

Seeking God's Direction and Responding to Conflict

David's Next Step: Waiting on God's Timing

After Saul's death, **David didn't assume anything**. He had already been **anointed as king by Samuel**, but instead of **rushing to take the throne**, he **sought God's guidance first**.

He asked, "*Shall I go up to Judah?*" and God responded, "*Go.*" Then David asked, "*Where?*" and God directed him to **Hebron**.

So David **went in obedience**, and the men of **Judah anointed him king**—but it wasn't over yet. The rest of Israel didn't immediately recognize his leadership. Instead, **Abner**, Saul's former commander, set up Saul's son **Ishbosheth** as a rival king.

David reigned over **Judah for seven and a half years**, while **Israel remained divided**.

Personal Application: What Can We Learn?

1. Seek God Before Making Big Decisions

David **didn't force his way into power**—he **waited on God's timing**. Even though he had already been **anointed years earlier**, he **didn't assume the next step**.

Instead, he asked **two key questions**:

- "*Lord, should I go?*"
- "*Where exactly should I go?*"

This shows **total dependence on God's leading**.

- **Proverbs 3:5-6** – "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*"
- **Application**: Are you making decisions based on **assumptions, emotions, or pressure**? Or are you **waiting on God's direction**?

2. Partial Obedience Creates Division

David was **meant to be king over all of Israel**, but because Abner **rejected God's plan**, the kingdom remained **divided** for over seven years.

Abner knew about David's anointing but still set up **Ishbosheth** as king. He was **protecting his own power**, even though he was fighting **against God's will**.

- **James 4:17** – "*So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*"
- **Application**: Is there an area in your life where you're **resisting God's plan**? Holding on to **your own control** instead of surrendering to God's direction?

3. How We Treat Our Enemies Matters

David showed **kindness and respect** to the men of **Jabesh-Gilead** for giving Saul a proper burial. Even though Saul had **chased him for years**, David **still honored him**.

This shows **David's heart of grace**—he didn't carry **bitterness or revenge**.

- **Romans 12:19** – *"Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."*
- **Application:** Do you hold on to **bitterness** toward those who have wronged you? Or do you **release it and trust God** to handle it?

4. Avoid Unnecessary Battles

Abner and Joab's men **met at a pool** and **escalated a conflict** into a **full battle**—all because of **ego and competition**.

At first, it started with **a contest** between their soldiers. But it **turned into bloodshed**, and **Asahel**, Joab's brother, **died in the pursuit of vengeance**.

Joab wouldn't forget—he **held on to anger** toward Abner, which would lead to **even more bloodshed later**.

- **Ephesians 4:26-27** – *"Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil."*
- **Application:** Are you **holding on to past offenses**? Is there an **unnecessary battle** in your life that you need to **walk away from**?

Final Challenge

David's actions in **this chapter** give us **powerful lessons**:

1. **Ask God before making decisions.** Don't assume—seek His guidance.
2. **Partial obedience leads to division.** Don't resist God's will.
3. **Honor people, even when they fail.** Release bitterness and trust God's justice.
4. **Let go of unnecessary battles.** Don't hold on to past offenses.

David **trusted God's timing**—and because of that, he would eventually rule over **all of Israel**.

What about you? Are you willing to **wait, obey, and trust God's plan**—even when it takes longer than you expect?