

## 2 Samuel 2:1-7 - Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- Last week we left David having received the news from an Amalekite, whom he kills for killing Saul who along with Jonathan died in battle.
- Then, in what would arguably be one of the most stunning responses, David writes a song as a eulogy in honor of both Saul and Jonathan.
- The take away from this was David's example of how it's possible to guard ones heart against bitterness towards those who have hurt you.

1 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."

- Notice right out of the shoot that David's first response is to "inquire of the Lord." In other words, this time, prayer was not his last resort.
- Often times we treat that which is the source of our greatest power as a last resort and not a first response, and we do so to our own peril.
- The late Corrie Ten Boom was once quoted as asking this very poignant question: "Is prayer your steering wheel, or is it your spare tire?"

- I find it interesting that for the last year and four months, there's not one record of David inquiring of the Lord in prayer even as a spare tire.
- I suppose you could say David is back! This is the David we've come to know and love. This is the David who will first inquire of the Lord.
- This is also the David who won't get ahead of God and instead waits for God to respond with his marching orders before he moves forward.

- I point this out because of how prone we are to simply say, "well, I prayed about it." Okay what was God's answer to you when you prayed?
- The point being is that there's this assumption that just praying about it is all you need to do. Prayer is not a monologue it's a dialogue.
- The two-way conversation comes by way of God answering first and foremost through His Word. Sometimes it will be a specific scripture.

- Notice the specificity with which God responds to David's first prayer. First David specifically asks if he should go up to any cities of Judah.
- Then, notice what the Lord says to him, he answers him by saying, "yes, go up." Then David prays even more specifically the second time.
- He then, specifically, asks which city should he go up to? Then the Lord answers him even more specifically, saying he's to go the Hebron.

- Couple of thoughts here, the first of which is this speaks to the importance of praying specifically to have your prayer answered specifically.
- Secondly, this speaks to the importance of praying continually, even if it's concerning the same petition, and even if it's for a very long time.
- The reason being is that sometimes God may deem it fit to delay the answer if for no other reason other than to teach you to pray more.

- While I realize that may seem like a cruel thing for the Lord to do, from my own personal experience it's actually the best thing He could do.
- Let me explain why, one of the lessons I'm learning as it relates to prayer, is how absolutely vital it is to "pray continually and specifically."
- This because, prayer changes the "pray-er," if you please, such that, it changes you when you pray, and it even changes how you pray too.

- This is why I keep a prayer list and prayer journal in a spreadsheet format on my computer; I can see all the changes over several years.
- By way of an example, almost 10-years to the day, on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2004, I prayed God would let us get 6k SF at the Kaneohe Center.
- Then, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005, which was exactly two months later, my prayer changed to asking for space in the Ko'olau Shopping Center.

- Then, four months later, on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005, it changed again, this time; I prayed that the Lord would let us rent this church from the SDA.
- Then, I even prayed more specifically and inquired of the Lord asking if 9:30 would be a good time to have our Sunday morning services.
- On Saturday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005, eight months after my first prayer, I prayed that God would bless our Sunday morning service at 9:30am.

- Please know that I am not sharing this in a boastful way, rather, I'm sharing it because of how convicted I have been as it relates to prayer.
- I'm afraid I'm a lot like David, in that there are gaps, sometimes for months, where there are no specific prayer entries on my prayer list.
- It's not that I wasn't praying it's just that I wasn't praying as specifically and continually as keeping a prayer journal had enabled me to do.

- What's interesting is when I go back through my prayer journal over the years I noticed a pattern emerge when I didn't pray specifically.
- Namely, the conspicuous absence of specific answers to my prayers in ways that only praying specifically, effectually and fervently bring.
- James 5:16 very clearly says that it's the effectual and fervent prayer of the righteous that accomplishes the most in the life of the Christian.

- Allow me to share one more thought before we move speedily along to verse two. It has to do with another aspect of keeping a prayer list.
- I find that going back through the prayers I journal years prior become what I like to call, "faith triggers," when you recall God's faithfulness.
- Perhaps better said, when you see how faithful God has been to answer your prayers in the past, you pray big in the present for the future.

2 So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. 3 And David brought up the men who were with him, every man with his household. So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. 4 Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul."

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is David is very prayerful and careful about the how, when, and where.
- More specifically, how, when, and where he should go in Judah, knowing he may not receive the warmest of welcomes when he gets there.
- As we'll see shortly, it will only be these men of Judah who welcome him and freshly anoint him as their King after it's been about 20-years.

- Be that as it may, what David inquires of the Lord about shows his sensitivity to the Lord's leading, and his sensitivity to the Lord's people.
- By that I mean; David does not want to appear to be presumptuous in his going back to Judah to be their king this soon after Saul's death.
- It's for this reason that he inquires of the Lord as to whether or not he should go back or not, and if so, whether or not this is the time to go.

5 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. 6 And now may the LORD show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. 7 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."

- I can't even begin to tell you how powerfully and profoundly God has used these seven verses to minister to me when we first moved here.
- Actually, I created a mnemonic to remember the specific lessons that God was teaching me about waiting on the Lord as David does here.
- Ironically, I journaled it in the very same Excel spreadsheet that I have my prayer list in. I never thought I would be sharing it 10-years later.

- You'll forgive the dorky nature of my mnemonic, but it's the word, "DOSE." The way I remember it is that God gave me a "dose" of waiting.
- Kindly allow me to share with you a "dose" of my notes on 2 Samuel 2, from way back in 2004, which has been about 10-years ago now.
- First, let me give you what the letters stand for, "D" is for Don't Strive "O" is for Observe, "S" is for Stay above the Fray, and "E" is for Enjoy.

**D - Don't Strive:** David didn't strive to be king of all Israel, and waited as just the king of Judah. Also, they came to him. He didn't go to them. He didn't even go to Hebron until God told him to. David wanted only God's fingerprints and none of his own so that when it happened there would be no mistaking that it was God Who did it. Isaiah 28:16b says, Whoever believes will not act hastily, and, Isaiah 26:3 says, You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. When God delays it's always because He has something better. He's preparing something grander. Isaiah 30:18 says, Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.

**O - Observe and do good:** David did good, and Israel observed David doing good. They needed to get to know David and watch David so God gave the people time to observe how David handled himself, and they had to give David time to prove himself. Psalm 37:34 says, Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.

**S - Stay above the fray and stay below the radar:** David didn't get caught up in all the fighting amongst the tribes. David stood for righteousness and stayed out of the mix. Some people get frustrated while waiting on the Lord, and as such, they get drawn back into the world and when that happens, they're in danger of being drawn away from the call that God has on their lives. Simply put, they wrongly conclude that God is not going to act on their behalf. Isaiah 64:4 says, for since the beginning of the world Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, Nor has the eye seen any God besides You, Who acts for the one who waits for Him.

**E - Enjoy the season of peace and calm:** David has been virtually homeless for the last 15+ years, not to mention that he's been through an unspeakably difficult time for the last year and a half running from God and living among the Philistines. While in Ziklag, we're told that he strengthened himself in the Lord. This would indicate that not only had he hit rock bottom spiritually and emotionally, but he was hanging on by a thread in his exhaustion physically. He needed respite; he needed a time to renew his strength. Isaiah 40:28-31 says, 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. David will need this very strength soon enough. For now, he could just enjoy the rest in the Lord, as he waits on the Lord. Then, when the time comes, and the ministry gets very complicated, so-to-speak, he will run and not be weary, walk and not be faint.

- I'll bring tonight's Bible study to a close by sharing with you another lesson that goes hand in hand with the difficulty of waiting on the Lord.
- I found this in my notes as well, and I thought it would be apropos, such that it speaks to what we can do while we are waiting on the Lord.
- While I don't have a mnemonic for it, what follows are what I'll call the "4 Insteads;" 4 things to do instead, while you're waiting on the Lord.

	DO THIS	INSTEAD OF THIS
1	Pray out loud and even cry out load unto the Lord	Feeling sorry for yourself thinking that God is through with you
2	Find things to praise God for and listen to praise and worship	Blaming others and or blaming self thinking God is punishing me
3	Maintain a good and godly attitude	Having a bad attitude thinking what's the use God is mad at me
4	Declare publicly by faith that God will show Himself faithful	Letting your heart be fearful thinking God won't pull through for me