

240306-4 2Samuel 3, Abner Would Turn Israel after David, but Is Killed— CThurman

David returned to the land that is presently possessed by Israel, and to the city of Hebron which belongs to the tribe of Judah. Once here, the men of Judah anointed him to be their king. However, Abner, captain of Saul's armies, took Ishbosheth to Mahanaim and made him over the northern tribes of Israel. Because of this there are now two rival forces at work in Israel. And these forces contend against each other beginning about the second year of Ishboseth's reign and continues over the next five and one-half years. (comp. 2Sa.2.11; 5.5) It begins when Abner and Joab, and their men, met at the pool of Gibeon. (cf. 2Sa.2.13) There they set twelve young warriors from each side to *play*. (This is hand-to-hand combat. [cf. 2Sa.2.14, 15]) Abner's twelve were immediately dispatched. Then Abner and his men fled. Asahel, brother to Joab and Abishai, pursued after Abner following close to his side. And after Abner warned Asahel to fight against some younger opponent Abner finally struck him through with the hinder end of his spear. Asahel died as a result of this. Then Joab and Abishai continued to pursue after Abner until the evening. It was then that the tribe of Benjamin joined in to defend their kinsman, Abner, thus bringing an end to this particular conflict. Abner went to Mahanaim, and Joab and Abishai to Hebron.

The third chapter reveals another significant event that leads to the transference of the kingdom from the house of Saul to the house of David.

Chapter 3

1 ¶ *Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David:*

long, of the Hebrew adj. אָרְכָּא, is tss. *long* (3), *long war*, 2Sa.3.1; the measure thereof is *long-er* than the earth ..., Job 11.9; this captivity is *long*, Jer.29.28.

war, of the fem. noun מִלְחָמָה, tss. *war, battle, fight*

Again, reference to Ishbosheth reigning two years (cf. 2Sa.2.10) appears to mean there began a clash between the forces of Abner and of Joab. (cf. 2Sa.2.10) David reigned in Hebron for 7 ½ years (2Sa.5.5) and that it was after Ishbosheth's assassination (cf. 2Sa.4.5-7) that Israel came to David to

1Sa 30:5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

But David took a number of wife after he came to Jerusalem.

2Sa 5:13 And David took [him] more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. (see note about concubines, v.7)

and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;

Amnon did wickedly to take his step (sister to Absalom) sister and rape her. And for this Absalom will have him killed.

3 And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite;

Chileab is also called Daniel. (cf. 1Chr.3.1)

and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;

Absalom will flee to his mother's house after he has killed his step brother, Amnon, for raping his sister, and he will remain here for three years. (cf. 2Sa.13.37, 38)

When David was in the land of the Philistines, and after Achish gave to him Ziklag, he conducted raids against the enemies of Israel that live around his brethren in the south area of Judah. This Geshur, which was located somewhere in the in the south of Judah doesn't appear to be the same place from which Absalom's mother came because, in these raids, David slew everyone, men, women, and children to prevent word of his exploits from coming back to Achish. (cf. 1Sa.27.8) Absalom's mother might have come from Geshur, in the north, which is on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee.

4 And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith;

Later, Solomon, David's son by Bathsheba, will put his step-brother, Adonijah, to death for his continued attempts to assume the throne as king of Israel. (cf. 1Ki.1.5, 52; 2.20-25)

**and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;
5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife.**

Eglah, עֵגְלָה, is a fem. noun tss. *heifer* (12), *cow* (1), *calf* (1).

These were born to David in Hebron.

(During his 7 ½ yr. reign there.)

6 And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.
(over the next 5 yrs.)

made himself strong, Hithpael (reflexive act.) part. of the verb קָיָם
tss. *to be sore, to prevail, to be strong, to be courageous, to be confirmed, to establish, to be stout, to be of good courage, to seize, to take hold, to retain, to hold, to be valiant, to be mighty, v.6, made himself strong* (Wigram, *was making himself strong.*); **v.1.**

Abner did what he could during this time to prosper the house of Ishbosheth. This is family business. They are of the house of the tribe of Benjamin.

7 ¶ And Saul had a concubine,

Concubines are servant-wives.

Ge 16:3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

Ge 25:1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name [was] Keturah.

...

1Ch 1:32 Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.

Ge 37:2 These [are] the generations of Jacob. Joseph, [being] seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad [was] with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Jud.19.1 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when [there was] no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Bethlehemjudah. 3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak friendly unto her ...

Remember, the practice of men having multiple wives (polygamy) is not condoned by the word of God, though, like divorce, it is regulated. (cf. polygamy, Deu.21.15-17; divorce, Deu.24.1-4)

whose name [was] Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and [Ishbosheth] said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?

Whether Abner really did what Ishbosheth claim charges him with is not confirmed. If Ishbosheth is anything like his father, Saul, he might be suspicious of Abner's motives. (cf.1Sa.22.8, 13) Taking the wife of the king might give the appearance of assuming the kingdom, continuing a kingly line, but with another man of the same family. After all, Abner was Saul's cousin.

1Ki.2.22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he [is] mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

Whatever the case, the statement by Ishbosheth offends Abner.

8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ishbosheth, and said, [Am] I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault
number, count

that thou chargest, Qal fut. of the verb פָּקַד, tss. to visit, to number, to appoint, to remember, to count, to charge, etc.

concerning this woman?

Abner says, am I become this despicable in your sight for showing you and your father's house such kindness by standing against Judah, and not delivering you over David, that you would say this to me?

9 So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;

Interesting that Abner is aware of the claim that the LORD did swear to David that he should have the kingdom.

1Sa.15.28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, [that is] better than thou.

This of the kingdom was said before some of the servants of Saul that went with him to enquire of the witch at Endor. Doubtless they repeated something of what they heard to others, and that report reached to the ears of Abner.

1Sa.28.17 And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me (Samuel speaking from the dead): for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, [even] to David ...

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul,
to cause to pass on

to translate, Hiphil infin. of the verb עָבַר, tss. to pass by, to go over, to pass on, to go over, to come over, to pass through, to pass along, to pass, etc.

and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah,

to set up, Hiphil infin. of the verb קָוַם, tss. to rise up, to perform, to ordain, to decree, to enjoin, to confirm, to stir up, to uphold.

from Dan even to Beersheba.

from Dan even to Beersheba – is a way of saying over all of Israel, from the north to the south or the whole land.

We see that Dan is established as the most northern tribe in the nation of Israel, though their inheritance was west of Benjamin's lot on the Mediterranean Sea.

Abner has now sworn to use his efforts to bring the whole kingdom to David.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again,
Ishbosheth was unable to return an answer

because he feared him.

12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying,
in his place
(to be his, Abner's representatives)

Whose [is] the land? saying [also], **Make thy league with me, and, behold,**
Cut covenant

my hand [shall be] with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.
turn

to bring about, Hiphil infin. of the verb סָבַב, tss. to compass, to be about on every side, to occasion, to besiege, to turn, to turn aside, to stand round about, to beset, to sit down, to fetch a compass, to wind about, etc.

Abner is saying, Look, if you will forgive me this conflict against you as an enemy and let me live (the implication is that he was worthy to die for his actions, v.23b ... the king *hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.*), then I will dedicate myself to turning the kingdom to you alone as their king. So, at this David stipulates a single condition.

13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require

David Good cut a covenant ask

of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

The things concerning Michal:

Saul hated David, but because all Judah, as well as Israel, loved him (cf. 1Sa.18.14) he thinks to use David to advance himself before the eyes of Israel. To do this, first he offers to David his eldest daughter, Merab, for a wife. But David thought himself unworthy to become son-in-law to the king. (cf. 1Sa.18.18) So, Saul gave Merab to Adriel instead. (cf. 1Sa.18.19) But then when Saul discovered that his only other daughter, Michal, loved David he arranged for a way by which David could 'earn' the honor to be the king's son-in-law. If David killed one hundred Philistines (presenting their foreskins as evidence) then he could marry Michal. (cf. 1Sa.18.25) David showed double honor by killing two hundred Philistines. (cf. 1Sa.18.27) However, not long after it was confirmed that Saul was out to kill him (cf. 1Sa.20.33), and David went into hiding from Saul (cf. 1Sa.20.42), that he took it upon himself to give David's wife to another man named Phalti or Phaltiel. (cf. 1Sa.25.44; 2Sa.3.15) In this way Saul completely renounced David. Well, now David wants his wife restored to him.

14 And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver [me]

Give

deliver, Qal imper. of the verb נָתַן, tss. *to give, to deliver, to apply, to set, to consider, to put, to make, to lay up, to commit*, etc

my wife Michal, which I espoused to me
made a spouse (H. W. F. Gesenius)

I espoused, Piel (intensive act.) pret. of the verb אָרַשׁ, ah-ras', tss. *to betroth, to espouse*; this verb is ten times in the OT and is always *intensive*, either Piel (intensive act.) or Pual (intensive passive).

Piel (intensive act.) pret., Deu.20.7; 2Sa.3.14; Hos.2.19 (twice), 20; Piel fut., Deu.28.30; Pual (intensive pass.) pret., Ex.22.16; Deu.22.28; Pual part., Deu.22.23, 25, 27.

for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

David's request to Ishbosheth opens the way for Abner to be able to bring Michal down without any opposition from Ishbosheth.

15 And Ishbosheth sent, and took her from [her] husband,
(Abner seized, carried away
& perhaps others)

and took her, Qal fut. of the verb לָקַח, tss. *to take, to seize, to buy, to bring, to take away, to carry away*, etc.

[even] from Phaltiel the son of Laish.
Phalti (1Sa.25.44)

16 And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought the word of Abner was

for David in times past [to be] king over you:

18 Now then do [it]: for the LORD hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.

Abner was aware of the word of the Lord concerning David when he chose to make Ishbosheth king over Israel. But now Abner has had a change of heart. What was Abner's motivation? Was he motivated because of the truth of the word of God? Or, was he motivated by anger because of offense? Either way, the will of God is done, but Abner wasn't acting out of conviction for God's word. He moved wherever the winds blew. Otherwise he would never have made Ishbosheth king.

19 And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin:

Probably the most difficult tribe in Israel to win over to David would be the tribe of Benjamin, being the very first king of Israel was of the tribe of Benjamin.

1Sa 9:21 And Saul answered and said, [Am] not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?

Gibeah of Benjamin, where the infamous sodomites killed the Levites wife (cf. Jud.19.15;20.5) seems to have been the capitol city at the time.

and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel,
which was in the eyes of

and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.
in the eyes of

In other words Abner conveyed the sentiments of Israel and Benjamin of a possible Davidic kingdom.

20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that [were] with him a feast.

banquet

feast, of the masc. noun מִשְׁתֶּה, tss. *feast, drink, banquet*.

21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel

I will arise, Qal fut. of the verb קָם, tss. *to arise, to rise up, to be assured, to be established, to stand, to decree, to confirm, to perform, to stir up*, etc.

אֶל-אֲדֹנָי

unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee,

master

cut

covenant

נַפְשׁוֹ

and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth.

soul

And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

22 ¶ And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from [pursuing] a troop,
patrol, raid

from [pursuing] a troop, דָּוָד, g' dood, a masc. noun tss. *a troop* (1Sa.30.8; 2Sa.3.22), *a company* (1Sa.30.15, 23), *a band* (2Sa.4.2; 22.30; 1Ki.11.24), *an army* (2Chr.25.9), *robbers* (Hos.6.9).

and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner [was] not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that [was] with him were come, they
(some of the servants of David)

told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.
(David)

So that fact that David sent Abner away in peace rather than slaying him lends credence to the arrangement that Abner's league was to spare his life if he brought the kingdom over to David.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why [is] it [that] thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee,

to deceive thee, Piel infin. of the verb פָּתַח, tss. to deceive, to entice, to make silly, to flatter, to persuade (as the demons worked to convince Ahab to fall in battle at Ramothgilead. [1Ki.22.20-22; 2Chr.18.19-21])

and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah (Sý-rah): but David knew [it] not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly,

Abner completely unaware of any further schism in the ranks of Israel. Expecting perhaps an expression of cooperation in the final details of the transition of the kingdom, Joab kills him.

and smote him there under the fifth [rib],

the fifth, חֲמִישֵׁי, masc. noun, 4 times in the OT and always tss. the fifth (rib), 2Sa.2.23; 3.27; 4.6; 20.10.

that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

Joab didn't kill Abner because he suspected his devotion to David. Joab killed Abner out of revenge; for killing his brother Asahel. It was a wicked act.

28 And afterward when David heard [it], he said, I and my kingdom [are] guiltless before the LORD for ever from 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 not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.

David separated himself and the kingdom from the vengeful act of Joab and showed what he could wish upon such a person and his house for committing such sin. And David holds Joab accountable for it, and the shedding of innocent blood shall be satisfied.

1Ki.2.5 (David speaking to his son Solomon) Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, [and] what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether (for joining in Absalom's rebellion against David), whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that [was] about his loins, and in his shoes that [were] on his feet.

6 Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.

1Ki.2.31 And the king (Solomon) said unto him (Benaiah, his mighty warrior), Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father.

32 And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing [thereof, to wit], Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah.

33 Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

As for Abishai, when or how he died is not recorded in Scripture. Perhaps by the time a reckoning came for requiring the shedding of innocent blood of the guilty he might have already died. (?)

31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that [were] with him, Rend your clothes,

rent, Qal part. Paul of the verb קָרַע, tss. *to rend, to tear, to cut out*; 2Sa.1.11, Qal fut., *and rent* them; 2Sa.3.31, Qal imper., *Rend*; 2Sa.13.19, Qal pret., *rent*; 2Sa.13.31, Qal fut., *and tare*; 2Sa.13.31; 15.32, Qal part. Paul, *rent*.

and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner.

David commands all that are there in Hebron to mourn Abner until the day is past. (v.35) 'Joab, you're going to mourn this man!'

And king David [himself] followed the bier.

bier, מִטָּה, a fem. noun tss. *bed, bier*.

The wisdom of David deemed it best for his kingdom not to deal with Joab immediately, deferring his judgment to a later time, at the end of his reign.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

grave, קֶבֶר, a masc. noun tss. *buryingplace, sepulchre, grave*.

This affection of David moved the people. Doubtless, Joab couldn't relate to it.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a ^{נָבָל} fool dieth?
nah-val (Nabal)

These two men were harsh. They preferred the easy way. They're like some Baptists today when they come into differences and disagreement. Kill him! Cut him off! Cast him out! Unchurch 'em! Mark them as liars and heretics! Don't support them. Separate! Joab and Abishai were harsh:

When David was fleeing from his son's attempts to kill him and take throne Shimei went out to curse David. At hearing this Abishai said, *'Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. 2Sa.16.9'*

2Sa 16:10 And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

Once again, Abishai pipes up as David returns to Jerusalem, his son Absalom being dead, and Shimei comes out to meet them again, but now repenting for his actions: *'But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD'S anointed? 2Sa.19.22'*

2Sa 19:22 And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I [am] this day king over Israel?

the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

Closing thoughts: What Joab did by killing Abner frustrated rather than helped unite the kingdom to David. But nevertheless the LORD's will shall be fulfilled.

Not everything that differs or that divides is without something good to be gained from it, or something good to be learned in it. The LORD is always working good for His own in some way or another, even given oppositions and reproaches. What if we never had divisions or oppositions? What if we

never suffered trial, reproaches, persecutions or setbacks? Let us remember that it is in these times that the Lord blesses us to grow spiritually, to increase in faith, to increase in wisdom, to increase in knowledge, to increase in understanding. Dear brethren, I enjoy peace. I enjoy peace and quiet among brethren. But (and I'm not justifying brethren that create strife among the brethren) it is through times of tumult when we learn to be shaken less by things, and become solid, established, and steadfast.

I have heard that trees, perhaps this is with reference to certain trees, but that the winds that blow upon them, if they don't destroy them, strengthen them. Don't look at trials as something that we should never suffer.

1Th 3:3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions (θλίψις, tribulations, troubles, burdens): for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

Knowing that we shall suffer them, see that in them the LORD is working in some area of our lives to conform us more into the image of the Lord Jesus. What we suffer is a common experience for the child of God. (cf. 1Co.10.13)