



2 Samuel 4 – Wait For The Lord

March 26, 2023

Background

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Psalm 37:5–7 (ESV)

1. Panic At Mahanaim

When Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed. 2 Samuel 4:1 (ESV)

Ish-Bosheth and his followers show us how easily overthrown are the wicked who seem to pose a deadly threat to God's people. Let us not doubt, when we see the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, that it will take nothing to make them a broken people, who do not know which way to turn because they do not have God on their side and they can not call on him. — John Calvin

2. Ishbosheth's Two Men

Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon a man of Benjamin from Beeroth (for Beeroth also is counted part of Benjamin; the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been sojourners there to this day). 2 Samuel 4:2–3 (ESV)

3. Mephibosheth

Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled, and as she fled in her haste, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. 2 Samuel 4:4 (ESV)

4. Ish-Bosheth's Death

Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ish-bosheth as he was taking his noontime rest. 2 Samuel 4:5 (ESV)

And they came into the midst of the house as if to get wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach.... 2 Samuel 4:6a (ESV)

*And behold, the doorkeeper of the house had been cleaning wheat, but she grew drowsy and slept. So Rechab and Baanah his brother slipped in.
— Septuagint*

...Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. 2 Samuel 4:6b (ESV)

When they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedroom, they struck him and put him to death and beheaded him... 2 Samuel 4:7a (ESV)

...They took his head and went by the way of the Arabah all night, 2 Samuel 4:7b (ESV)

and brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron. And they said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. The LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring." 2 Samuel 4:8 (ESV)

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Luke 6:35 (ESV)

To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."
Romans 12:20 (ESV)

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
Matthew 5:44 (ESV)

5. A Message From The King

But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity..."
2 Samuel 4:9 (ESV)

Whenever we are tempted to evil under the excuse of ridding ourselves of worry or anguish, or of having remedy for our own troubles, let us remember, has not God taken care of us up to now? Since God has been so merciful to us, and we have been saved by his hand so many times, should we abandon our trust in him now? - John Calvin

May the LORD therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."
1 Samuel 24:15 (ESV)

The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the LORD gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the LORD's anointed. 1 Samuel 26:23 (ESV)

when one told me, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his news.
2 Samuel 4:10 (ESV)

How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and destroy you from the earth?"
2 Samuel 4:11 (ESV)

And David commanded his young men, and they killed them and cut off their hands and feet and hanged them beside the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner at Hebron. 2 Samuel 4:12 (ESV)

Application

1. Avoid sinful choices to achieve good goals.

It is an abomination to kings to do evil, for the throne is established by righteousness. Righteous lips are the delight of a king, and he loves him who speaks what is right. Proverbs 16:12–13 (ESV)

2. While people are fully responsible for their sinful choices, God overrules sinful choices and incorporates them as part of His good plan to establish His kingdom.

...this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. Acts 2:23 (ESV)

3. When there is no god-honoring way forward, God calls us to pray, trust, and wait.

Wait for the LORD and keep his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land; you will look on when the wicked are cut off. Psalm 37:34 (ESV)

4. God extends severe mercy. Sometimes He cripples His people to turn them back to Him.

Life Group Questions

1. **Read 2 Samuel 4.** What did you learn that was new? What parts of this message were a surprise?
2. **Read Psalm 37:1-11.** In this Psalm, David talks about the importance of trusting in the Lord and waiting for him to make a way forward when there is no godly way. Have you ever felt stuck and you didn't know the right way to honor God in a disagreement or business deal? What does this Psalm tell us to do in these times?
3. Rechab and Baanah thought David would consider them heroes for killing the man they thought was his enemy. Why did David not consider Ish-Bosheth his enemy? What does this teach us about how we relate to those who do not like us?
4. Rechab and Baanah claimed they were just carrying out God's vengeance on Ish-Bosheth. They were only giving Ish-Bosheth what he deserved. Are you ever tempted to give people what they deserve? What is wrong with thinking like these brothers?
5. God uses the acts of sinful men to achieve his good purposes while they remain responsible for their sinful choices. We see this with the death of Jesus (Acts 2:23), with Joseph (Genesis 50:20), and in this passage with Rechab and Baanah. How does knowing God incorporates the sinful choices of people into his good plan to establish his kingdom change the way you look at the evening news?
6. Why did God, in severe mercy, cripple the house of Saul so His people had no place left to look other than to David as their king? Have you experienced God's severe mercy, where He took away everything in your life, so you would have no place left to look other than him? While this is a painful thing, why is it a good thing?