

## 2. God's will, God's way

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We all have seen a bumper sticker says, "God is my copilot." That means God is flying with us. It sound awful nice. Since God is in the same flight with us, nothing should go wrong. However, in case something happens, "Voila!" God is right there to rescue us from any possible disaster. A great theology? Oh yes, it is as good as two week old shrimps left in a hot room. That theology stinks, it belongs to a garbage can. What it means that God is there for emergency only in our lives, nothing else.

Actually, we don't belong in the cockpit. We are not flight attendants. We are not ticket agents. We should be luggage in the luggage compartment and God is the pilot and He flies the plane wherever and however He desires.

We find David who just have learned the death of former Israel king Saul and his son Jonathan, waiting upon God instead of assuming God's will. David kept the right priority and mindset.

### A. THE NEW KING WAITING UPON THE KING OF KINGS

*2 Sam 2:1-4a It happened after this that David inquired of the Lord, saying, "Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?" And the Lord said to him, "Go up." David said, "Where shall I go up?" And He said, "To Hebron." So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. And David brought up the men who were with him, every man with his household. So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.*

1) "After this" refers to the time after the deaths of Saul and Jonathan and the period of mourning for them. Now that Saul is out of the picture, David wants to know what to do. He is in Philistine country. Saul is dead, and David is to be the next king. What should his next move be? He waited until he received his instructions from the Lord. David had learned from the past experience that he must wait on the Lord for direction.

2) **This was key to success in David's life.** With rare exceptions, he constantly inquired of the Lord. David wanted more than God's blessing on his plans, he wanted to be right in the middle of God's plan.

God told him to go up to Hebron. Hebron is located in the south of the land, not too far from the Philistine border. God is telling him to move cautiously. He is not to go up and simply take over Israel, but to move up into the land to make himself available to the Lord.

David doesn't rush in blindly and seize the throne. Instead, he carefully sought the Lord. David knew the promise was from God, so he knew God could fulfill it without any manipulation from David.

3) **David knew that it was better to let God lift you up through others** instead of striving to advance yourself. We should strive to advance God's Kingdom and leave the advancement of self in His hands.

*1Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,*

This anointing couldn't come when David still lived among the Philistines virtually as a Philistine. He had to get things right in his own walk before this fresh anointing.

The God's anointing already came to him through Prophet Samuel in 1 Sam 16. This people's anointing is nothing more than their acknowledgement of what God has done in David's life.

**4) David went up to Hebron with his two wives.** Does God approve of a man having two wives? No. This matter will cause David a great deal of trouble. To make the matter worse, later he will have more wives and concubines. David was an idiot for this. Having two women under one roof together is just asking for a ton of troubles.

## **B. A COMMENDATION TO THE MEN OF JABESH GILEAD**

*2 Sam 2:4b-7 And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul." So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, "You are blessed of the Lord, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."*

**1) After Saul became a king,** the town of Jabesh Gilead was invaded by the Ammonites in 1 Sam chapter 11. Saul rounded up his troop and rescued the town. The people of Jabesh Gilead was so grateful to Saul and never forgot it. When the Philistine hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the wall without their heads, these people came and took the bodies and buried them in proper manner.

David does a very wise thing. David shows appropriate gratitude to the men of Jabesh Gilead who risked their lives to honor the memory of Saul and Jonathan.

**2) Then he asked for their support and devotion to him as king,** even as they had given it to Saul. Notice that he is moving in a diplomatic and commendable manner at this time.

David was in fact already indicating to Israelites outside Judah that he was the true successor to Saul, and had authority over all Israel.

## **C. THE PUPPET KING ISHBOSHETH AND ABNER**

*2 Sam 2:8-11 But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only the house of Judah followed David. And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.*

**1) Abner the son of Ner,** first cousin of Saul, captain of Saul's army took Ishbosheth. Abner made Ishbosheth king, probably so he could be the real power behind the throne of this puppet king.

**2) Here was the establishment of a rival kingdom.** This is the beginning of the division of the kingdom which will come after the reign of Solomon when Jeroboam leads a rebellion. This is the first fracture.

3) **These two years show remarkable patience**, longsuffering, and trust in God on David's part. Ishbosheth was not the Lord's anointed like Saul. David seemed to have every right to crush this man who stood in the way of his throne. Yet out of trust in the Lord and respect for Saul's memory, David waited.

#### **D. THE BLOODBATH AT THE FIELD OF SHARP SWORDS**

*2 Sam 2:12-17 Now Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon. So they sat down, one on one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool. Then Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men now arise and compete before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." So they arose and went over by number, twelve from Benjamin, followers of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. And each one grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called the Field of Sharp Swords, which is in Gibeon. So there was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David.*

1) **Abner and Joab were each tough, mean and killing machines**, completely devoted to their causes, but not necessarily to their masters. Because they had their own agenda in their hearts.

2) **The contest Abner proposed was anything but a friendly game.** It was a fight to the death in order to determine a victor. Yet, the result was 360 casualty on Abner's side and 20 death on Joab's side.

#### **E. THE DEATH OF YOUNG OVER ZEALOT & CEASE FIRE**

*2 Sam 2:18-32 Now the three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab and Abishai and Asahel. And Asahel was as fleet of foot as a wild gazelle. So Asahel pursued Abner, and in going he did not turn to the right hand or to the left from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him and said, "Are you Asahel?" He answered, "I am." And Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right hand or to your left, and lay hold on one of the young men and take his armor for yourself." But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. So Abner said again to Asahel, "Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I face your brother Joab?" However, he refused to turn aside. Therefore Abner struck him in the stomach with the blunt end of the spear, so that the spear came out of his back; and he fell down there and died on the spot. So it was that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still. Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner. And the sun was going down when they came to the hill of Ammah, which is before Giah by the road to the Wilderness of Gibeon. Now the children of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became a unit, and took their stand on top of a hill. Then Abner called to Joab and said, "Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter in the latter end? How long will it be then until you tell the people to return from pursuing their brethren?" And Joab said, "As God lives, unless you had spoken, surely then by morning all the people would have given up pursuing their brethren." So Joab blew a trumpet; and all the people stood still and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore. Then Abner and his men went on all that night through the plain, crossed over the Jordan, and went through all Bithron; and they came to Mahanaim. So Joab returned from pursuing Abner. And when he had gathered all the people togeth-*

er, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. But the servants of David had struck down, of Benjamin and Abner's men, three hundred and sixty men who died. Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at daybreak.

1) It seems that Asahel pursued Abner in part for the glory of killing the commander of Ishbosheth's army and taking his armor as a trophy.

2) Joab, Abishai and Asahel were brothers, all sons of David's sister Zeruah. Abner killed young over zealous Asahel. That means that in Joab's heart there will be bitterness, hatred, and the desire to get revenge. His revenge will come later, as we shall see in chapter 3.

## G. APPLICATIONS

1) God wants to do His will in our lives in His way and in His time.

If you need something from God, be patient and wait on Him. God will meet you wherever you are to lift you to where He wants you to be.

*Psalm 18:25–26 To the faithful You show Yourself faithful; to those with integrity You show integrity. To the pure You show Yourself pure, but to the wicked You show Yourself hostile.*

2) We should strive to advance God's Kingdom and leave the advancement of self in His hands.

*Ps 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way.*

*Pr 16:9 A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.*

3) We should want more than God's blessing on our plans. We should want to be right in the middle of God's plan.