

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

**Let's pray...**

**[2Sa 3:1-39 NKJV] 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.**

In our study last week, we saw that after the death of King Saul, David, returned to Hebron and he was anointed king over the tribe of Judah.

The reason that David wasn't anointed king over the other tribes was because Abner didn't want to lose the power that had been given to him under Saul – so he then makes one of Saul's children – Ishbosheth, king of the other tribes.

Ishbosheth was simply a puppet king as Abner was the one who called the shots.

So we started to see civil war between the tribes of Judah, led by Joab and the other tribes, led by Abner.

And as the war continued, Judah was getting the best of the other tribes.

**2 Sons were born to David in Hebron: His firstborn was **Amnon** by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; 3 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; 4**

the fourth, **Adonijah** the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5 and the sixth, Ithream, by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

When David showed up in Hebron in chapter two, he brought with him his two wives – so now in a matter of a few years - David is up to six wives and he will add another one later on in the chapter.

Turn with me to Deut 17 -

[Deu 17:14-17 NKJV] 14 "When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that [are] around me,' 15 "you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; [one] from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who [is] not your brother. 16 "But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 **"Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away;** nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

Why did David disobey the word of God?

1. All the other kings were doing it -

David was following the convention of the time, which was for a king to have multiple wives. The more wives, concubines & children, the more a king's glory was supposed to shine.

The idea was that he was strong & virile (veral) –important qualities for ancient kings because it marked the favor of God.

2. Many of these women were daughters of important and powerful men.

David probably married these women to seal alliances and build his power base.

Certainly he knew the principle of God's Word that marriage was for one man and one woman for life.

But he conveniently set God's Word aside, justifying his marriages by saying it was normal & expected for someone in his position.

This is something many other wise mature Christians do – they know something they're doing isn't God's will, they know it doesn't reflect true holiness, but they rationalize and justify it by saying that - well, everyone else is doing it.

And they will make excuses like...

- God's Word was given for a different time; things have changed.
- Society & morality have evolved.
- It might not be right for others, but it's okay for me.

- Surely that doesn't apply to me, here, now.
- And besides, we're not under law, we're under grace. Here is the thing church, when grace becomes a cover & excuse for sin, it isn't grace. God bestows His grace to enable holiness, not to excuse sin.

I want you to notice that nowhere in this chapter do we see God calling out David for what he is doing –

And that is because sometimes, the word of God uses the consequences of the individual to teach us the lesson.

Many of the individuals are going to bring heartache to David

Amnon is going to rape his half sister, Tamar.

Absalom is going to murder his half brother Amnon for raping his sister and later on he will try to make himself king by overthrowing his father – and will even try to kill him.

Adonijah also tried to take the throne from David and from his successor, Solomon.

So we see the consequences of the decisions that David made.

Always remember, just because God condones it, it does mean that He approves of it.

We might think that we might be getting away with it – but sooner or later, we will have to face the consequences of our sin.

**6 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. 7 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?"**

What's going on here –

During these days, when a king died, their wives and concubines were still considered their property.

If someone were to marry them or sleep with them, they would then have a claim on the king's property and the throne.

We are going to see the something very similar with Adonijah who will try to marry one of David's concubines after his death so that he can lay a claim to the throne. And Solomon will have him killed.

So Ishbosheth here is paranoid that Abner has his eyes on the throne.

**8 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?**

Abner is furious of Ishbosheth's accusation.

A dog was a pretty lowly creature in this culture.

Saying he's a dog's head that belongs to Judah would be referring to David, as if Abner is a worthless spy from Judah trying to bring down Ishbosheth.

The truth is, Abner has been nothing but loyal to Ishbosheth.

He's the one who put him in power to begin with.

**9 "May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as the LORD has sworn to him-- 10 "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." 11 And he could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.**

Here in verse nine, we see something very interesting –

Abner admits that he knew all along that David was the true king – the one anointed by God.

Yet, he was willfully opposing God in his support of Ishbosheth.

But now that his loyalty is being challenged, Abner tells Ishbosheth that he has the power to persuade the remaining tribes to follow David.

And because Ishbosheth was weak - he didn't say anything.

Did Abner do the right thing by choosing to leave Ishbosheth and join David – yes.

But he did it for the wrong reasons.

He did it because he was offended by Ishbosheth calling him out.

He should have done it because he knew that David was God's choice to be king.

**12 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." 13 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."**

**14 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."**

Michal was David's first wife.

King Saul had promised a daughter to anyone who would slay Goliath.

After David slew Goliath, he said he wasn't worthy of marrying a king's daughter, Saul made him feel better by telling him he could do something to earn the princess' hand – he could give Saul 100 Philistine foreskins.

Which meant killing 100 Philistines.

And David did so – and Michal and David were married but when Saul turned on David and David fled, Saul gives Michal away to someone else.

Why does David want Michal back??? Especially since he already has enough wives.

I believe that this was a power move on his part.

Michal has a connection to Saul.

If David has Michal back, then the other tribes will be more accepting of him as their king – because once again, he would be Saul's son-in-law.

**15 And Ishbosheth sent and took her from [her] husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish. 16 Then her husband went along with her to Bahurim, weeping behind her. So Abner said to him, "Go, return!" And he returned.**

This is just a really sad scene.

**17 Now Abner had communicated with the elders of Israel, saying, "In time past you were seeking for David [to be] king over you. 18 "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.' " 19 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.**



Abner keeps his end of the treaty and he goes back and he tells everyone to switch allegiance to David.

I think that it is significant that Abner spoke these words regarding David instead of coming from David himself.

You see, even though David was the rightful king, David would not reign over Israel until they submitted to him freely.

I think we find an illustration here of Jesus' Lordship in our lives.

He is, in fact, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But He chooses, for the most part, to exercise His sovereignty only at our invitation.

**20 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. 21 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.**

Abner delivers the good news to David that people are ready to accept him as king.

David throws a party for him and Abner leaves to gather the people so they can have the formal coronation.

**22 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. 23 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." 24 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? 25 "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."**

Joab is suspicious of Abner –

Abner is a spy – he is up to no good.

Remember, these two were the ones that were leading their troops against each other during the civil war.

**26 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]. 27 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 sends his men to call Abner back – and then Joab kills Abner.

Why did Joab kill Abner?

1. He didn't trust Abner
2. He felt threatened by Abner – remember Abner was second only to Ishbosheth. If he joins David, David might choose to put Abner ahead of Joab.
3. Most likely - He wanted to avenge the death of his brother – last week, we saw Joab's brother Asahel who ran after Abner and Abner stabbed him in self defense with the blunt part of his spear and killed him.

One of the problems of ancient Israel was the concept of the ancient “blood feuds”.

If you had something to do with the death of someone in my family, I was honor bound to take revenge and kill you.

And then your family would seek vengeance on me and then it would continue to go on and on.

This was one of the reasons why God set up the system of “cities of refuge”.

There were supposed to be six cities set up throughout Israel, where a person could run to for safety in case they had killed another person (Num. 35).

A trial was to be conducted in the city of refuge to determine if the person was guilty of murder or not.

If the person had only been guilty of manslaughter, not premeditated murder, then they would be safe in the city of refuge.

They would be protected from the “avenger of blood”.

If the person was guilty of murder, then they were to be put to death.

Look at where the cities of refuge were on the western side of the Jordan River:

**(Jos 20:7 NKJV) So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron) in the mountains of Judah.**

Hebron was one of those cities.

That’s where this is taking place.

If Joab wanted to deal with his brother’s death, he could have called for a trial in Hebron.

But he doesn’t do that, instead he takes revenge.

Abner should have been safest in Hebron, but instead he died outside the gates.

Joab knew what he was doing all along.

**(Ro 12:19 NKJV) Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.**

**28** 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. **29** "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." **30** So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

David knows that when word gets out that Abner has been killed by one of his top guys, people will start to believe that he is the one who ordered his death and that might make it harder for him to win the loyalty of the other tribes.

So what David does here is that he pronounces a curse upon Joab and his family.

But he really doesn't do anything to address the situation.

We will see that this is one of David's shortcomings – he will repeatedly fail to correct issues that occur.

**31** 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. **32** 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. **33** And the king sang [a lament] over Abner and said: "Should Abner die as a fool dies? **34** 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. 35 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!"

So David mourns for Abner –

And he sings for him at his funeral –

Abner did not deserve to die the way he did –

**36 Now all the people took note [of it], and it pleased them, since whatever the king did pleased all the people. 37 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.**

So the people see the way that David acted toward Abner –

They see his compassion, they see his mercy and grace – and it pleased them

This is an individual that they can follow.

**38 Then the king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? 39 "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."**

Zeruiah is David's older sister –

David is complaining about Joab here.

Here he is on the cusp of becoming king of the entire nation of Israel, and goes out and kills the one guy who is mediating the process of the nations coming together.

Why didn't David have Joab executed?

David had experienced God's gentleness (22:36), and he tried to deal with others as God had dealt with him.

He no doubt went too far in this approach when it came to his own family (18:5, 14), but David was a man after God's own heart ().

All David could do was leave the judgment with the Lord, for He never makes a mistake.

Amen

Let's pray...



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