read).

What did Joab just do, he turned right around and lied to Abner and deceived David, we read where he called this meeting, “But David did not know it.” He became guilty of the very thing he accused Abner of, cunning craftiness and deceitful plotting.

Jesus would put it like this, “*Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?*” In other words the very things we’re so anxious to accuse other people of, we’re guilty of ourselves, you know how it’s so easy for you to spot some sort of sin in the life of another? Because you’ve had a nice tight close up of that sin in your own life even if it’s never resonated out of the cavity of your heart, Paul spoke of how we’re guilty of the very things we accuse others of, and here we see that in Joab’s life. The very thing he accused Abner of, he stepped out and did, and so Abner died as a fool. Outside the city of refuge, Jesus Christ is our city of refuge, our hiding place, our safe haven, to step outside the confines of Christ is foolishness and only invites the wages of our sin upon us, death. Now we read in vs 1 of Ch 4.

Vs1

Now in vs 39 of ch 3 we seen where David said that he was weak because of the behavior of his nephew’s, namely Joab and Abishai for killing Abner. And here we’re reading really a contrast in that Ishbosheth lost his heart when he heard that Abner had died. Why, David may’ve been weak and sickened over the fact of what these men did, but his trust and his confidence was in the Lord, he knew that God had called him to be in the position that he was in, he was anointed as the king. However with Ishbosheth that wasn’t so, he wasn’t anointed to be the king, he was a puppet and a pawn at best, and Abner had been the man who had propped him up and placed him on the throne. And so when Abner was killed, his heart sank, why? In short, because his trust was in man, you see, David trusted *in* the Lord, sought counsel *from* the Lord, but we read no such thing of Ishbosheth. He trusted in man, sought counsel and confidence in man, and so when that man was taken away from him, he was hollowed out, there was nothing more for him to stand on. Question; in whom to do you place your trust, your spouse, your employer, some establishment or organization, you’re only setting yourself up for a fall, because should those things be stripped away from you, you’ll collapse. The bible says, “*It is better to trust in the LORD, Than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in princes.*” Ps 118:8-9. And again, “*Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish.*” And that’s what we’re seeing here, Ishbosheth placed his trust in a man in whom there was no help, and now that he’s returned to the earth, his plans have perished. Ishbosheth was weak because he placed his confidence in man. How much better to trust in the Lord, to place your confidence in the Lord, Isaiah tells us, “*The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.*” Isa 58:11

So as to where there is no help in man, the Lord will guide you continually and strengthen your inner man, satisfying your soul in drought.

Vs 2-4

Now we want to remember this name, “Mephibosheth”, because he’ll pop up again later on (not tonight), but he’s introduced here seemingly to sort of set the stage for the coming event. We remember the epic battle in which Saul and Jonathon lost their lives, now it was the custom of that day that if a new ruler usurped authority, everyone in the previous ruler’s family died. Bros, sisters, cousins, sons, daughters, everyone, there would be no rival to the throne, and when it was heard that Saul and Jonathon had died, the family nurse immediately picked up Jonathon’s son knowing the Philistines would be on their way and if they found him they’d kill him. But she tripped or, somehow something happened and he fell, and either dislocated something or some break didn’t properly mend, the point being that there was no real prospect for the throne outside of Ishbosheth, because the next in line was a now 12yr old boy who was lame.

Vs 5-12

They didn’t count the cost to themselves in getting “a head” in life. These boys thought to themselves, “Ishbosheth is just a puppet, Abner is gone, the only thing that keeps David from ascending to the throne is this weak and anemic ruler who’s nothing more than a thorn in David’s side.” (Because Mephibosheth isn’t an option). “So if we take Ishbosheth out, and bring proof of his death to David, then surely we’ll be heralded as heroes and set up on the retirement plan of a lifetime, his head to David will be like the winning power ball numbers.” So they went in, in the heat of the day, unsuspecting Ishbosheth had laid down for his noon-day siesta, these 2 captains come to his house, finding him sleeping in his bed, stab him through the heart and cut off his head. Cold blooded murder. If the murder of Abner was a heinous crime, then this murder was over the top (not that there’s any other kind of murder) but the point being that the only “crime” Ishbosheth was guilty of was being Saul’s son. He had broken no law, injured no one, wasn’t given any opportunity to defend himself, and then these guys try and justify their murder by this masquerade of spiritual jargon, “The Lord has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants.” Blah, Blah, Blah, these guys are plastic, and David sees right through this religious mumbo jumbo.

You see they’re seeking to justify the means by the end, was it true that Ishbosheth was the only remaining descendant of Saul fit for the throne? Yes, did this clear the path for David’s ascension? Seemingly, then what’s the problem, the problem is that these guys murdered an innocent man in cold blood, and so the end that results in good for David’s life, is never justified by a sinful means. Paul asked the question in Rom 3 “*For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come’?*” Rom 3:7-8 In other words, if God uses even my sin to bring about His good, then what’s the problem?

The problem is that it's sin that nailed Jesus to the cross, now we know it was love that held Him there, but it was sin that nailed Him there. So then Paul says as he goes on in the book of Romans and he picks up in Ch 6 with the thought of God's grace abounding more wherever sin abounds, and he says, "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" Rom 6:1-4 Or to understand it another way, all things will work together for good to those who love God and are the called according to His purposes, but God will never allow us to justify sin in our lives, no matter what seems to be the outcome. It goes against the grain of all God is to try and somehow rationalize evil that good may come. These men murdered an innocent man and tried to justify it by saying that in the end it was better for everyone. "and So really David you should see us that the Lord's avengers on your behalf."

But David just couldn't go there, why? #1 Because David never considered Saul his enemy, he had the opportunity to take him out himself more than once, but never did. Saul considered David an enemy, but David never considered Saul an enemy. So there goes that argument, but then on top of that, #2 David quickly calls these guys attention to the fact that he's never needed any man to redeem his life from adversity. Notice it there in vs 9 (it's a good portion to underline) David says, "It's the Lord who has redeemed my life from all adversity." These 10yrs plus of exile in David's life, he never tried to help God's plan along by murdering people and discarding them along the way to sort of hurry things along. God has done the whole thing, so after all those years of hardship do you think David's suddenly going to approve of that which he's spent a majority of his life seeking to refute. God doesn't need our help, He's well able to promote those whom He chooses, and lower those who are in His way.

And so David says, Don't think you guys have done me any favors, and he calls to their remembrance that incident that happened with the Amalekite that sought promotion through the death of Saul. Thinking that because he claimed to have killed him that David would reward him, and He says, at least that was on the battlefield, this was done in the sanctuary of a mans own home in broad daylight, in his own bed! And verse 11 "Shall I not now require his blood at your hand and remove you from the earth?" (Never the words you like to hear.)

So David had these guys executed, and in so doing (of course removing the hands that committed the crime, and the feet that carried it out) he sent out a message that not only did he have nothing to do with the death of Ishbosheth, but also that he was a decided enemy of the destruction of Saul's family. Saul had asked David not to take out his descendants when he ascended to the throne and David said that he wouldn't, and now he's making good on that promise.

Vs1-5

Now there are a couple of primary takes here in this scenario, both I believe to be completely valid. This is the 3rd anointing we've seen on David's life and as I mentioned last time we need a continual fresh outpouring of God's Holy Spirit upon our lives if we're to really walk in the fullness of what God has purposed for our lives. With each facet of David's being lifted up, the Lord anointed him fresh for that capacity, we just can't count on where we were at yesterday or last year with the Lord to carry us through the present moment. We need the anointing of God upon our lives with every turn in life.

But what I want to draw to your attention is the order of the anointings; the 1st one was way back in 1st Samuel when Samuel anointed David before his family. And I believe that's where the initial outpouring of the Spirit of God is evidenced in a person's life, around those nearest to him or her. The family may not understand it, it may be that seeing all the faults we might wonder why God would choose such a vessel, but the fact is, it's evident that God has a purpose and a plan for your life. And it has to bear witness, and be evident to the family 1st because if not, I don't care what your ambitions or intentions with ministry are, if your family, your spouse in particular is not behind what God seems to be doing in your life. Then forget about it, you're going nowhere in the ministry until it bears witness in their heart and they're willing to get behind you. 2 cannot walk together lest they be agreed, and so the initial outpouring and evidence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life needs to be in the family.

The 2nd outpouring took place in Judah, in a little bit bigger fashion; it took place before David's tribe. Those in his inner hub, larger than his family, but not evident to all, those who were in his immediate life outside his family circle took notice. And again, "I might not understand it, you wouldn't be my choice, but I have to confess that things are getting done, and God is unarguably doing a work in your life." Now many times in either of these points many a men fall, they see something in their lives, or other people begin to acknowledge something about their lives and so they get out there ahead of the Lord and seek to make this thing happen. But learn the lesson of David, I can tell you that for me (at least as it pertains to the Pastorate) I never sought this position. Of course my wife would bear witness that though a clown I might be, God seemed to have given me an ability to articulate His word that He must want to use. But that didn't send me into hyper drive to start a church.

Then as God would grant me more and more opportunities to share His Word I would all the time have people coming up to me saying things like, "You're going to be a Pastor one day." Or, "Have you ever thought of moving somewhere and starting a church?" It was beginning to bear witness in my tribe, people around me, but even still, I never felt compelled to see what I could do with this thing. I just thought, "Well God I'm yours, whatever you want to do. If you want me to move I will, it would be great if I didn't have to, but whatever you want." But never once did I seek to make myself a Senior Pastor, or assume some sort of position over anyone, God has done the whole thing.

And not really even being aware of this scenario in David's life at the time things were happening in mine, (and believe me I'm in no way comparing myself to him) but I see the pattern, family, tribe, nation. An awareness and backing by the family, those around you being prepared to come under you (in the Lord) and then eventually everyone sees it and is able to get behind it. But if you try to inaugurate step 3 after step 1 or 2 it'll cause disaster, how careful we should be to let God do the whole thing. And for David it was a process of no less than 15yrs, "Well my mom has known all year I should be a pastor!" That's neat, how about your friends, is it bearing witness? And with David even between points 2 and 3 it was 7 ½ yrs. He was content with where God had placed him, and though he knew God had other plans for his life; he waited until the people were ready to get behind him instead of causing a rift in the nation. I served as an assistant for no less than 4yrs (though that's not long) but never once with the intent of seeking any other position, or somehow making myself a Senior Pastor. God just did it, and that's what we're seeing with David, after a number years, God just did the whole thing. Vs 1 starts out, "Then all the tribes came to David." When? When they saw David's love for Saul's family and his innocent intentions towards them and how he was just wanting to serve the Lord. You've heard it said, "People will care how much you know, when they know how much you care." Once they see the love of God in you for them and toward them, they'll give you a platform to speak into their lives, but as long as you're forcing an issue, it's only going to breed strife and division.

Now that's one take, and it's right. The other that revolves around this world "Then" is this. It was only after every other option fell through that the men came to David and said, "We want you to be our king." And it's easy to criticize such a notion, but how often do we only come to Jesus and ask Him to take control of a situation only after we've tapped out every other option?

"This didn't pan out, the other isn't working, that's a dead end, Jesus, would you take over from here?" Wouldn't it have been better if they'd have come to David in the 1st place instead of the last? Even so wouldn't it be better if you (if I) would go to Jesus 1st, and not last?

But they say, "Look we know that even when Saul was our king, you led the nation." Of course in reference to the armies of Israel, "and God promised you the position of being His people's shepherd." The KJV says, "Thou shalt feed My people Israel." God is always looking for a man with a shepherds heart, a man who will feed His people, that's what the sheep of God's hand need, to be fed the Word of God. And they say here we know that you'll feed us, and you'll lead us, and so we're willing to get behind you, notice the witness that's now bore in the hearts of all the people, David has finally inherited the promise. Heb 6:12 says, "*Imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*" Notice those 2 ingredients that we see in David's life, "Faith, and Patience." And very quickly I'll show you 3 things we need to see in anyone we get behind as it pertains to leadership and then we'll blaze.

#1 They need obviously to be believers themselves and belong to God's people in both heritage and heart. (Vs1 We are your bone and your flesh) "We're family here, you're one of us."

#2 They need to demonstrate the ability to lead. Things get done around them, able to lead the people out and to bring them in.

And then #3 They have an evident call of God on their lives. “The Lord has said to you” the elders of Israel bore witness to all these things, and then they got on board full tilt behind David. If you look at the latter portion of 1 Chronicles ch 12 you’ll see over 340,000 men of war that came to this meeting and inauguration of David, it was a real celebration.

Vs 6-9

This is basically the taking of Jerusalem, which bordered on Benjamin and Judah, so it made a perfect capital city showing no biased-ness, and they mocked David because it was so well protected saying even the blind and lame would keep him out. Now that obviously enraged him and insulted him and so he took the city and began to build around it, now notice vs 10.

Vs10

David became great, but he paid a great price, he wasn’t an overnight success story. And the secret of his greatness is here revealed, “The Lord God of hosts was with him.” David Guzik makes this comment; “In God’s plan there is almost always a hidden price of greatness. Often those who become great among God's people experience much pain and difficulty in God's training process.” And such was certainly true of David, to be greatly used, one must be greatly broken.

Vs11-12

I just can’t bypass this vs, David knew 3 things about his life that established his reign and anyone who God uses in any capacity should be just as sober about these things. #1 David knew that, “The Lord had established him.” He knew that it was God who did the work; he didn’t manipulate or somehow influence things towards his favor. #2 That He (that is God) had exalted His Kingdom. David knew that it was God’s Kingdom that he was employed under, it wasn’t his baby, it was the Lord’s. And #3 David knew that God didn’t raise him up because he was so cool, you remember David was the young runt of the family, the one that wasn’t even presented to Samuel until there was just no other choice. God raised David up “For the sake of His people.” It wasn’t so David could be ascribed to fame and fortune and go down in the history books with all the fanfare and glory. Now God blessed him in those ways, but by no means for that reason, it was so that God’s people might be tended to, and for the sake of His people. God raised David up so that God’s purposes might be fulfilled, so that David might serve as a channel or a vessel through which God’s people could be blessed. God doesn’t raise you up, or me up so that I can look so cool, but so that His people might be blessed, for the leading and feeding of His people, that His purposes might be served. It can be so easy to allow those lines to blur, but it’s imperative that we remain sober concerning God’s using of our lives, and it’s not for our benefit, it’s for His.

Vs13-16

Again David made a huge mistake here, he had a lot of good things about him and then also some real problems. But in one respect it comforts me to see that God will use people that have some real problems, because I know I qualify, but believe me this will haunt David later. God's intention from the beginning was one man, and one wife, Adam and Eve.

Vs17-25

2 Things and I'm done. I'm sure you noted the pattern, "David inquired of the Lord." He never presumed upon the, "been there done that" cliché. But rather when he was confronted about a situation, he inquired of the Lord, and God changed the battle plan. We need to be tuned in, rather than seeking to box God in, He'll move different ways at different times even though the situation may be similar. Then finally, there's a time to wait, and a time to move, and when you sense the Lord is moving, advance quickly, don't procrastinate, proceed, for then the Lord will go out before you. When you sense the Lord's hand moving and the wind blowing; raise the sails because it's time to act. God's going before you, and when He's going before you victory is eminent. So when you sense the Lord's hand stirring in a situation, trust Him in it, and go for it, and see what the Lord will do.