

A HEART TO RUN

2 Samuel 18:5-32

Ephesians 6:18 AMPC

Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).

- It is so significant that we learn to pray, walk, and live in the Spirit of God.
- One of my favorite spiritual 'life lessons' is found in **2 Samuel 18:5-32** concerning a man named Ahimaaz.

2 Samuel 18:5-18 NASB

⁵ The king charged Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "*Deal* gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king charged all the commanders concerning Absalom. ⁶ Then the people went out into the field against Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷ The people of Israel were defeated there before the servants of David, and the slaughter there that day was great, 20,000 men. ⁸ For the battle there was spread over the whole countryside, and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

⁹ Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on *his* mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going. ¹⁰ When a certain man saw *it*, he told Joab and said, "Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak." ¹¹ Then Joab said to the man who had told him, "Now behold, you saw *him*! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? And I would have given you ten *pieces* of silver and a belt." ¹² The man said to Joab, "Even if I should receive a thousand *pieces* of silver in my hand, I would not put out my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Protect for me the young man Absalom!'" ¹³ Otherwise, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." ¹⁴ Then Joab said, "I will not waste time here with you." So he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. ¹⁵ And ten young men who carried Joab's armor gathered around and struck Absalom and killed him.

¹⁶ Then Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the people. ¹⁷ They took Absalom and cast him into a deep pit in the forest and erected over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled, each to his tent. ¹⁸ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to preserve my name." So he named the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

- David's army was overcoming the opposition.
 - David wanted to win the battle against Absalom and his supporters. (v5)

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- David also wanted to keep Absalom alive (capture him, not kill him). This was his posture towards Saul and Nabal; let God determine their fate and not David or his soldiers.
- Joab defies David's desires and his directive and Absalom is killed. (v9-17)
- Joab knows what David is like and if Absalom is captured and brought to David, Absalom would be allowed to live. Joab wanted to end the 'rebellion' and assure that David would continue as King so he had Absalom killed and was willing to risk David's rebuke to end Absalom's revolt.
- David and Joab were both 'career' soldiers but their values were quite different.

“Joab had a better idea than David, or so he thought. He was a warrior and it was his purpose to win the battle, so he put three spears in Absalom's body and turned him over to ten other soldiers who finished him off. Joab was a warrior like David, but he was not a worshipper. David was a man with a heart after God, while Joab was a man with a heart for conquest. Joab's heart left no room to respect David's love for his son or God's lordship of His chosen people. Joab's lust for victory trumped his loyalty to the king and to the King of kings.” **John Brown, *Rhythm of a Captured Heart***

- Do you see the difference in these two hearts?
- Joab was a warrior but it was all about winning. He had a lust for victory.
- Joab was all about conquest, so much so that he missed 'connection' with the King's heart and the King's heart values.
 - Joab was a true warrior but he lacked the passion of a true worshipper.
 - Joab was governed by the 'terms of engagement' while on the battlefield, while David was governed by terms of engaging the heart of the Father.

2 Samuel 18:18-32 NASB

¹⁸ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to preserve my name." So he named the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day. ¹⁹ Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Please let me run and bring the king news that the LORD has freed him from the hand of his enemies." ²⁰ But Joab said to him, "You are not the man to carry news this day, but you shall carry news another day; however, you shall carry no news today because the king's son is dead." ²¹ Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed to Joab and ran. ²² Now Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said once more to Joab, "But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite." And Joab said, "Why would you run, my son, since you will have no reward for going?" ²³ "But whatever happens," *he said*, "I will run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and passed up the Cushite.

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²⁴ Now David was sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and raised his eyes and looked, and behold, a man running by himself. ²⁵ The watchman called and told the king. And the king said, "If he is by himself there is good news in his mouth." And he came nearer and nearer. ²⁶ Then the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "Behold, *another* man running by himself." And the king said, "This one also is bringing good news." ²⁷ The watchman said, "I think the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said, "This is a good man and comes with good news."

²⁸ Ahimaaz called and said to the king, "All is well." And he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. And he said, "Blessed is the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king." ²⁹ The king said, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, and your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what *it was*." ³⁰ Then the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still. ³¹ Behold, the Cushite arrived, and the Cushite said, "Let my lord the king receive good news, for the LORD has freed you this day from the hand of all those who rose up against you." ³² Then the king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And the Cushite answered, "Let the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up against you for evil, be as that young man!"

- Absalom is dead and someone needs to tell King David his son has died.
 - In a sad scenario: Absalom named a monument after himself (v18), in an attempt memorialize himself.
 - Ahimaaz volunteers to run to David and give him the news of victory. (v19-33)
 - Ahimaaz pleads with Joab... "Please let me run..." he wanted to be in the King's presence so he could 'know the King's heart.' (v19)
 - Joab has the 'anti-blessing' for Ahimaaz; he tells Ahimaaz "you are not the man to carry news this day." (v20)
 - Joab commissions another runner. (verse 21)
 - Ahimaaz was not going to be paid, rewarded or acknowledged but he still declared to Joab, "But whatever happens," he said, "I will run." (v23)
 - Joab does not 'get it,' he just says, "Run." (v23)

"I read this many years ago and was fascinated by the heart of Ahimaaz. He loved the king and when the joy of the battle's victory was announced, all he could think of was blessing David with this news. He also knew the heartbreak that King David would experience over Absalom's death, so he wanted to be there to share in that, and to minister to the king. Even if all he could offer was his presence, he wanted to be with the king at this moment. It didn't matter that today was not his time to run. He had no concern about reward or compensation. His heart was to be there with the king so that David could be touched by his presence and he could be available to the desire of the king's heart. He was in the service of the king, and while he did not have a position

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of command, he had a place in his heart for David, and nothing could keep him from running into the king's presence.

“What a wonderful disposition of heart toward the king and what a stark contrast to the motive of Joab's heart. Joab was all about conquering the enemy for the king's army, while Ahimaaz was all about honoring the authority of the king by serving the purpose of David's heart.

“A quick glance at Ahimaaz's pedigree gives us a little insight into his motives and his character. He was a son of Zadok (2 Samuel 18:19). Zadok was a special man with a family that was dedicated to serving the Lord.” **John Brown, *Rhythm of a Captured Heart***

Ezekiel 44:15-16 NASB

¹⁵ “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who took responsibility for My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to serve Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,” declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁶ “They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to serve Me and assume the responsibility I give them.”

Ezekiel 44:19 & 23 NASB

¹⁹ And when they go out into the outer courtyard, into the outer courtyard to the people, they shall take off their garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers; then they shall put on other garments, so that they will not transfer holiness to the people with their garments. . . .

²³ Moreover, they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the common, and teach them to distinguish between the unclean and the clean.

- Ahimaaz had a terrific pedigree. He was a son of Zadok.
- The sons of Levi ministered to the people but Zadok and his sons ministered to God.
- They encountered God at a level that their clothing was permeated with God's presence and simply touching their clothing would transmit holiness.
- Ahimaaz knew what it was like to live in God's presence and in the presence of God's anointed King.
- Nothing could keep him from the King's presence. He had a heart to run into the presence of the King.

“King David was sitting at the gate, and his watchers were looking for messengers from the battlefield. The watchmen called out that two runners were approaching, and that one man was running like Ahimaaz. Do you see it? Ahimaaz had run so often into his presence that the king's watchmen recognized his movement. I saw this and something exploded in my heart. I cried out to God, ‘O Lord, I want to run to You so often, so consistently that the watcher in Heaven will

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recognize me when I approach You. I want to come into God's presence so often that my *g-a-i-t* is recognized at the *g-a-t-e*.'

“Ahimaaz had a healthy heart habit of running to the king. He did not have to be rewarded, it could be good news, bad news, or no news, but God had put a heart to run in him and his response was, ‘**But whatever happens...I will run**’ (2 Samuel 18:23).” **John Brown, *Rhythm of a Captured Heart***

- Ahimaaz did not get to be the one who had the ‘word’ for the king.
 - It wasn't about his rank, his revelation of truth or speed.
 - He ran for one reason...to stand in the King's presence...not for recognition or for reward but he ran due to a heart relationship to the king.

“I want my heart to say ‘your face O Lord, I shall seek’ (Psalm 27:8). I want to say that it doesn't matter what battle is waging or whether circumstances are favorable or bleak, no matter what happens I will run. **I want my *gait* to be known and recognized at the *gate***. O God, give me a runner's heart because it is when I run that I feel Your pleasure.” **John Brown *Rhythm of a Captured Heart***

- Do you not know that in a race all the runners run [their very best to win], but only one receives the prize? Run [your race] in such a way that you may seize the prize and make it yours! 1 Corinthians 9:24 AMP
- We want to run so that our own hearts are won to His. (Won to One!)

Whatever happens...I will Run!