

(2 Samuel) More Anointing, More War

by David Guzik

David's return to God and his commitment to serving others is a powerful example of how we can live a life of faith and obedience to God.

Duration: 34:58

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:13, 1 Samuel 23:2, 1 Samuel 23:4, 2 Samuel 2:18, Ephesians 5:18

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Christian Maturity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the need for Christians to have a mature understanding of the spiritual battle they face. He uses the example of a young man in military training to illustrate the idea that sometimes we may not feel like we need the challenges and hardships in our lives, but they are necessary for our growth. The speaker then transitions to a biblical story from 2 Samuel, where a fierce battle takes place between the armies of Ishvosheth and David. He emphasizes the vividness of the scene and highlights the importance of commitment in winning a war. The sermon concludes with a reference to Winston Churchill's speeches during wartime, emphasizing the need for commitment in achieving victory.

Transcript

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 so David went up there and his two wives also Achanoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite and David brought up the men who were with him every man with his household so they dwelt in the cities of Hebron and The men of Judah came and there they anointed David King over the house of Judah When the book of 2nd Samuel began David wasn't in the land of Israel He was living among the Philistines in the city of Ziklag And that's where he is when the second chapter of 2nd Samuel begins David is sort of pulling out of a decline in his spiritual life a period of time when he lived virtually as a Philistine among the Philistines It was a time where despair and discouragement Had led him away from the things of God and the people of God and it took a real Shaking in his life to bring him back to a place where he was committed to serving and honoring God again But that shaking has happened and now David is doing something great. Did you notice it here in verse 1? It says that he inquired of the Lord Now I know that there's a lot in this section in this chapter that we can't really deal with Many of you were probably struck with some curiosity when you notice that David had two wives here and you're saying what's that all about? This man after God's own heart. Well, can I just ask you to sort of put that on hold? We'll do let's wait till David has a few more wives before we deal with that whole question And we'll get to it a little bit later on in our study of 2nd Samuel So

be patient with me on that one But I just want you to focus on the fact that David inquired of the Lord how important that is in our life You know so often we set our course and we make our plans and somewhere along the way we ask God to bless them Well, we want God to bless our plans, right? My plan my strategy.

Oh God, please bless it. Come on over onto my team God David wasn't like that his heart is changed and now he's inquiring of the Lord much more than God's blessing on his plans Now David wants to be right in the middle of God's plan. And so he inquires he said God Do you want me to go to Judah and it's beautiful what we see there in verses 1 & 2 that the Lord answered him? I think even better than David Inquiring of the Lord is what we read there in verse 1 where it says and the Lord said to him go up Isn't it great when you have that guidance from the Lord, you know, sometimes we don't and it's not because God wants to torture us It's not because God hates us.

Sometimes God only reveals the smallest of steps in front of us Sometimes you just as well. I'm not going to give you any more guidance You just be faithful right here where you're at and we just obey him at times like that But nevertheless, isn't it glorious when he does give us guidance and says go up God didn't have to God had every right to say well David, you know You're just coming back to me now after a period of decline after a period of backsliding in your spiritual life David You're on probation for six months Come inquire of me back in another six months and then maybe I'll speak to you No, no, do you see how gracious God is how much he loves you how much he cares about you? And so David says well now good I can go back and the Lord can give me this Guidance and I know God that you're going to do some great things in my life And there were some great things happening when he came back to Judah. Did you see what happened? Verse 4 then the men of Judah came and there they anointed David King over the house of Judah If you know anything about the life of David, this might make you scratch your head say well, wait a minute A long time before this David was already anointed King remember when Samuel came and at that big dinner with all of David's brothers and and God didn't want the firstborn in David's family nor the second born went all the way down to the eighth son in the family who was David and There Samuel anointed David with oil anointing him as the next king over Israel Well, he was already anointed.

Why is he being anointed again in verse 4? Isn't that a powerful lesson to his friends that we we need a fresh anointing from God an Ongoing experience with the Holy Spirit. Oh I rejoice if God anointed you 15 or 20 years ago like he did David Do you need a fresh anointing from the Lord? He's here to give it to you He's here to give you that great anointing. I want you to notice something that's pointed out for us here in verse 4 Where did this anointing happen did it happen when David was in Ziklag living among the Philistines? No, look at it there verse 4 then the men of Judah came and there they anointed David there Where's the there in Hebron in the land of Judah? The anointing couldn't come to David when he still lived among the Philistines Virtually as a Philistine himself.

He had to get things right in his own walk before this fresh anointing That beautiful David says no, I'm leaving the Philistines. I'm leaving those associates I'm gonna walk among the people of God now and when he came God had a beautiful fresh anointing for him Oh, we need that in our own lives, don't we? Maybe that's God's Word for some of you right now Just as well. You could just get up and leave right? Please don't bear me out to the end But that's what the Lord has really wanted to say to you.

He's been trying to get that through to you You got to leave the Philistines and come and be among the people of God and then God has a fresh anointing for you Well, it didn't end there. Not at all. David was a gracious man He knew how to give thanks where it was due look at here in verse 4 It says in the middle of

the verse and they told David saying the men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead and said to them you're blessed of the Lord for you've shown this kindness to Your Lord to Saul and it buried him now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you I also will repay you this kindness because you've done this thing now Therefore let your hands be unstrengthened and be valiant for your master Saul is dead and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them Well, David knows to give some recognition show some gratitude towards these brave and faithful men of the city of Jabesh Gilead You see when Saul was slain on the field of battle actually He he ended his own life in a in a misguided attempt when he knew that his his fate was sealed there on the the slopes of Mount Gilboa Saul killed himself and his sons also fell slain in battle and Saul Decided there and to end his own life and when the Philistines came upon his dead body They couldn't help but desecrate it Mutilate it Hang it from a wall on one of their prominent cities Just so that the cause of God in the name of God could be mocked Well, these men of Jabesh Gilead wouldn't stand for it And so in a daring commando raid they broke out and they they fled and they they came to the walls of the city Where where the body of Saul and his sons were hanging and they cut it down and they took it back to the land of Israel and they gave it a proper burial David says I want to recognize that these are the kind of men I need to encourage these are the kind of men I need to have strong around me and that's exactly what he did He's strengthened and he encouraged these men of Jabesh Gilead Now right about now we think the rest of the nation of Israel should be coming around They should be recognizing David as king.

I mean, he's God's man, right? He was anointed 15 or 20 years ago to be the king over Israel And here he is the Saul's dead long live the new king King David But I think it's fascinating that not everybody recognized the reign of David look at it here verse 8 But Abner the son of Nerr commander of Saul's army took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahana and He made him king over Gilead over the Asherites over Jezreel over Ephraim over Benjamin and over all Israel Ishbosheth Saul's son was 40 years old when he began to reign over Israel and he reigned two years only the house of Judah followed David and The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months This is strange, isn't it? Well, I thought David was the new king But what's up with this? distant son of Saul Named Ishbosheth who suddenly gets put up into the place of being king and most of the tribes of Israel recognize him I mean there were 12 tribes in Israel and 11 of them recognized Ishbosheth the pretender to the throne and only one of them the tribe of Judah recognized David now This is fascinating because well if I was David, I wouldn't stand for it at all I mean I wouldn't put out my hand against King Saul because as bad as Saul was Saul was anointed of the Lord, but not Ishbosheth The Lord never put his anointing on King as King on Ishbosheth not one bit And if I was David, I would have well kill this man assault his armies ruin him David didn't David said Lord, I'm not gonna take the throne. You're gonna have to give it to me You're gonna have to open the door You're gonna have to pave the way and David knew this as well that he did not want to reign over the people of Israel Until they wanted him to reign over them David wasn't going to impose or force his reign on anybody. The 11 tribes want Ishbosheth and not me then fine Let them have him God will bring them around God will arrange the circumstances that results in the fall of Ishbosheth.

I don't have to worry about it. God will do it That amazing that David wouldn't force his reign on anyone And neither will Jesus Christ the son of David. Have you been waiting for that? Have you been waiting for Jesus to force his reign on you now Maybe you're really not a follower of Jesus Christ at all And you've come here this morning as a favor to family or friends or whatever I'm glad you're here But I just want you to see and don't you to notice that that Jesus isn't going to force his reign on you You're gonna have to invite him in Maybe you're waiting and say well Jesus, you know, whenever you make me be a follower of

you, then I'll do it You know, Jesus won't do that not I won't say that he won't paint you into a corner here and there But the decision is still going to be up to you You're gonna have to choose to be a follower of Jesus Christ and he'll set up where he'll put you in the right direction He'll persuade you of the necessary character of this but it's still going to come down to you have to be a willing follower of Jesus Christ in The army of the Lord, there's only volunteers.

He doesn't he doesn't impress anybody or draft anybody into service Or maybe you're you're waiting for the time when Jesus forces a full commitment out of you total surrender Saying okay, Jesus when you really want it from me force it from me. No. No, he's gonna invite you He stands at the door of your heart and he knocks you're waiting for him to kick in the door No, he's gonna knock and wait for you to open He's not gonna force his reign on anybody yet All there's going to come a day when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess There's going to come a day when recognition of Jesus and his sovereign Reign is king.

It's not going to be optional right now. The Lord leaves it up to you Don't don't wait for him to force it from you Well, look in this time where there was two competing kings over the people of God You can just imagine that there would be warfare. So look at it here in verse 12 now Abner the son of Ner By the way, maybe I should say a few words about Abner You can't say that name without thinking of the comic strip little Abner, right? I'll get that out of your mind for heaven's sakes, you know This isn't some country yokel walking around bare feet, you know with with all that sort of nonsense Abner was anything but that that sort of country five stupid man This was a sharp military man tough mean utterly devoted to his cause This is the kind of guy you would want in charge of your armies and he was Saul's general for many many years Well when Saul died, I think Abner ached to be in charge of things.

And so he found a weak man a Son of Saul, maybe a son pushed off to the side. I Would even speculate that ishposheth was an illegitimate son of Saul because he's not mentioned among the other sons of Saul But we'll take this man and then put him up into power and then Abner knew well, I can really run things I'll just put a weak man up there and I can really run the show verse 12 now Abner the son of Ner and the servants of ishposheth the son of Saul went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon and Joab the son of Zariah and the servants of David went out and they met them by the pool of Gibeon So they sat down one on one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool And here we're introduced to another fascinating man. We've got Abner who by the way was a cousin of King Saul Then we have Joab who actually was a nephew of David See Joab is a fascinating captivating man all on his own Joab was the son of one of David's sisters and Joab had two brothers The two brothers name were Abishai and Asahel and we're going to meet those two guys later on in the chapter and Joab and Abner are fascinating men cut from the same cloth that they were tough mean Military men and as I said both completely devoted to their cause and here they are They're set across on a pool that the armies are surrounding and for some reason they choose 12 men to step forward Maybe for some kind of contest maybe for some kind of duel They say well, let's see how your best and our best square off against each other And so there they have you know, they have the the Navy SEALs on one side and then on the other side They have the Army Rangers or the elite among the Marine Corps or whatever and they're squaring off across one another right there on those army lines across a pool Look what's going to happen here in this battle verse 14 then Abner said to Joab let the young men now rise and Compete before us and Joab said let them arise so they arose and went over by number 12 from Benjamin followers of Ishmael the son of Saul and 12 from the servants of David and each one Grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in the opponent's side so that they fell down together Therefore the place was called the field of sharp swords, which is in Gibeon Wow

Wouldn't that be a scene There they are these 24 men squaring off against each other 12 on one side and 12 on the other and they're paired off one by one and as they get ready, somebody announces a signal go start whatever they would do and they each reach out It's almost as if it's choreographed.

They each reach over and grab one another's head and draw a sword and almost simultaneously They kill one another and so that in just a few moments. There's 24 dead bodies laying down there on the field And the surrounding armies look at it and they're outraged how could this happen what they killed 12 of our men and the other side Well, they killed 12 of our men Well, let's add it boys and they go at it and they fight look at it there in verse 17 So there was a very fierce battle that day and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David Well, this is remarkable not just for the vividness of the scene You know you think about this this had to be an eyewitness writing this right only an eyewitness would note those details as they were Friends, I want you to see not just the vividness of the scene But the whole the whole concept of this we kind of take the camera back a little bit look at the whole situation We say this is crazy This is madness Why does David have to fight a war to come to the throne? Didn't he already go through all of that? Isn't he already anointed didn't he already spend 15 20 years, you know being chased around the Judean countryside By this crazy King Saul who wanted to kill him Didn't he already lose his family and lose his career and lose his home and lose his security God hasn't he paid his dues enough? Well, why don't you just make it a fast track to the throne right now? Why does he have to be the pretender to the throne and? Why is there so much warfare in the Christian life No, why I? Keep waiting for it. I keep waiting for the day when it's just all going to be easy Now I have to say in all honesty And I think you would say the same thing that there are wonderful periods of time of rest that God gives us in the Christian life But somehow we don't remember those Don't seem to rush through in those times of struggle or warfare we remember those There's a fun.

I know it from surfing. There's a funny thing about it But somehow your wipeouts are more vividly impressed in your mind than even a great ride You have a great ride and and it's over and you oh you want to paddle out and get another one You almost forget it as soon as it's done. Oh, but the wipeouts you remember those You know the warfare that we fight why why There's a lot of reasons for it, but can I? Can I mention one great reason why I think God had this for David? It's because we need the battle We need the warfare now.

I know you don't feel like it. You feel like that's the last thing you need But you know there's a lot of things that we need in our life that we don't feel like we need I think of Pastor Bob and his wife Rose and their son Nathan there in military training right now for the Marine Corps in boot camp And I just picture a young man like that Called up and well, here's a 15 mile forced march with heavy packs Do you think you well I need this. Oh boy.

Do I need this? Feels like that's the last thing in the world you need But in the big picture, it's what you do need you do need things like this We do need the warfare. We do need the bat and as I thought about it, I thought you know, we We need to really live the Christian life with a grown-up view about the battle that we face Last summer my daughter spent several weeks as a guest from my sister-in-law Who lives in London and she spent several weeks in London? What a great opportunity it was for to hang out with my sister-in-law and her family and to and to you know Tour all around London and my my daughter is a very polite girl, of course, and she has good manners So when she returned home, she brought gifts and what she got me was something that I couldn't find anywhere Though I looked for it in the US, but she was able to find it somewhere another in London It was a set of two cassette tapes the wartime speeches of Winston Churchill And it's all the great addresses that he gave over BBC Radio during World War two

Right leading up to the war and then the war itself and I just about drove my family crazy listening to those tapes all the time But I was really struck by seeing What Churchill would say to the nation during a time of war? I? Think it really came out very eloquently What it took to succeed in wartime or at least some of the principles one of the principles I saw there was that wars are won with commitment You've got to be committed to win in wartime Listen to this from one of Churchill's speeches and don't expect me for a moment to try to do his voice that that would just Be the silliest thing we can imagine here But he says this We must show ourselves Equally capable of meeting a sudden violent shock or what is perhaps a harder test a prolonged vigil But be the ordeal sharp or long or both We shall seek no terms we shall tolerate no parlay we shall show mercy, but we shall ask none I Like that line in there Be the ordeal sharp or long or both We will go through with it friends. I think it's very clear to us that wars are won with commitment.

They're never won out of convenience. I Was speaking with a great man of prayer a great man of God and the man of God was impressing upon him the need in his Life for a secret time of prayer He shared how every great work of God every great awakening and revival if you traced it back far enough It came out of one person's prayer closet And so he wanted to know from this man. Well, what's your secret time of prayer like with God? What's it like with you and the Lord in the secret place? Well, the man felt very convicted because he really had no personal prayer life to speak of and so he went to the refuge that We often do in a time like that He talked about the times that he does pray and he pointed out how he prays when he drives to work every morning And he said, you know, it's great there I am in the car and as our instinct in a time like that We start dressing it up to even be more than it is, you know, and he says it's so wonderful there I'm driving to work and I can see the rising sun and all the rest of it And it just lifts my heart up to glory with the Lord and you start exaggerating talk about how great it is And you know, he points out that he prayed in his car every every time when he goes to work in the morning now Far be it from me or anybody else To put down prayer in your car.

I mean, that's great. It's wonderful We see how we all drive on the freeway, you know all the prayer the better But then the the godly man that he was speaking to said something that really stuck in my mind He said I am so happy to hear That you pray out of convenience But I pray that the Lord would lead you into prayer out of commitment as well And there's a difference isn't there? There's a difference between a Christian life by convenience and a Christian life out of commitment Well convenience never won a war never But commitment does but let's look at how this war was fought here verse 18 now the three sons of Zariah were there Joab and Abishai and Asahel and Asahel was as fleet of foot as a wild gazelle So Asahel pursued Abner and in going he did not turn to the right hand or to the left from following Abner you can Picture this in your mind, can't you?

There they are running over the Judean Landscape and sometimes the distance is great Sometimes maybe Abner is 30 or 40 yards in front other times it gets very close and it seems like Abner is just within reach of this fast young man this nephew of David named Asahel and you know Asahel wants him because if he gets the commander well, then then the battles over and he's thinking Oh what a great feather in my cap would it be to come back with the armor of Abner and to show everybody what a great thing that I had accomplished and he goes on here now verse 20 and Abner looked behind him and said are you Asahel?

And he said I am and Abner said him turn aside your right hand to your left and lay hold on one of the young Men and take his armor for yourself, but Asahel would not turn aside from following him So Abner said again to Asahel turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How could I ever face your brother Joab? However, he refused to turn aside Therefore Abner struck him in the stomach with

the blunt end of the spear So that the spear came out of his back and he fell down there and he died on the spot So it was that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died Stood still Wow, that's vivid, isn't it?

Abner in a clever and brilliant maneuver knows how to stop and as he stops he backs up his spear and Asahel who had been following so close upon him is impaled upon the spear and in a dramatic scene It went right through him and he died right there on the field of battle Verse 24 Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner and the Sun was going down till they came to the hill of Ammah Which is before a Giah by the road to the wilderness of Gibeon Now the children of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became a unit and took their stand on top of a hill Do you get the point here?

Do you get the scene in front of your eyes? The armies of Ishbosheth led by Abner now, let's remember These are the armies of the pretender King the king who has no place ruling over any part of Israel and These armies are on the run and verse 25 tells us that they they gathered up the the forces and in a last stand They said here we are in a good defensive position on top of this hill men reform the ranks strengthen the lines We're going to prepare for a final assault if we don't hold it here We're destroyed and the men of Abner that army under him They're ready for this final assault from Joab and the troops loyal to David and then notice what happened in verse 26 Then Abner called to Joab and said shall the sword devour forever Do you not know that it will be bitter in the latter end?

How long will it be then until you tell the people to return from pursuing their brethren? Do you get the scene here at this critical moment when the armies of Abner on the run and they're in full retreat and then They make a stand for a final last Desperate effort to withhold total destruction Abner calls out to Joab as he's leading the army up the hill Joab Can't we all just get along Joab let's give peace a chance now I'm sure that the That the men loyal to David under Joab were very tired I'm sure that they were weary of fighting.

You know, they saw their men They saw Asahel laying down on the ground this great warrior among the people of God Laying down there with a spear stuck clean through his body They're weary of the blood and the gore and the fatigue and the intensity of war But they did a bad thing at that critical moment when they could have pressed through and Destroyed this army that was opposing God's King Well, look what they did verse 27 and Joab said as God lives unless you had spoken surely then by morning All the people would have given up pursuing their brethren In other words, okay Let's take a break That's it wasn't that good. They stopped fighting No, it's not good Look at it here to the rest of the chapter. We're even going to read the first verse of chapter 3 Verse 28 so Joab blew a trumpet and all the people stood still and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore Then Abner and his men went on all the night through the plain crossed over the Jordan and went through all Bithron till they came to Mahanaim So Joab returned from pursuing Abner and when he had gathered all the people together There were missing of David's servants 19 men and Asahel but of the servants of David had struck down a Benjamin and Abner's men 360 men who died.

Well, that's a big difference in casualty count, isn't it? Do you see how close? the men of David were to completely vanquishing the foe when you have a casualty counts 360 to 20. That's a pretty big difference verse 32 Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb Which is in Bethlehem and Joab and his men went all night and they came to Hebron a daybreak now. There was a long war between the house of Saul in the house of David But David grew stronger and stronger and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

I think this is amazing That long war was unnecessary If Abner Wouldn't have given that call for a ceasefire and If Joab wouldn't have received it They could have pressed through and won the victory right then on that hill on that day, but he didn't What was the result There was a long war, you know in the lives of many Christian people today There's there's raging a civil war It's between the forces of the King Jesus in your life and a pretender King let's call himself and they're battling aren't they and I I Realize that there is a time when God is dealing with something in our life and we have the opportunity to press it home through to completion and The world or the flesh or the devil at that moment wants to do every can everything it can to cry out to you and to say Ceasefire Let's give peace a chance Can't we just get along and at that critical moment is the time where you can't listen to it And you need to press through until the victory is absolutely complete in your own life. I Trust that you're battling some things in your walk before the Lord. I Mean, that's a good thing to say.

Well, I want to be more pure in this area I want to be more holy in this area. I want to be more disciplined in that area. Those are good things Friends if you're still struggling with the same things you struggled with five or ten years ago that's a long war and I wonder if there weren't times when you almost had victory in hand But when the offer for ceasefire was made you withdrew Now as I look around and I think of what God's doing in our church family and in individual lives.

I Think that God's doing some wonderful things and in your lives in certain places in certain ways You can say that the devil so to speak is on the run The world or the flesh is never there in retreat Do you see what this shows us if you don't press the battle through to the end You're just going to be facing a long war along the end Friends wars are never won when you just want it all to end And that's the atmosphere. That's the discouragement That the world and the flesh and the devil will try to paint in your mind in the time of battle Oh, I just want the struggle to be over But wars are never won when you just want to escape from it Let me read you another little section of Winston Churchill In another speech, he said we ask no favors of the enemy. We seek from them no compunction on the contrary if tonight the people of London were asked to cast their votes as to whether a Convention should be entered into to stop the bombing of all cities an Overwhelming majority would cry.

No, we will give out to the Germans the measure and more than the measure that they have given to us We will have no truce or parley with you or the grisly gang who work your wicked will You do your worst and we will do our best Friends When God is moving in your life and you sense the advantage in some area or in many areas It is time to read double your commitment to the Lord and press it home to the fullest to leave nothing in reserve And to never listen to that siren song that says well, maybe now it's time for ceasefire No, it is Not until King Jesus reigns in glory over every area of our life. Well, let's pray and ask God to impress this to our hearts That is our prayer Lord We pray for the great victory of King Jesus over every arena every aspect and Lord we know that this requires a commitment from us But Lord we ask that you help by putting that commitment in us first We cry out before you Lord and say let us Let us be dedicated to you and press home the advantage to the fullest. We love you Lord We praise you and honor you here this morning We ask that you would persuade any reluctant hearts among us To press on in this warfare Lord in some ways we didn't ask for this, but we can see it as a gift from your gracious hand Pour out your spirit upon us we pray in Jesus name Amen

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