

## 2 Samuel 1-3 – “David’s Heart in the Waiting”

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As we move into the book of 2 Samuel, we leave behind us the sad sordid saga of Saul. First Samuel was about the search for a king. The people wanted a king like the other nations had. So God gave them a king – Saul, and that turned out to be a bit of a sour point just like God had forewarned.

But now in 2 Samuel we look at the rise of the king. The kind of King that God has in mind. It’s king David. And this book Chronicles the ups and downs of this man whose heart was after God. Yet, he’s still human and imperfect and we’ll see the triumphs and the troubles of this king. He was Israel’s greatest king, yet he still fell short. It all goes to show that the only answer and help is to allow God to rule over us. Which is what He always intended for Israel. And this only be fulfilled through His Son Jesus Christ.

### Outline:

1. David’s Triumphs (1:1–10:19)
  - a. Saul’s Death (1:1–27)
  - b. David Anointed King of Judah (2:1–7)
  - c. Civil War Exists with Israel, Ruled by a Son of Saul (2:8–4:12)
  - d. David Becomes King of All Israel (5:1–5)
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2. David’s Troubles (11:1–20:26)
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  - e. Control (23:8–39)

f. Census (24:1–25) <sup>1</sup>1. A Compassionate Heart – 1:1-27**David Meets the Amalekite who Killed Saul – 1:1-10**

**1:1-10** - *Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, <sup>2</sup> on the third day, behold, it happened that a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the ground and prostrated himself. <sup>3</sup> And David said to him, "Where have you come from?" So he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." <sup>4</sup> Then David said to him, "How did the matter go? Please tell me." And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also." <sup>5</sup> So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?" <sup>6</sup> Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. <sup>7</sup> Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' <sup>8</sup> And he said to me, 'Who are you?' So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' <sup>9</sup> He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.' <sup>10</sup> So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."*

Here we see a different story than what took place in 1 Samuel 31. Not so much a different story as it is a fuller story.

Saul was killed by an Amalekite. It's almost poetic justice here as this is why God had dealt with Saul so severely in removing him from the kingdom.

- **1 Chronicles 10:13**, *"So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Lord, because he did not keep the word of the Lord, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance."*
- What was Saul's unfaithfulness? 1 Samuel 15 shows how he was to wipe out the Amalekites. This was spoken of already in Deuteronomy 25:17-19.

<sup>1</sup> Richards, L. O. (1991). *The Bible reader's companion* (electronic ed., p. 202). Victor Books.

The Amalekites through Scripture are seen as a type of the flesh. And the lesson here is so vital for the life of the believer. We need to deal with, and put to death, the flesh. The flesh is speaking of those bodily appetites that go against the nature and character of God. Our mind can become so distracted by and focused on those things that it keeps us from moving forward in the things of the Lord.

- **Matthew 6:33**, *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*
- Everything else will fall into place when you begin to get your heart and mind on the things of God.
- Trouble comes when we begin to have a divided mind or a divided heart.

**Romans 13:13–14**, *“Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*

**Galatians 5:16**, *“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*

And so because Saul did not fully obey the Lord in taking out the Amalekites, it's fitting that it's an Amalekite that delivers the death blow to Saul.

- It will be the same for us if we allow a little of the flesh to linger, thinking it's not a big deal or won't really cause any harm. We're to make no provision for the flesh, don't let it have any room in your life, or it may eventually deliver the death blow.
- Years down the road Saul's compromise almost had devastating consequences to the Jewish people when a man by the name of Haman rose up with a plan to exterminate the Jews in the days of Esther. Haman was an Amalekite. God intervened, but Saul's lack of obedience almost led to a catastrophic situation. We just can't take lightly the ramifications of sin or disobedience.

Some think this young Amalekite is just making this whole thing up and didn't really kill Saul and was saying that he took out Saul to cause David to show favour over him. Maybe give him a big kingly reward for taking out public enemy #1. But he was in for a bit of a surprise because he underestimated David's heart. Look at what we read...

## **David Mourns the Death of Saul and His Family – 1:11-16**

**1:11-12 - Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. <sup>12</sup> And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the Lord and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.**

You would think that news of Saul's death would cause David to throw a party! Saul has been relentless in his pursuit to take out David! But rather than grandstand, David grieves.

David tears his clothes as an expression of great grief and mourning.

- Which reminds me of a story about a Greek professor at the seminary who did business with a Greek tailor. The two men shared a love for Greek philosophy. They were always reading and discussing the Greek classics. One day the professor tore his suit, and took it to the tailor. The tailor looked at the tear and said, "Euripedes?" The professor said, "Yes! Eumenides?"

This response of David speaks right into why God chose David – he was a man after God's own heart. He had plenty of opportunity to take out Saul himself, but he would not lay a hand on the man he still saw as God's anointed. In other words, David knew it was God that put Saul on the throne and it would be God who would remove him from the throne. God doesn't need our help in these things.

So David responds to this news with great grief. Not only is the king dead, but his dear friend Jonathan is now gone.

**1:13-16 - Then David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." <sup>14</sup> So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" <sup>15</sup> Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. <sup>16</sup> So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the Lord's anointed.' "**

The Amalekite thinking to win the approval of David was in for quite a shock when David ordered his own execution. This was based on this man's own testimony. Again, whether this was all a ruse or the truth, this man thought he would be profiting off of taking out the Lord's anointed.

- There might be times we think it's the justifiable thing to do, but what we need to do is allow God to do it His way. When we try to step in and do it our way we often just cause more bloodshed, just ask this Amalekite.

## David's Song of the Bow – 1:17-27

**1:17-27 - Then David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son, <sup>18</sup> and he told them to teach the children of Judah the Song of the Bow; indeed it is written in the Book of Jasher: <sup>19</sup> “The beauty of Israel is slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen! <sup>20</sup> Tell it not in Gath, Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon— Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. <sup>21</sup> “O mountains of Gilboa, Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, Nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty is cast away there! The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. <sup>22</sup> From the blood of the slain, From the fat of the mighty, The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, And the sword of Saul did not return empty. <sup>23</sup> “Saul and Jonathan were beloved and pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions. <sup>24</sup> “O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you in scarlet, with luxury; Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. <sup>25</sup> “How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan was slain in your high places. <sup>26</sup> I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; You have been very pleasant to me; Your love to me was wonderful, Surpassing the love of women. <sup>27</sup> “How the mighty have fallen, And the weapons of war perished!””**

The book of Jasher was mentioned in Joshua 10:13 and was a book containing records of significant events and victories in the history of Israel.

Again we begin to see the heart and attitude of David towards Saul and his sons. David doesn't dwell on the evils of Saul, he refers to him as **the beauty of Israel** (vs. 19) and as **beloved** (vs. 23).

**Tell it not in Gath...** Gath was the capital city of the Philistines and David was more concerned for the Lord's reputation and glory. He didn't want anyone thinking the Lord had failed them. Plus I believe David genuinely didn't want Saul to be shamed among the Philistines.

**O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew nor rain upon you.** This is where the battle went down. David wants this place to remain barren for what happened. And it pretty much is to this day!

***The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil*** (vs. 21). In this day they would put oil on their shield so that when someone would shoot their arrows, or fling their spear, it would just slide off the shield. It wouldn't grip it but would reflect off it more readily.

- Now it is certainly an interesting picture of how Saul had not been walking in that anointing in a general sense. And he did become much more susceptible and vulnerable to the fiery darts of the enemy.
- We too need to be covered in oil – the oil of the Holy Spirit. And as we are walking in and filled with the Spirit, we are strengthened to keep that shield of faith in place quenching the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Now vs. 26 has been stretched so far by some to insinuate that David and Jonathan had a homosexual relationship (...***surpassing the love of women***). What is simply being said here is that David enjoyed such a deep and trusted relationship with Jonathan that he didn't really have up to that point with women. Remember he was married to Michal, Jonathan's sister, who he won by collecting 100 Philistine foreskins (though David killed 200 Philistines). Saul's motive in this was for her to be a snare to David. It wasn't a great marriage. He would rather be out hunting with Jonathan.

Now you can understand a song like this being sung for Jonathan, but to say all this about Saul? That seems kind of insincere. But I believe David recognized that though Saul was more an irritant than an inspiration, he could see that God used him to prepare him for the throne and to learn to trust the Lord.

- Are there irritants in your life? How do you respond to them? Be careful of how you do because these may be the very things that God is using to refine your life and prepare you for greater things. David is being setup for something greater.
- Don't be quick to cut those irritants off, but rather let the Lord have His way through them to your growth and refinement.

## 2.A Dependent Heart – 2:1-7

### **Daavid Moves to Hebron – 2:1-7**

***2:1-3 - It happened after this 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." 2 So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and***

***Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. <sup>3</sup> And David brought up the men who were with him, every man with his household. So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.***

Notice what David does – he inquires of the Lord. Things go well when we do, and we'll see in this book that things don't go well when David neglects to inquire of the Lord. It's always a good thing to ask of the Lord to direct us and lead us in what He has for us. This was a key to David's success.

- "Corrie Ten Boom asked this pointed question: "Is prayer your steering wheel, or is it your spare tire?" Many of us pull prayer out of the trunk when we're feeling flat or when there's a blowout. However, prayer ought to be the steering wheel guiding us through the day, keeping us out of the ruts and ditches of life." <sup>2</sup>

Now one thing David didn't inquire of the Lord about it seems are his marriages. He's got two wives. Was this proper? Was this just a kingly tradition? It wasn't of God. God's word said that kings were not to multiply wives for themselves (Deuteronomy 17:17). And we'll see that this area will be a distraction in his life. When we get to chapter 3 we'll see he's got 6 wives (3:2-5)!

***2:4-7 - Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul." <sup>5</sup> So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, "You are blessed of the Lord, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. <sup>6</sup> And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. <sup>7</sup> Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."***

David is anointed publicly now, but it's only by the tribe of Judah.

First thing David does is honor those who honored the body of Saul and gave him a proper burial. Again, David is choosing to dignify Saul rather than speak badly about what a jerk he was. That's showing tremendous grace.

### [3.A Tested Heart – 2:8-3:39](#)

<sup>2</sup> Courson, J. (2005). *Jon Courson's application commentary: Volume one: Genesis–Job* (p. 903). Thomas Nelson.

**Ishbosheth Made King over Israel – 2:8-11**

**2:8-11 - *But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim; <sup>9</sup> and he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel. <sup>10</sup> Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only the house of Judah followed David. <sup>11</sup> And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.***

There's some civil unrest and division taking place. Saul's son Ishbosheth is still on the scene. Abner, who was Saul's cousin and general of the army, is looking to have Ishbosheth be the man to carry on the throne left vacant by Saul.

- It's odd that Abner isn't mentioned in 1 Samuel 31 when Saul died in battle. He probably should have been there. Maybe he fled the scene when the fight got intense. He'll do it again. Perhaps this is all being done out of guilt. So Ishbosheth is crowned king over the rest of Israel – the kingdom is divided temporarily. It will happen this way again 80 years from now when Rehoboam comes on the scene and Jeroboam leads a rebellion.

Ishbosheth's reign will be short-lived – 2 years, while David will reign for 7½ years before the kingdom is united under his reign.

**Battle Between Israel and Judah – 2:12-32**

**2:12-16 - *Now Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. <sup>13</sup> And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and 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. <sup>14</sup> Then Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men now arise and compete before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." <sup>15</sup> So they arose and went over by number, twelve from Benjamin, followers of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. <sup>16</sup> And each one grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called the Field of Sharp Swords, which is in Gibeon.***

Seeing that two camps have formed now in Israel, Abner suggests they have a little friendly matchup between 12 of his men and 12 of David's men. Well they missed the memo that it was a friendly competition because they all killed each other! And now a bench clearing brawl ensues.

**2:17-23 - So there was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David. <sup>18</sup> Now the three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab and Abishai and Asahel. And Asahel was as fleet of foot as a wild gazelle. <sup>19</sup> So Asahel pursued Abner, and in going he did not turn to the right hand or to the left from following Abner. <sup>20</sup> Then Abner looked behind him and said, “Are you Asahel?” He answered, “I am.” <sup>21</sup> And Abner said to him, “Turn aside to your right hand or 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. <sup>22</sup> So Abner said again to Asahel, “Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I face your brother Joab?” <sup>23</sup> 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 died on the spot. So it was that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still.**

The men of Israel suffer a big defeat and so Abner again goes on the retreat. This time he's hunted down by Asahel who's fast as a gazelle. While he's in hot pursuit of Abner, they're having a little conversation. Abner wants nothing to do with taking out Asahel knowing this would not bode well with Joab. Nevertheless, Asahel, is relentless and Abner kills him with the blunt end of his spear.

- Now you need to get the point of this. There are things we can find ourselves pursuing and chasing after, but in the end can be nothing but a dull and damaging conclusion.
- Be certain that what you are living for and pursuing is of God and honors Him. That's what will be satisfying and life giving.

**2:24-32 - Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner. And the sun was going down when they came to the hill of Ammah, which is before Giah by the road to the Wilderness of Gibeon. <sup>25</sup> Now the children of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became a unit, and took their stand on top of a hill. <sup>26</sup> 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?” <sup>27</sup> And Joab said, “As God lives, unless you had spoken, surely then by morning all the people would have given up pursuing their brethren.” <sup>28</sup> So Joab blew a trumpet; and all the people stood still and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore. <sup>29</sup> Then Abner and his men went on all that night through the plain, crossed over the Jordan,**

***and went through all Bithron; and they came to Mahanaim. <sup>30</sup> So Joab returned from pursuing Abner. And when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. <sup>31</sup> But the servants of David had struck down, of Benjamin and Abner's men, three hundred and sixty men who died. <sup>32</sup> Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at daybreak."***

After cooler heads prevailed, everyone returned to their homes. And then we see the damage from this battle: David's side lost 20 and Ishbosheth's side lost 360. The difference is staggering. It goes to show how God was favoring David's kingdom and anyone who goes against that will not be blessed. God's plans will not be stopped. The beginning of Chapter 3 makes that clear.

### **David's House Strengthened – 3:1-5**

***3:1 - Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. But David grew stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.***

The same is true for us – pursue the heart of God like a David, and you'll grow stronger and stronger. Pursue the things of the flesh like a Saul, and you'll become weaker and weaker.

Now David has a heart for God, but he's still a man. And he's still prone to making choices that are not the best. Case in point...

***3:2-5 - Sons were born to David in Hebron: His firstborn was Amnon by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; <sup>3</sup> his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; <sup>4</sup> the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; <sup>5</sup> and the sixth, Ithream, by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.***

Again, it was somewhat customary for a king when making a treatise with other kings to give a wife as a gift of goodwill. And so it could become a prideful or prestigious thing for a king to have many wives. But it was never ordained of God.

David's multiple wives and mixed family will become a major problem for him in 2 Samuel. His feuding children will cause him much heartache.

- Solomon followed in father's footsteps with 700 wives and 300 concubine. How do you keep track of anniversaries with that load? And they became Solomon's downfall too.
- Once again, the Bible does not try to hide these shortcomings of those we esteem as heroes. These were real people who made mistakes, and it brings comfort to us to know that God still chose to work through people like this. Just as He can work through imperfect people like you and me. It's not allowance for sin, it's His grace if we do sin.

### **Abner Accused by Ishbosheth – 3:6-11**

***3:6-11 - Now it was so, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner was strengthening his hold on the house of Saul. <sup>7</sup> And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. So Ishbosheth said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?" <sup>8</sup> Then Abner became very angry at the words of Ishbosheth, and said, "Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I show loyalty to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hand of David; and you charge me today with a fault concerning this woman? <sup>9</sup> May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as the Lord has sworn to him—<sup>10</sup> to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba." <sup>11</sup> And he could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.***

To take a wife or concubine of a former king was to basically say you were stepping into his position of authority; you were laying claim to the throne. Solomon had Adonijah executed for requesting Abishag, a member of David's harem, as his wife. And so we see the reason now Ishbosheth reacted this way.

- Was it just? Was it insecurity? We don't know. But Ishbosheth's name means 'man of shame' and it seems he's living up to it now.
- Abner certainly denied it strongly.

Abner was correct in saying that God was going to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David. But Abner knew this previously, so why was he fighting against David earlier? Abner's actions never really lined up with obedience to God's Word. He lived based on what he could get out of each situation. He was right in coming to David's side but it was based on wrong reasons (offense by Ishbosheth; David becoming stronger).

**Abner Defects to David – 3:12-21**

**3:12-16 - Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to David, saying, “Whose is the land?” saying also, “Make your covenant with me, and indeed my hand shall be with you to bring all Israel to you.”<sup>13</sup> And David said, “Good, I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul’s daughter, when you come to see my face.”<sup>14</sup> So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, saying, “Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.”<sup>15</sup> And Ishbosheth sent and took her from her husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish.<sup>16</sup> Then her husband went along with her to Bahurim, weeping behind her. So Abner said to him, “Go, return!” And he returned.**

Abner now joins David. A covenant is made where they will be loyal to each other. But David, for reasons I just can’t understand, requests Michal to be returned to him. Was this just to bolster his power or give him a sense of entitlement to the throne of Saul. He didn’t need that because God has called him to the throne.

- Whatever the reason, the flaws of David are beginning to be seen more and more. And yet, God was still going to work through him. David didn’t let these blips and shortcomings be the norm for him, he continued to come back to the Lord with a heart after God.

**3:17-21 - Now Abner had communicated with the elders of Israel, saying, “In time past you were seeking for David to be king over you.<sup>18</sup> Now then, do it! For the Lord has spoken of David, saying, ‘By the hand of My servant David, I will save My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and the hand of all their enemies.’ ”<sup>19</sup> And Abner also spoke in the hearing of Benjamin. Then Abner also went to speak in the hearing of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel and the whole house of Benjamin.<sup>20</sup> So Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him.<sup>21</sup> Then Abner said to David, “I will arise and go, and gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires.” So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.**

Here’s Abner, a man who previously had been an enemy to David, and tried to track down David for Saul. Now he’s been given a feast, and coming and going in peace.

- What a picture for us. How we were enemies of God and now we've been invited to the table to fellowship with our Saviour. This is realized when we surrender all to Him. We then experience His glorious peace.

### **Joab Kills Abner – 3:22-27**

**3:22-27 - *At that moment the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. <sup>23</sup> When Joab and all the troops that were with him had come, they told Joab, saying, "Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he sent him away, and he has gone in peace." <sup>24</sup> Then Joab came to the king and said, "What have you done? Look, Abner came to you; why is it that you sent him away, and he has already gone? <sup>25</sup> Surely you realize that Abner the son of Ner came to deceive you, to know your going out and your coming in, and to know all that you are doing." <sup>26</sup> And when Joab had gone from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the well of Sirah. But David did not know it. <sup>27</sup> Now when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him privately, and there stabbed him in the stomach, so that he died for the blood of Asahel his brother.***

Joab is upset with David thinking that Abner is up to no good. So he secretly calls for Abner to come and while in the gate, Joab pulls him aside and murders him.

### **David Mourns for Abner – 3:28-39**

**3:28-34 - *Afterward, when David heard it, he said, "My kingdom and I are guiltless before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. <sup>29</sup> Let it rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house; and let there never fail to be in the house of Joab one who has a discharge or is a leper, who leans on a staff or falls by the sword, or who lacks bread." <sup>30</sup> So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle. <sup>31</sup> Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes, gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn for Abner." And King David followed the coffin. <sup>32</sup> So they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept. <sup>33</sup> And the king sang a lament over Abner and said: "Should Abner die as a fool dies? <sup>34</sup> Your hands were not bound Nor your feet put into fetters; As a man falls before wicked men, so you fell." Then all the people wept over him again.***

Hebron was one of 6 cities of refuge (Joshua 20:7). This was a place a person who had killed another could find refuge and a fair trial. But Joab brought Abner to the gate, probably out of the safety zone and took him out.

David here laments saying, should Abner dies as a fool dies?

- I think of the amazing refuge we have in Jesus Christ. He invites us all to come to Him and find salvation. And yet, how many people wander aimlessly thinking they'll be ok outside of Him? The enemy is looking to lure us away from that place of safety and refuge. But may we remain close to the Lord where we are out of reach of the enemy's plots and ploys. May it not be said of us we have died as a fool dies, in other words, apart from that protection and peace that is found only in Jesus Christ.

Though David rebukes Joab, he never did anything about his actions. A problem that will resurface with David elsewhere. But Joab will continue to serve alongside David all through his reign, causing much problem and bloodshed. David would finally instruct Solomon to be sure to bring him down, not letting his grey hair go down to the grave in peace (1 Kings 2:5-6).

**3:35-39 - *And when all the people came to persuade David to eat food while it was still day, David took an oath, saying, "God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun goes down!"*<sup>36</sup> Now all the people took note of it, and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people.<sup>37</sup> For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king's intent to kill Abner the son of Ner.<sup>38</sup> Then the king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?<sup>39</sup> And I am weak today, though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for me. The Lord shall repay the evildoer according to his wickedness."**

What a wonderful position to take when we don't know what to do or feel like we have the strength to do anything. There will be times (and lots of them) when you just feel like a particular situation is too much for you to handle. And the wisest thing you can do in that situation is to give it over to the Lord, and say, the Lord will take care of it. Truly, when we put that into practice, you'll see the Lord come through time and time again and take care of each problem or difficulty in a way that only He can.