

## God's Purposes and the Period of Waiting (Psalm 10)

Let us take a look at the storyline.

David was anointed as a king when he was a shepherd boy minding his own business. He becomes an overnight sensation when he wins that famous battle against Goliath. People started praising him; he is everybody's hero. But there is a problem. The king doesn't like him; he is jealous against him. Out of his jealousy, the king wants to kill David. David is on the run. He is running for his life. He had a few narrow escapes; he has seen death very closely; he had to be away from his wife whom he loved dearly. Here is the anointed king of Israel who seems to be far away from the reality one could hope for.

How do we make sense of God in a story such as this?

We see a definite plan for God's purpose in David's life, the life of Israel and our lives in the scriptures as we have the privilege to access the entire story. However, for David, it is simply to prepare and face day to day battles day in and day out.

Maybe we are in different phases of our individual lives. Some of us probably believe for sure that what is God's purpose in our life is; Some of us are certain and believe that we are in the centre of God's purpose and we live out God's purpose in our lives; some of us know God's purpose for our lives looks like but the current reality is far from what we believe God's purpose is; Some of us have no clue about God's purpose in our lives; Some of us are waiting for God's purposes to reveal but God seems to be far away; Some of us probably believe that we don't need to have God's purpose for make sense of life.

I am not sure which camp you are in, but when we look at the scripture we see that God has a definite plan, He has a purpose and He has his timing. The difficult part is that most of the times this doesn't make sense. What did David do? Let me highlight a couple of things that David's life reflected upon;

### - **David stayed human**

What do I mean by that? David remained a human being and did what human beings do. In other words, he did not try to become God, take matters into his hands and force things to become the next king of Israel; nor he appears like a person who has got it all, who is calm and collected and

very spiritual. After all, he is the God's anointed! In fact no character in the scripture appears very sorted. They are real people with real struggles, with real egos, with real temper and with real failures. In fact, sometimes they are too real and we are uncomfortable with that. I am not sure if anyone else was uncomfortable reading some of the Old Testament narratives. I certainly feel that. This is what makes Bible very authentic and real. This is not some cooked up story with an agenda to make the story appealing to a particular audience. Instead, it is as real it gets, it is the truth in its purest form; it is raw and authentic. It is not like one of the Oscar winning movies with the perfect storyline and the choice of perfect characters with the perfect edit. Instead, it is like a documentary with collection of raw videos with no additional edits. Still it is one of the most impactful books in the human history. David's character is not portrayed any different. We see David in his real raw human self. This is an important principle for us because we don't need to be in a calm and collected self who looks very sorted in life. I mean its ok to be calm and collected and very sorted. But not in the sense of a burden to please God. God knows our inmost being; He knows our real us. This reminds me of the parable that Jesus shared regarding the prayer of the tax collector and the pharisee. On the surface level, one would say, of course God will hear the prayer of the Pharisee, he got everything proper, he follows all the Laws, he is sorted in his understanding of God etc. In no sane mind one would think that God hears the prayer of the tax collector, who probably is completely away from the faith. But God hears the prayer of the tax collector. This parable is not about what do we need to do get our prayers answered. Instead, it is about Jesus saying that God is close to the broken hearted and the repented saviour than to the self-righteous law-follower. This parable also tells us that we don't need to pretend anything that we are not in order to access God. We have the provision to access God in our raw real self.

Bible portrays David as a real human being with real human emotions and attitudes. One particular emotion that was dominant during this period that we are looking today in "grief". The historical period in the Bible that we are looking is where the King Saul is dead and there is a new king named Ish-Bosheth who becomes a king before David becomes the king for the nation of Israel. David as a human being was experiencing grief during this period. The first reaction for any modern day reader should be wow David must have been relieved. But the biblical narrative

does not tell us that. Instead Bible tells us that David was grief stricken. David's grief was in multiple levels. He was experiencing personal loss and also he was experiencing a national loss. He lost his best friend Jonathan along with Saul and later he lost Abner who was the commander-in-chief. He knew all of this people in person including Jonathan who is his best friend. David's friendship with Jonathan is very special because Jonathan was instrumental in helping David escape for his life. The death of Saul, Jonathan and Abner is also a huge national loss. King Saul, the leader of your nation is dead; Jonathan, one of the most skilled warrior of the nation Israel is dead; Abner, the commander in chief of the army is dead. The nation of Israel lost to the Philistines. This is a massive massive loss for the nation of Israel. David, who is God's anointed, who loves his nation very dearly and one of the warriors of Israel lost the key leaders of his nation. He is grief stricken.

The moment he hears the news, he tears his clothes, puts ashes in his head, skips his meal and mourns. He processes his grief through a song that he composes. His song is set up in the rhythm that sounds- How the mighty have fallen! (x3) That expresses shock, disbelief and dismay. He proclaims it as a shame that this has happened and hoped that this news does not reach the streets of the enemies. He is angry and he curses the ground where the killing occurred. He praises the military skills of King Saul and Jonathan. He praises king Saul's contribution to the nation. He is devastated that his best friend Jonathan is dead. He expresses the love that he has for his friend. He expresses his disbelief, How the mighty have fallen!

Death is so inevitable and obvious but it always comes as a shock. Dear church, the scripture encourages to grieve and process the grief. It encourages us not to put up a face, or to be emotionally strong or not to play it down by stating the hope of resurrection or Jesus' second coming. Instead, we are encouraged to grieve. It could be any kind of loss- personal, marriage, family, society, nation, relationship etc. A loss is a loss.

Dear church, let me encourage you that God loves you in your real emotional self. He knows your innermost self which nullifies any self that we put on to look sorted.

**- David stayed connected to God**

Lord's anointed; truth and justice

When we look at David's life as a whole, he was not perfect, he committed really bad sins. Not everything that David did was exemplary. At the same time there are so many other things that we can look at David and say we can see that as an example and apply in our lives. I would like to highlight three things that we learn from David.

**Firstly, David is God dependent.** One of the best ways to understand David's heart and his dependence on God is read through the book of Psalms. Last Sunday we looked through Psalm 27 on how David reaches to God in times of desperation and finds hope in God. Today we read Psalm 10 and scholars believe that this Psalm is written by David even though there is no note written in the Psalm. We do not know the exact circumstances but we do get know David's God dependent nature. The first part of Psalm from Vs.1-11 is a Lament where David is expressing his lament to God. He is feeling that God is far away, God is hiding from him and the wicked is prospering. He in fact expresses in detail regarding the wicked people's prosperity. Lament is one of the dominant themes in the book of Psalms and we see David repeatedly lamenting in the scripture. Lament is a beautiful representation of our intimate relationship with God. In our human relationships, there are different levels of relationships. Some relationships are limited to only hellos. Some relationships have space for small talks; some give room for deeper talks. The closer the relationship gets, the deeper the conversations get. The deeper the conversation, higher the vulnerability and lesser the pretence. The relationship that we have with God can get the closest and it purely depends on how close we are to god. The more close we are to God, we start laying down our defences, we become more vulnerable, we start talking to God with no filters, we are in our real selves, we are in our raw real selves. I believe that this can be the greatest blessings that one can ask for. We can lay down all the thoughts that weigh upon us. For instance, if I am jealous with somebody, I can tell God that God I am jealous with someone due to following reasons. There is a tendency in me that would make me feel stupid. It feels stupid to tell details about my jealousy to God. The truth is that He knows the intricate details of your jealousy even if you don't mention it in your prayer. However, God's presence is such a healing providence where you don't need to have second thoughts of mentioning anything that is going on in your mind.

The second part of the Psalm is prayer and the third part is assurance of hope. We also see David seeking constantly seeking God's guidance in all that he does. What a great blessing we have in God that He is ever present, He gives us the providence to reach out to Him in our real raw self, as a complete mess, even when we are emotionally struggling to talk and probably just blabber. Church, what an amazing God we have!

**Secondly, he revered God deeply in his heart.** One thing that we learn about David throughout the scripture that his heart is always gravitated towards God. One of the ways we know that David deeply revered God is by learning his understanding of the Lord's anointed. David knew that he was God's anointed and he also knew that King Saul was anointed by God. We see in 1 Samuel that Saul was jealous of David and wanted to kill David. In fact, the second half of 1 Samuel is filled with chapters that narrate the stories of how Saul was chasing David and David is running away from Saul. We see a couple of times that David had a perfect opportunity to kill Saul but he doesn't take advantage of the situation. Even when Saul is dead, when the news bearer tells him that he killed Saul because Saul asked him to. David reacts to the situation saying, *How is it that you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy Yahweh's anointed one!* It is God who anoints the kings and they belong to God. David held this belief close to his heart out of his reverence to God.

In Romans 13:1 Paul says *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except by God and those that exist are put in place by God.* I understand that this can be a very sensitive topic especially in contexts where we don't with all the governmental policies and laws. Especially the laws that are against the Christian Faith. Probably, this requires a much deeper discussion. However, David's understanding of the Lord's anointed and Paul's letter tells us this;

God is the ultimate authority of the land we live in.

It is God who appoints the kings and leaders of nations.

We are called to law-abiding citizens while not compromising the values of our faith (we see that from other parts of the scriptures).

We are called to avoid civic conflicts that disrupts the peace of the nation that we live in.

Finally, It is the Lord who brings justice.

The call is to revere God from our heart that will lead us trust God and His ways.

**The third principle that we learn from David is that he faithfully does what he is called to do.** David was no more a shepherd boy but he was a warrior and a tribal king by then. He was the leader of Judah, the southern province of the nation of Israel. During this period, he pronounces and executes judgement on two different people. These people were executed on the account of sinning against God and nation. We also see David being the leader to his people, taking care of them, doing things that a leader does for their people. He serves as an example as someone who is faithful in what he/she does irrespective of the desired position in life. David knew that he is God's anointed even though he was not officially God's anointed in the nation of Israel yet. There was a time in life where I was not at all happy with my job where I felt my job is quite insignificant and I could contribute much more with the skills that I possess. I was cribbing this to my pastor then and he provided me with the perspective of flourishing. He said that it is God's desire that we all flourish. The job that we do contributes to somebody else's flourishing. So, it is not about how I flourish in my role but it is about the people around me flourishing because of the impact that I create in what I do. The significance of impact may vary but it should lead to the flourishing of my society, community, nation and probably the whole world. I feel that's what David does here. He is committed to the flourishing of his nation. He is committed irrespective of the crown.

Looking at the life of David. We learn three principles from him; David is God dependent, David carries deep reverence to God and David stays faithful in his calling.

While we spend time in looking at David, it is important to turn our focal lens to God and see **what is God doing during this period of History.** It feels like God is actively silent during this period. In fact, only time God speaks actively is by providing assurance to David when he seeks guidance from God.

But we learn that God is in action. We see that in this story is that God's ultimate purpose is to make David the king of Israel through whose lineage eventually comes Jesus Christ.

On the surface level, the story is not a supernatural one where God anoints David as a king and topples the existing government. Instead, it is a classical story where God's purposes are revealed and human life continues the way and most of the time it is not in line with God's purposes.

Eventually, God accomplishes his purposes.

How does it play out here?

David is the anointed king of David but is not part of the royal family. He cannot technically become a king. He becomes a celebrated warrior but the Saul becomes his enemy. He had close encounters with death but escaped all of this. He in fact had to leave the nation of Israel to stay safe from Saul. Meanwhile, his only connection to the Royal family was that he was married to Saul's daughter. While David was running away from him, Saul gave his daughter in marriage to another person while she was married to David. That's quite cruel. At this point of time, Samuel who was God's prophet who anointed David as the king is dead, David doesn't have any royal lineage. After Saul was dead, there were political scheming that was happening in the background that kept away from David becoming a king.

This sounds so tiring and long. The purpose of it is to know that David becoming a king was not a straight line at any stretch but God's purpose came into fulfilment. David, the God's anointed did not enter the throne through his strengths or his royal heritage or through his prowess or through his warrior abilities to become the king of Israel. Instead, he was weak who was on a run for his life in the wilderness. God made him the king of Israel and brought his plan to fulfilment.

The story of David points out to the Lord's anointed Jesus Christ who brought God's purposes to fulfilment in the cross through weakness so that whoever believes in Him does not perish but have eternal life. The cross of Christ is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

This brings the message of hope and comfort to know that God is in control, God is constantly working and God eventually wins.