



DISCUSSION

After reading 2 Samuel 2, do you think that David is encouraged or discouraged? Why?

How do you determine whether to stick with something through challenges, or to move on? Do you tend to be someone who quits too easily, or are you someone who probably hangs on too long? In what ways does your faith affect your perseverance factor?

Read 2 Samuel 2:1. Once again we find David “enquiring of the Lord.” What practices do you use to determine God’s will or get His guidance your decisions? What scriptures do you base your practices on?

Read 2 Samuel 2:8 & Nehemiah chapter 4. What do you learn from these passages about opposition to what God has called us to accomplish? What other scriptures have been useful to you in dealing with challenges?

Read 2 Samuel 2:25-32. What lessons about conflict can you draw from the interaction between Joab & Abner? How do you determine whether to let something go, debate, enter into conflict, or even break fellowship with someone? What does it mean to be a “peacemaker?” (See Matthew 5:9). And, finally, what do you think we could all learn from the symbolism in Micah 4:3)

What’s the most prominent thing you’ve learn thus far in our study of David?



2 Samuel 2 **ONE MORE HILL / WAR BETWEEN BROTHERS**

This is a PG-13 sermon.

When I first started Mountain Biking I used to get really excited about approaching the summit of a climb. Looked forward to reaching the summit to roll downhill. Invariably what I found is that once I reached the top, I had a view of the trail that only showed how many more climbs were on the horizon. What I learned, overtime – is that many times, climbs are followed by other climbs.

So, do you ever feel like that?

One more hill, one more set of waves...

REVIEW & CONTEXT:

2 Samuel 1: David laments the death of Saul & Jonathan, slain by the Philistines.

In Chapter 2 of 2 Samuel, David is anointed King, finally – well kind of.

TODAY:

See the story unfold (vignettes) in Chapter 2, & then make a few observations.

PRAY

2 Samuel 2:1 In the course of time, David enquired 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.

God’s plans for us involve:

1. What we should do
2. Where we should do it
3. When we should do it

Hebron, 20 miles SSW of Jerusalem, has the highest elevation of Judah and is a strategic location for David to begin his reign.

2-3) So David, along with his family and the men following him travel to Hebron-

4 Then the men of Judah came to Hebron and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.



The #2 anointing of David as King, but the first that actually recognizes his rule. However, it is an incomplete fulfillment.

4-5) As David relocates in Hebron, with added responsibility/challenge, still mourning Saul & Jonathan, word reaches him that the men of Jabesh-Gilead showed tremendous respect for Saul by providing for his burial, David recognizes their effort-

5 "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."

David shows appreciation, loyalty for their efforts; and makes an appeal to them to follow his leadership-

7 Now then, be strong and brave, for Saul your master is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

Note: his approach is to win them, not force them into submission. Begins with their common respect for Saul & his house. (More indication of David's remarkable leadership capability.)

Ps 78:72 And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.

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.

Abner, cousin of Saul and general of his army. The real power in this absence of leadership falls to the military leaders. (Joab-Abner: story in the story)

In the void, opportunism is rampant (Nations, Organizations, Home...) The nation is split into Northern & Southern kingdoms.

SEE MAP





This is a civil war, dividing of a people, & although they will unite under David/Solomon; the shadow of of 2 kingdoms will remain and reappear.

12-13) The struggle for dominance begins between brothers with Abner & Joab meeting in Gibeon, where they agree to “representative warfare” (See David & Goliath; A way of settling military disputes, and probably some entertainment.)-

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.

Since all 24 are slain, no victor can be declared, and it seems to have incited both sides into full scale battle-

17 The battle that day was very fierce, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by David’s men.

18 The three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab, Abishai and Asahel.

1. **Joab**, David’s general.
2. **Abishai** has been by David’s side since the beginning. Encouraged David to slay Saul when they snuck into Saul’s camp. (1 Samuel 26)

3. 18)...**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.”

“Step off Asahel.”

21) “Strip someone else” of their weapons? A kind of military trophy.

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?”

22) *How can I face your brother?* Abner & Joab would have known each other and out of respect he asks Asahel to stop pursuing him. Abner makes every attempt to get Asahel to stop.



Asahel, loyal, fleet footed & single minded. But, that single mindedness was his undoing. Did not maintain his “situational awareness.”

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.

23) Everyman stopped. Significant death.

24-25) Joab & his brother Abishai continue their pursuit of Abner, while Abner & his men find a strategic spot to take a stand-

25) 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 for ever? Don’t you realize that this will end in bitterness? How long before you order your men to stop pursuing their brothers?**”

It appears even warriors grow weary of fighting.

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 any more.

RECAP OF CHAPTER 2:

- David becomes king of Judah
- Abner & Ishbosheth grab power in the void – splitting the people of Israel
- Bloodshed of brothers follows

Who gives a rip? (Keith Johnson) So what? What can we learn?

1. PERSEVERE

Remarkable quality of David is his perseverance. What motivated him?

Even though David is crowned, he’s not fully crowned, yet. It’s kind of like opening that present on Christmas, that’s good, but it’s not really completely what you wanted? Long time after Samuel anointed him King the first time – a lot has happened since his shepherd days.



And, it's without Saul & Jonathan. Not how he pictured it.

As our lives unfold, the things we want to happen sometimes fail to happen on our timeline. God has a wonderful plan for your life vs. I have a wonderful plan for my life – and all I need you to do, God, is make it happen. Waiting.

Waiting room in Urgent Care? The waiting does many in, who jettison their faith, because of the wait.

So, the question is, how do we persevere? Why do we persevere? Where can we ever find the strength?

Perseverance of the Saints (Calvinism: Theology Lesson)

John 8:31 Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

Go "under" for a little while. (free dive!) This statement, and others like it have been mistaken to say, "That's why you need to hold it together; because if you don't; you are not a true Christian."

The message then, is bear down, suck it up, be determined...Not what I'm saying, and I don't believe that was David's source-

1 Peter 1:1 ... to strangers in the world, scattered ...In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ...5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

What it's really saying is, "We can persevere, through disappointment, tragedy, waiting... by faith, by God's power, through the resurrection of Jesus..." My hope is built on nothing less...GOSPEL IS THAT WE ARE SAVED AND KEPT BY FAITH.

What are you waiting for?

Psalm 145:13 The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving towards all he has made.

2. WHEN WE JOIN GOD IN WHAT HE IS DOING – THERE WILL BE RESISTANCE.

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.



Meanwhile; there is always a meanwhile. Always resistance to what God is doing. Always an opportunist who seeks to derail.

- Possessing Canaan: “giants in the land”
- Nehemiah: Sanballat & Tobiah, so they built the walls with a trowel in one hand, sword in the other.
- Paul: Judaeizers, those suspicious of him, questioned his leadership
- Jesus: Pharisees, Roman Empire, Disciples

Sometimes, we are the resistance-

The Screwtape Letters (CS Lewis)

Letters from high level demon, Screwtape to his nephew, Wormwood, a demon in training. Wormwood is working on derailing the faith of Patient, his personal project. Wormwood wants to use sins of the flesh to undermine patient. But, Screwtape’s constant advice is, “the safest road to hell is the gradual one...”

The resistance could come from within.

Ironic, I would speculate that Abner thought he was doing the right thing, but actually was opposing God’s plan. (Possibly our own commitment, fleshly application of our need for religion...)

Why we need to keep the gospel at the center, and that means self on the periphery.

*Mr 8:35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the **gospel** will save it.*

3. SEEK UNITY, WHENEVER POSSIBLE

#2 can turn you into a warrior –

26 Abner called out to Joab, “Must the sword devour for ever?”

Stanley Weintraub: **Silent Night.** The Story of The World War 1 Christmas Truce.

To be sure; Some things are worth fighting for. War, sometimes necessary, but always tragic.

“Fought the good fight.” (Paul) But here, they take a moment in time to stop. Abner takes the risk of being called a coward; Joab allowing his enemy to escape. Perhaps he learned from David in the cave? Who wins a war? Who loses (everyone).



Right back to the crazy cycle. What if they had prayed? Or, discussed? Who wins in war? Churches, companies, marriages, families, nations, labels, politics etc.

3:1 The war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time.

*Mic 4:3 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into **pruning hooks**. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.*