

Life of David, In the Waiting Room of God, 2 Samuel 5, 6/6/25

Confession- I hate waiting. I don't like to wait for my shower water to get hot, I don't like to wait in traffic, I will find a road that is still moving even if it's longer if it means I don't have to wait. I hate waiting at the DMV, or waiting for my water to boil for my spaghetti. The most frustrating thing is waiting for the doctor, who's with me? You wait on hold to make an appointment, then you wait 4 weeks for the appointment, and then you get there and wait 30 minutes in the "waiting room", Seinfeld has a joke about that he says "They actually have a room named the waiting room, just for this activity, that's all you do! You wait in the waiting room. Then they call you in... to wait in another room! This is the smaller room. Now you don't even have your magazine and you have no pants on!" So if you are a doctor out there, just know this is how we all feel. Wasn't that cathartic?

This continues to be an area of my character that the Spirit is working on in my life, and I'm guessing I'm not alone. And of course we all have to wait for far more serious things than traffic and the doctor. Maybe you are waiting for a clear diagnosis, a new job, physical healing, a relationship to begin or a relationship to mend, a breakthrough with your adult children, a cure...Waiting...One of the reasons that we struggle so much with waiting is because we think that **waiting is wasting**. It's a waste of precious time, just spinning our wheels, nothing is happening, at least nothing we can perceive.

But what if God sees waiting from an entirely different perspective? What if waiting isn't wasting at all. **What if God's waiting room is the place where God isn't wasting, but working**...forming, molding, doing things in us for his extraordinary purposes? That's where we are headed today in the life of David.

Today, we're looking at the chapter that marks the fulfillment of a decades-long promise, 2 Samuel 5. Finally, in the year 1005 BC, David became king over not only the tribe of Judah, but all 12 tribes of Israel to the North and South, a united kingdom. **v.4 David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.**

5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

It's fair to say that David knew a thing or two about being in God's waiting room, and we will return to this theme, but first let's read about the first several months of David securing his kingdom with the Lord as the wind at his back.

6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The very first act of David he undertakes as King of a united Israel is taking the fortified city of Jerusalem and making it his capital. Some biblical context, when Joshua took the promised land, he was able to capture most of the land, but never Jerusalem. For 400 years Jerusalem existed as a hostile enclave within Israel under the control of a Canaanite people, the Jebusites, who were among the wicked people groups whom God told his people coming out of Egypt to drive out of the land as an act of justice. So finally, David is fulfilling God's command.

The last seven years David had been reigning over Judah from Hebron, so why move the capital? Strategically there are at least three reasons.

- 1- It's exactly on the border of the northern and southern tribes of Israel.
- 2- It had a wonderful water supply, the Gihon Spring which ran even when the rest of the land was in drought.
- 3- It was set high on the hills, it was an easily defensible city.

You can see why Jerusalem has been such a strategically important city, fought over for centuries to this very day. But ultimately the reason is because it's the place God had chosen. David tells us this in **Psalm 132, For the LORD has chosen Jerusalem, he has desired it for his dwelling, saying,**

"This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it. And it will be the place that the Lord Jesus returns first, and the city that was modeled after the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem in the final state. Wow, pretty big deal.

V.6 The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here."

7 Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion—which is the City of David. How?

8 On that day David had said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies. Obviously this isn't David mocking people with disabilities, this is David sending their taunts back at them.

9 David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces inward.

10 And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.

For 400 years the Jebusites successfully defended Jerusalem, they wrongly thought they were impenetrable. But they failed to defend their weak point, the water shaft. They find themselves on the wrong side of biblical history because they failed to take seriously that the Lord almighty was with David. Instead, they should have been more like the guy in verse 11.

11 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent envoys to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. Not everyone is an enemy, Hiram was a friend and ally not only to David but to Solomon as well. The Hiram took God's covenant in Genesis 12 seriously, **"Those who bless Israel I will bless, those who curse Israel, I will curse."** **12 Then David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.** After nearly 2 decades David finally is experiencing the promises of God.

There's been an enormous amount of excavation done in the City of David in Jerusalem over the last 150 years. I've had the privilege of touring this privately in 2021 when they were just

beginning to allow people back into Israel. Here was a Jewish man I met there, [view of Mount of O] You can see how close all of this is, just across the valley from the City of David is the Mount of Olives.

One of the things you will notice are the ruins of the stone terraces mentioned in v. 9 that level out the ground in between the top of Jerusalem into the surrounding valley, at least 55 of these supporting terraces have been found, like the one you see here dating back to this very time in history.

In 1967 famous archaeologist, Kathleen Kenyon, excavated a building during the time of David that confirms this is the palace of David that Hiram King of Tyre built for David in verse 11. Based on the ruins, here's a rendering of what they imagine that looked like. Here's what's especially interesting. Dr. Kenyon unearthed giant supporting columns that correspond in design to columns that were used by Phoenicians at the very same time. And doesn't that make sense because Hiram who was a Phoenician sent his workers there.

The water shaft referred to v. 8 that David's men used to sneak attack the Jebusites was discovered in 1867 by Sir Charles Warren, now called Warren's Shaft is a deep tunnel hewn through solid rock used to bring water in and as an escape route, an unbelievable engineering feat. All of this just confirms "the more they dig out of the ground the more the Bible proves to be true."

So back to our story- not only did God use David's early reign to drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem, God's holy city, but also to drive out their arch-rivals the Philistines from the promised land.

17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold.

18 Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim; **19** so David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hands?"

The LORD answered him, "Go, for I will surely deliver the Philistines into your hands."

20 So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, the LORD has broken out against my enemies before me."

Once again, David clings not to military strategy, or the might of his army, but to the Lord to fight his battles, and once again the God of Angel Armies fights the battle. And the chapter ends with yet another decisive victory over the Philistines by the hand of the Lord, securing the land from Israel's enemies.

And while this is certainly a chapter of triumph and victory for David in the power of God, we have to go back where the chapter started, after nearly 2 decades, David finally receives the promise that he would be king, but only after years of extreme hardship, rejection, threats and

near death experiences, running, confusion, and loneliness. Where was all this victory and triumph back then with David? Wheren't those just wasted years running and hiding in caves? Couldn't David have been getting all this done years ago?

David must have been wondering the same thing at times. David is human just like us, with doubts, and fears, and impatience...David struggled to sit in God's waiting room. In the Psalms we hear his struggle- "God where are you? God did you forget about me and the promises you made to me?" David was tempted just as you and I are to think that waiting is wasting. And yet, what is so inspiring about David is that in all of these moments of waiting, he leaned back into the character and promises of God.

Psalm 27:13-14 *"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."* And David stands in a long line of men and women of faith in the Bible encouraging us to wait on the Lord. Did you know there are over 100 verses where we are commanded or encouraged to wait on the Lord?

Isaiah 40:31 – *"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength..."*

Jeremiah- Lamentations 3:25-26 – *"The Lord is good to those who wait for him... it is good that one should wait quietly..."*

Paul- Romans 8:25 – *"But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."*

The secret that Isaiah, and Jeremiah and Paul and David learned is in the midst of our waiting trust in the character and the promises of God, that **it's not wasting, it's God working**. Just like gardening...In fact gardening teaches you some good theology. You plant a seed, water it. Nothing. Next day water it, nothing. On and on for weeks! It seems like nothing is happening...ahh but under the surface is where all the work is happening, roots are growing deeper, getting stronger, more in tune with the soil, getting all the nutrients...before anything happens above the surface. In fact, if it just shot up right away it would die quickly from exposure to the harsh elements. Guess what grows up fast weeds and fungus...Do you want to be a fungi? This is what God is doing in David's life through those years of waiting.

How was God working in David to bring about his great purposes? Teaching humility, Developing leadership, Building his trust in God, Learning to deal with conflict and rejection, building his character, Learning not to take shortcuts (he refused to kill Saul), Built his reputation among the people he would lead, to learn to delight in the blesser, not just the blessing. Using him to write such powerful Psalms that have benefited millions for centuries, God was giving him the intimate experiences of Jesus in his suffering.

Waiting isn't passive—David wasn't wasting time; he was being shaped into the kind of king God wanted him to be. God's waiting room is where God *forms* us, the waiting room is the doctor's office in many ways for God.

What are you waiting on right now that's stretching your trust in the character and promises of God? How is God working while you are waiting?

LC on our staff team, shared her own experience with our team of waiting as an Iranian immigrant to come to the US. I asked if I could share her story, here's what she wrote- "My sister was our sponsor and had to go through all the right channels to submit our documents. There was no set timeline, no way of knowing how long it would take. What we thought might be a year or two turned into five long years of waiting, years filled with uncertainty, hope, and prayer.

And that wasn't the end of it. Once our papers were finally approved by the agency in Austria, we had to sell everything we owned just to cover our travel expenses, still not knowing for sure if it would all work out. It was another leap of faith, another year of waiting and just trusting the Lord to make a way.

Living in Austria as refugees was tough. Everything cost nearly seven times more than it did in Iran, and we weren't allowed to work. So we waited again, this time for the U.S. Embassy to process our case. No one could tell us how long it would take.

When our interview finally came, we were heartbroken to be rejected. They didn't believe our story about the persecution we faced as Christians. They couldn't accept that my mom had spent time in jail for her faith, or that I was mocked, hit, and even tortured by classmates because I followed Jesus.

In those moments, one verse carried us: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

It was that promise that kept us going when everything felt uncertain. Eventually, our pastor sent a letter confirming our story, and by God's grace, we were given a second interview. Miraculously, this time, we were accepted. We had no idea if or when we would make it to the U.S., but God was working behind the scenes, just like He always does.

Now, 18 years later, I look back and see His hand in every step of the journey. I know in my heart that God brought us here for a purpose, for such a time as this, and, of course, to find the love of my life, Sherak. He helped us adapt, learn the culture and the language, and prepared us to be His hands and feet in this new land we call home." Inspiring. And we are all part of the blessing that they are to our church family.

Waiting is not wasting, it's God's Working. God's working on your character, your trust, your resilience, he's working to prepare you, ultimately for glory!

You say, but what if what we are waiting for we never get? Listen, God does not promise to give us everything we pray for and desire. We can trust God to deliver on that which he promises in his word to us, but sometimes the waiting isn't fulfilled this side of eternity.

The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 tells us that he was waiting on God in prayer to remove a thorn in his side. We don't know what it was, maybe physical, emotional, maybe a temptation. But God didn't give him what he asked for, but he gave him something better than a miracle healing, in other words, he gave him something better than power. He said, "My grace is sufficient for you." v.9 In our suffering, in our unfulfilled longing for a spouse, a healing, for a problem to go away, for our kids to come back to faith, for restoration...We want God's power, but he might just give you his grace. Here's why that's better. Power will not save our soul, but grace does. By grace you have been saved. Power will not transform us. But grace does. Power will not solve any of our biggest soul deep, eternal problems, but grace will. God's grace comes to us at just the right time. Romans 5.

Communion