

Believers & Civil Responsibility

A Practical Application Of History

Lesson IV

Civil Unrest and Making Allies

II Samuel 2-5 I Chronicles 3, 4, 11, 12

A. Choosing the right allies

- a. We find an attribute in David we should all have - his first and biggest ally was always God. He asked God when, where and how he should go and then obeyed the response he was given.
- b. He also knew his closest allies needed the support of their families so he brought them as well as the men when he went to settle in Hebron.
- c. He recognized and complimented the good in others - example in hand the men of Jabesh who had buried Saul. Words of appreciation make and maintain allies.
- d. David knew how to recognize good leadership qualities in men and then promote them to positions that would use their abilities - this was the case with Joab.
- e. And notice as we see later the list of warriors, might men and men by tribe who followed David the phrase "all these fighting men who volunteered to serve in the ranks? I Chronicles 12:23-40
- f. Ish-Boseth as a counter example did not know how to maintain the relationship with those with him and because of it Abner ended up leaving him and going over to David's side in their civil war. We also see here what happens when the followers are stronger in conviction and strength than the leader as Ish-Boseth feared Abner and you cannot lead those you fear.

B. Civil war - causes and solutions

- a. When leaders are put in place God did not ordain that is when trouble happens - in this case Abner had brought Saul's son Ish-Bosheth and appointed him king over Israel.
- b. Once appointed Ish-Bosheth and Abner went to challenge David and his followers. While the fighting was fierce the battle was won by David's men 19 to 360. The battle chase is on and Joab's brother Asahel chases Abner on foot but is eventually killed but Abner. Joab and his men then pursue Abner and his men to the top of the hill until a truce is called. The war continued on but with God's favor David's men grew stronger and more dominant.
- c. Abner sends word he wants to come over to David's side. David gives him a test in bringing him his wife Micah which he does. He then goes back to the elders of Israel and the Benjamites and arranges the union of the nation again. Unfortunately Joab endangers the plan by taking vengeance on Abner for killing his brother. David understands the danger on what has happened and condemns Joab and shows his appreciation for Abner and wins over the people.
- d. We also see David promoting that which is right when Ish-Bosheth is murdered by Recab & Baanah and they come to David expecting praise and reward and instead received death and humiliation for having killed an innocent man.

C. Looking to God

- a. At the beginning of David's reign we see him going to God to ask whether or not he needs to go to Hebron and involving God in all the decision making process.
- b. One David is established he wants the Ark of God brought up to Jerusalem. Unfortunately this is one time David failed to consult with God. He spoke with the men who lead his armies and not God or the priest so he ends up not following God's commands for moving the ark and because of this Uzzah is killed by God. David exhibited angry and then fear of God due to this. For the time being the Ark is left with Obed-Edom and we see he is blessed because of it.

- c. Shortly after this we see the Philistines come searching for David to fight and this time God remembers to go to God first and ask about His plans before proceeding and God blesses him with victory.
- D. So what does it all mean to us today?
- a. We need to make sure we are allied with God first.
 - b. We need to understand that the process of choosing allies is not just taking anyone who does something to benefit you - it has to be done properly and with integrity. Abner was loyal to Ish-Bosheth until he was falsely accused then he told him he was leaving and going to David where he showed his loyalty by actions that showed integrity. In contrast Recab and Baanah were back stabbers and David recognized this and did not want them as allies since they could not be trusted even though they had done something for his benefit.
 - c. Allies need to be treated as humans (they need their family support system, etc.) and they need to be praised and rewarded for doing what is right. They also need to be called to account when they do something wrong as Joab did.
 - d. Not following God's plan can bring about strife or even civil war.
 - e. A desire to lead incited by another and done in fear of them is destined to fail.
 - f. We must always look to God - at the beginning, throughout the process, and at the end. Failure to do so will result in failure.