



TWO RAN, BUT ONLY ONE HAD NEWS!

“Then said Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, let me now run and bear the king tidings...Then said Joab to Cush, ‘Go tell the king what thou has seen’. 2 Samuel 18:18, 21.

Once upon a Bible time, two met went running with messages to King David about the outcome of the battle to tell whether Absalom had survived. The fastest and second runner went the long, smooth way, by the plain, and got to his destination first, even though he left after the first runner. The fastest runner was a young priest of pedigree—his father Zadok was a priest too. Ahimaaz had volunteered up front— “send me, please”. He was known for his speed, good humor, and was part of the establishment. Joab said “No, wait, don’t go; you’re not the right man”. Joab then turned to his servant, the Ethiopian, and ordered him to go—he took off immediately, went the shortest way, over the hills, a more difficult journey, took a longer time, but got there eventually, second. He was a slave, a black man, possibly easily dispensed with and of lower societal stature. His name was Cush. Not to be dissuaded, Ahimaaz persisted, “...let me also run after Cush. And Joab said, wherefore will thou run, my son, seeing that thou has no tidings ready?” Then Joab relented and agreed— “okay, run”.

The faster of the runners, Ahimaaz, it turned out, had news that was inconclusive. He told the king--"I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was". The king said, "turn aside and stand here". He couldn't deliver the core message that Absalom, the king's son, had died. The second runner, known for his endurance, but slower, bore the meat and core of the message. Cushai finally arrived; the king said unto Cushai, "is the young man Absalom safe?" Cushai answered wisely and discreetly--"the enemies of my lord the king, and all that raise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man now is". The king gets the message sure enough—it is painful—the king weeps, but it is the truth.

Sometimes, life's like that. The fastest runner, along the smoothest plain, with skillful language, and deft tongue, and the most beloved, may not always carry the core news of a "thus saith the Lord". You cannot deliver what you don't have. The study of the core truths of the Gospel and the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy are core. The exciting news may tickle the fancy and titillate the imagination. That which is truthful is sometimes also painful, yet honest and pure. We are called to be responsible stewards in truth and speech, in character and in deed, for only then can we witness fully and totally. Which of the runners then are you? Don't stop running; you'll get there; press on. <https://youtu.be/F2emsPPCH4c>