



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

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Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

Web: livingwaybiblestudy.org

Email: info@livingwaybiblestudy.org

Toll-free: 888-383-8119

FOUR-STEP METHOD

Living Way Bible Study suggests this four-step method:

1. PERSONAL - The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
2. SMALL GROUPS – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The Small Group Leader guides the group through the P.A. questions encouraging each to share their answers and add discussion.
3. THE MESSAGE – The lecture or message is given by a Pastor or lay person who has researched the material and presents the study giving personal experiences and complimenting, but not merely duplicating, the author's comments.
4. THE NARRATIVE – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P.A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the door as the student leaves the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P.A. questions, the Small Groups review the author's comments of the last lesson, and share what each has high-lighted as meaningful or important.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no PERSONAL APPLICATION questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting the Lecturer presents background information about the course using the INTRODUCTION lesson as a guide.

Each lesson should be stapled together using the number of the lesson in the right hand corner of the page. To keep the lessons in order check the Bible text listed at the top of each page. The PERSONAL APPLICATION questions are attached to the author's narrative and will be the home study for the next class session.

With this 4-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by this lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student a feeling of understanding and ownership for each section studied.



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY, INC.

Toll Free: (888) 383-8119

E-mail: INF04LWBS@aol.com

Web: livingwaybiblestudy.org

- Lois Engelbart - author of LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY course SECOND SAMUEL.
- edited by Rev. Robert Wolff
- author of Bible study material and leader of Bible classes for over twenty years.
 - married to Warren Becher Engelbart; they have three daughters and eight grandchildren.
 - educated in Lutheran grade school, public high school and two years of college.
 - member of St Paul Lutheran Church of Des Peres (St. Louis, MO) for many years.
- now member of Hope Chapel Lutheran Church, Osage Beach, MO.
 - active member of boards and committees. Taught Sunday School, Bible Classes and Vacation Bible School for many years. Sang in the "Lutheran Hour Choir".
 - Trained and active in Evangelism and "Under Shepherds" program.

Bibliography for: FIRST SAMUEL

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HALLEY'S COMMENTARY

WIERSBE'S EXPOSITORY OUTLINES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

HOWARD F. VOS COMMENTARY

PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY by John R. Mittelstaedt

THE WORKS OF JOSEPHUS (complete & unabridged)

SECOND SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

In First Samuel, our study focused on the lives of three men: Samuel, Saul, and David. As we begin the study of Second Samuel, both Samuel and Saul are dead. Only David remains alive. Thus, it is his life that we will be studying.

When First and Second Samuel were first written in Hebrew, they comprised only one book. As we begin our study of Second Samuel, the continuity between the two books will immediately become evident.

David Becomes King over Israel

The entire book of Second Samuel tells the story of David's ascent to the throne, and of his reign as king. The death of Saul ushered in David's kingship over Judah. Seven years later, David would become king over all of Israel.

Israel had become a fragmented nation after King Saul's death. Some of its citizens still followed what was left of Saul's family, and opposed David's leadership. Despite this opposition, David successfully worked to reunite Israel as a nation. Then, with God's help, he also defeated the enemy nations which surrounded Israel.

After David became king over all of Israel, he chose Jerusalem as the capital city from which to rule. He personally brought the "Ark of God's Covenant" to Jerusalem, so that God's presence would be close to him. David recognized his need for God's help if he was to rule justly and righteously.

David's Link to the Messiah

As we examine the life of this remarkable man, let us remember that he was an important link in our Savior's lineage. Hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, Isaiah had foretold the Messiah's coming. "You, who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout...Say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God'." (Isaiah 40:9) The night that Jesus was born, an angel told the shepherds, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

David is the only man in Jesus' lineage whose name Jesus used to identify Himself. Jesus was known to the people of His day, as well as to us, as the "Son of David."

The Authorship of Second Samuel

The writer of Second Samuel remains unknown. There are only speculations as to its authorship. The Prophets Nathan and Gad are two possible authors. (1 Chronicles 29:29) While it would be a matter of interest to know the person whom God had selected to write this book, we are content in knowing its true Author. The apostle Paul tells us

that “All scripture is God-breathed.” (2 Timothy 3:16) Like the rest of the Bible, God Himself is the Author of Second Samuel.

Learning to Know David’s Heart through his Psalms

As we study the life of David, we would be remiss if we did not also look at the Psalms which he wrote during this time in his life. Both in his successes and in his failures, David allows us to look into the deep recesses of his heart through the Psalms which he wrote. At times, David’s Psalms ring of praise to God, Who blessed him and made him a successful ruler over Israel. But David also cried out to God from the valleys in his life. When he sinned, David pleaded with God for forgiveness, and then trusted God to be merciful and gracious to him.

God was David’s Strength

God truly was David’s strength and shield in both good and bad times, just as He is our strength and shield in good times, but also in times of trouble. Studying Second Samuel will make us more aware of those times in our own lives when our heart and lips overflow with praise to our Lord. But it will also remind us of the times we can barely whisper a prayer to the God who created us and redeemed us.

God singled David out as a “man after His own heart.” David loved the Lord and set his mind and heart to follow after Him. Like many of us, David failed God miserably at times, but his heart was set to follow his Creator and Redeemer. David said, “O God, You are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for You...Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. I will praise You as long as I live.”(Psalms 63:1,3 & 4) Do David’s words reflect your feelings about your Creator and Redeemer? Then you, too, are a “person after God’s own heart.”

David’s Failings

David’s success as king over Judah and Israel stands in sharp contrast to David’s failures—both as a father, and as a godly husband.

Sadly, we will see David succumb to adultery. Then, in his desperation to cover his sin of adultery, David became a murderer. Sin, when left unchecked, always leads to greater sin.

The “man after God’s own heart” was actually content for a while in his bondage to sin. So God graciously gave him a wake-up call. The prophet Nathan was God’s mouthpiece to bring David to his knees and back to Himself.

God does the same thing in our lives when we wrongly entertain sin. He sends a “Nathan” to wake us up, jar us out of our complacency, and bring us once again to His throne of grace as a repentant sinner. David said, “When we were overwhelmed by sins, You forgave our transgressions.”(Psalms 65:3) What a gracious God we serve! David knew the weight of sin, but he also knew the grace of God.

Identifying with David

When God chose David to be His child, He saw all of David. He saw how much David loved Him, but He also saw the many times David would take his eyes off of the Lord and allow them to stray into sin. Similarly, when God chose each of us as His children, He saw the love which we have for Him, but He also saw the many times we would allow our eyes and hearts to roam into sin. Yet He still chose us, cleansed us, and now uses us to build His Kingdom, when we are surrendered to Him.

As we study Second Samuel, most likely we will identify with David in some manner:

- As he worshiped and praised the Lord with all of his being.
- As he succumbed to sexual temptation.
- As he cried out to God for forgiveness.
- As his children rebelled and brought great sorrow into his life.
- As he mourned for two of his sons who died violent deaths.
- As he mourned for his tiny infant son who was taken from him by death.
- As he became the proud parent of a baby boy who would one day ascend his throne.

One way or another, we can all identify with David as he made his way through this vale of tears to the glorious throne which awaited him in heaven.

Preparing our Hearts to Study Second Samuel

At the end of David's life, he said, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me. His Word was on my tongue." (2 Samuel 23:2) That is the Word we will be studying. God's Word.

David's beloved son, Solomon, passed on some advice to us about studying God's Word. He said, "When I was a boy in my father's house...he taught me...If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it...as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." (Proverbs 2:3-6, & 4:3 & 4)

Let's go treasure hunting as we begin our study of Second Samuel.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

As we open Your Word, make us aware that these are not man's thoughts. They are Yours, Heavenly Father. Plant Your Word deeply in our hearts, so that it may grow and produce beautiful fruit in our lives. Fruit that will attract those who do not yet know You as their Savior. Amen.

2 Samuel 1:1-10

1. Describe the outcome of the battle on Mount Gilboa. (1 Samuel 31:1-4)

2. What were David and his men doing while the Mt. Gilboa battle was taking place? (1 Samuel 30:3,8-20)

3. Who brought David news of the outcome of the battle at Mt. Gilboa? _____
Describe his appearance as he approached David.

4. Had David made any attempt to find out the results of the Mt. Gilboa battle with the Philistines? _____
5. What message did the young man from Amalek deliver to David?

6. Compare the young Amalekites description of Saul's death with the account in 1 Samuel 31:3-6.

_____ Which account do you feel is most accurate, and why?

7. The young Amalekite brought Saul's crown and armband to David. What significance might that have had? _____

2 Samuel 1: 11-16

8. Describe David's reaction to the news which the young Amalekite brought him.

9. What two questions did David ask the Amalekite?

10. What punishment did David mete out to the young Amalekite?

11. What reason did David give for the severity of his punishment?

12. Who had failed to carry out God's command regarding the Amalekites?
(1 Samuel 15:1-3 & 7-9) _____
13. Do you think that the nationality of the man bringing David the news of the battle could have played a part in the severity of his punishment? _____

2 Samuel 1:17-27

14. David, the sweet Psalmist, wrote a lament after hearing the news of Israel's defeat at Mt. Gilboa. Who did he order be taught this lament? _____ Why might David have given such an order?

15. What curse did David call down on Mt. Gilboa?

16. Read David's lament, and make a list of the accolades he bestows on his best friend, Jonathan.

Next, make a list of the accolades which he gave to his enemy, Saul.

17. What does Jesus tell us to do in Matthew 5: 43-45?

How was David fulfilling what the Lord desires of us?

Share with your class a time when you were able to obey Jesus' command in Matthew 5:43-45.

18. After reading David's lament, state what you think David's greatest concern was.

19. What should be our greatest desire, as we live here on this earth as God's children? (1 Corinthians 10:31-33)

SECOND SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

Introduction to Chapter One

As we begin our study of Second Samuel, David is at a low point in his life. After having been pursued by Saul, and Israel's army under Saul's command for years, David had fled to Philistine territory. The Philistine prince, Achish, not only had welcomed David and his men, he had given David his own city, Ziklag, in which to live. This is where David is residing as we begin this study.

Israel and the Philistines had once again entered into war against each other. The Philistines had no "Goliath" to frighten Israel this time, and Israel did not have David leading their army, shouting, "We are coming against you in the name of the Lord Almighty."

The battle did not last long. Israel's army was soundly defeated by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa. Saul and three of his sons were killed, and then mutilated by the enemy. Saul had turned his back on God so many times that God no longer gave him needed direction and strength. Saul's constant sin of disobedience brought judgment on innocent people. Saul's sons were slain, and the entire army of Israel was routed.

All the while that Israel was battling the Philistines, David and his men were fighting their own battle. Prince Achish had ordered David and his men to go to war with him to fight their own countrymen. But the Philistine commanders did not trust David, so Achish sent David home to Ziklag. When David and his men returned to Ziklag, they found an empty, burned-out city. Some Amalekites had come while he and his men were gone. They had burned David's city, and had taken all of the women and children captive.

After seeking the Lord's direction, David and his men pursued the Amalekites, defeated them, and regained their families. Every woman and child, and also their cattle and possessions, had been protected and cared for by God's gracious Hand. David returned with his men, women and children to his home in Philistine territory. David was tired and battle-weary, and now faced the job of reconstructing his burned city of Ziklag.

Because David was a "Man after God's Own Heart" (Acts 13:22)

- David was not anxious to see Saul hurt.
- David was not in a hurry to become Israel's king, although he had been anointed to be king many years earlier by Samuel.
- David was very laid-back when it came to his own power and honor, but...
- David was very zealous to defend God's honor and power.

David Mourns for his Countrymen (2 Samuel 1:1-5)

It is interesting that there is no mention of David sending men to Mount Gilboa to bring him news of the battle between Israel and the Philistines. God had graciously spared David from lifting his sword against his own countrymen. Even though David did not seek information about Israel's battle with the Philistines, news was brought to him of the outcome of the battle. The kingly crown and armband which Saul had worn for forty-two long and tiresome years, was also given to David.

It was not an Israelite that brought David the news of Israel's defeat, but rather an Amalekite. (I doubt that he knew that David's city of Ziklag had just been burned by a band of Amalekites as he approached David.)

God had sent Saul on a mission early in his reign as king. The mission was very clear, and very specific. He had been told to destroy all of the Amalekites. God had decreed that they be destroyed. Moses recorded God's Word regarding the Amalekites: "Remember what the Amalekites did to you...when you were weary and worn out...they cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God...You shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." (Deuteronomy 25:17-19)

Saul, like many of us, had not fully obeyed God's Word. Saul had decided to obey only the part of God's Word which appealed to him. He destroyed most of what the Lord had told him to destroy, but he had decided to save those things which appealed to him. Saul's sin of disobedience cost him dearly. The Lord rejected him as king over Israel. (1 Samuel 15:26)

Saul failed to realize that the sin we fail to destroy is the sin, which, in the end, slays us. (Warren Wiersbe)

The Amalekite's Testimony (2 Samuel 1:6-16)

The Amalekite that reported to David is neither named nor praised in the scriptures. His words and his actions are simply recorded. Part of the message that he brought was true. Saul and Jonathan were dead. But much of his story was fabricated to appeal to David. "Saul is dead. I helped him out of his misery by killing him. Here is his crown. You can now be king." But he didn't know David, and he didn't know David's God.

Scripture tells us that "there is a way that seemeth right unto men, the end of which is death." (Proverbs 14:12, K.J.V.) The Amalekite thought that what he was doing "seemed right". But the Amalekite did not know God's Word or God's heart.

David's immediate reaction upon hearing the news of Israel's loss was one of sorrow--great sorrow. He and his men tore their clothes, mourned, wept, and fasted. Death had taken the lives of hundreds of David's fellow-Israelites, and it had taken the life of his best friend, Jonathan.

But David also mourned for Saul, who had relentlessly pursued him, trying to take his life. Saul had been David's enemy. For many years, David had held himself back from harming Saul because Saul was God's anointed king.

David asked the Amalekite, "Why were you not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" Then David pronounced judgment on him. David said, "...Your own mouth testified against you when you said 'I killed the Lord's anointed.'"

Most Bible scholars believe that the account of Saul's death which is recorded in First Samuel 31: 4 & 5, and First Chronicles 10:3-6, is the correct account—Saul took his own life; the Amalekite did not end Saul's life.

It is difficult for us to understand the severity and swiftness of David's punishment. David simply called for the Amalekite to be executed—immediately.

The death of the Amalekite is a picture of God's final judgment, which will come to all mankind. It will come swiftly and unexpectedly. (1 Thessalonians 5:3) God had pronounced His judgment on this Amalekite, and all Amalekites, many hundreds of years before. They were to be destroyed because of sin. Similarly, God has pronounced judgment on all mankind because, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) But we worship a merciful God, Who paid fully for our sins when God's Son, Jesus, died in our place on Calvary. Romans 3:24 tells us this good news. "We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

David's Lament (2 Samuel 1:17-27)

David must have immediately written the thoughts which God had given to him. He begins his lament with what was uppermost in his mind. He expresses his deepest concern. "Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights." God's glory had been tarnished. God's glory was no longer revered by Israel's enemies. David wrote this lament not only to express his own sorrow; he wrote it to be learned and used by his fellow countrymen...and by us.

The words of Proverbs 24:17 had not yet been penned, but they were firmly written in David's heart as he wrote his lament. "Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice."

David's lament tells us just how much he loved his friend Jonathan. But David's lament also sings the praises of David's enemy, Saul. David was a man after God's own heart. He loved his enemies.

A thousand years later, Jesus, the Son of David, would say, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you; Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:43-45)

David was a son of the Heavenly Father.

Conclusion

The Amalekite is a picture of this world's way of thinking. He expected to be rewarded for bringing David the news of Israel's loss and his own hand in killing David's adversary, Saul, and for bringing David the king's royal crown and armband. David shows us the heart of God. He mourned for his fellow countrymen—even those who were his enemies. He executed judgment on the wicked. Then he wrote a lament expressing his sorrow over God's glory being dimmed. He loved God, and he loved his fellow countrymen.

God's word tells us that "the present heavens and earth are...being kept for the Day of Judgment...But...the Lord is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish." (2 Peter 3:7-9) That is the heart of God! And--David was a man after God's own heart!

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Heavenly Father, help us as we run the race set before us. Keep our eyes fixed on You, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Amen

2 Samuel 2:1-7

1. King Saul was dead, and David had been anointed to be the next king of Israel many years earlier by Samuel. (1 Samuel 16:12 & 13) Do you think that David was anxious to assume his position as king? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Compare David's spiritual life when he left Israel to live among the Philistines (1 Samuel 27:1), with David's spiritual life now. (2 Samuel 2:1)

3. Share with your class a time when you asked the Lord for help in making a decision.

4. Which city did the Lord tell David to go to? Where was it located, and why would this be a good place for David to return to in Israel? (1 Samuel 17:12A)

5. The men of Judah came to Hebron after David had settled there. What was their purpose in coming to see David? _____
6. Why did David show kindness to the men of Jabesh Gilead? Make a list of godly qualities which David displayed by this action.

2 Samuel 2:8-11

7. Who was Abner? (1 Samuel 14:50,51) _____
8. What action had Abner taken which was certain to cause strife in Israel? State your opinion of why Abner took this action.

9. The men of Judah had made David their king, and God had anointed him to his position as king. Who made Ish-Bosheth king over the rest of Israel, and what does this action tell you about his character and his power?

10. Do you think that Ish-Bosheth was an effective king, or a puppet king? State the reason for your opinion.

2 Samuel 2:12-16

11. What action taken by Abner caused Joab to take troops to the pool of Gibeon?
12. What suggestion did Abner make, and what was the outcome of his suggestion?

2 Samuel 2:17-25

13. What action followed the death of all of the young men?
14. Who won the battle, and why do you think God gave them the victory? (Lamentations 3:25)
15. Who was Zeruah, and who were her sons? (1 Chronicles 2:16)
16. What special ability had God given her son Asahel, and how did he choose to use it on this particular day?
17. Name a special ability the Lord has given you, and tell how you use it.
18. Do you think that Abner's warnings to Asahel were well-intentioned? Explain how Asahel died.

2 Samuel 2:26-32

19. Why do you think Abner called to Joab asking for a truce, and how did Joab respond?
20. Where did Abner and his troops return to?
21. How many men had Joab's troops lost, and how many men had Abner's troops lost?
22. Where was Asahel buried?
23. Who did Joab return and report to?
24. War is not something which God delights in; however, there are times when it is a necessary evil. What is your opinion of war?

SECOND SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

David Returns to his Homeland (2 Samuel 2:1-7)

When David had left Israel to live among the Philistines, he had consulted his own heart, not God's heart. Now that Saul was dead, David was again free to return to his native land. This time David did not seek his own heart, but rather—the heart of God. He asked the Lord not only whether it was the right time to return to Israel, but also specifically where he should live when he returned to his homeland.

Many of us seek the Lord only when difficulties arise in our lives. But our Lord is pleased when we ask for His guidance and His direction *all* of the time, even when making the smallest decisions.

David tells us to “Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him to help you do it, and He will.” (Psalms 37:5 TLB) God answered David's prayer. He told David, “Go to Hebron.” So that is where David moved—with his wives, his men, their families, and all who had remained with him during his exile.

Hebron is a city which is centrally located in Judah. It has the highest elevation (3040 feet above sea level), of any city in Israel. More importantly, Hebron was a city of refuge, and a Priest's city. The Lord had been David's refuge for many long and painful years, and the Lord continued to be David's refuge. (Psalms 61:3) Like David, let the Lord be your refuge not only in times of trouble, but also in good times.

The citizens of Judah, upon hearing of David's arrival, went to him and anointed him to be their king.

During this time, David wrote, “I will be careful to lead a blameless life...I will set before my eyes no vile thing...Men of perverse heart shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with evil.” (Psalms 101:2-4)

The first recorded action taken by David after becoming king of Judah, was to send a message of commendation to the men of Jabesh Gilead, to those who had rescued Saul and his three sons' bodies from Mt. Gilboa, thus saving them from further mutilation by the Philistines. The beginning words of David's commendation were a blessing. “The Lord bless you for showing this kindness to Saul...May the Lord now show you kindness and faithfulness.” David was calling down the Lord's blessing on men who had shown kindness to his enemy, Saul. The Lord tells us to “Bless those who curse you.” (Romans 12:14) David did so.

Abner Appoints Ish-Bosheth King over Israel (2 Samuel 2:8-11)

Abner, who had been Saul's general, was also Saul's cousin. (1 Samuel 14:50) The historian Josephus, tells us that when Abner discovered that Saul and three of his sons had been slain at the Mt. Gilboa battle, “he made haste into the camp; and taking away with him the remaining son of Saul, whose name was Ish-Bosheth, he passed over

to the land beyond the Jordan, and ordained him the king of the whole multitude, excepting the tribe of Judah.” (7.1.3)

Abner and Joab Meet at Gibeon (2 Samuel 2:12-16)

Whenever there is internal division within a nation, and there are two distinct leaders, there is a strong possibility that civil war will ensue. Some men seem to have a need to seek power by whatever means are available. When Abner made Saul’s son, Ish-Bosheth, king over most of Israel, a power struggle ensued.

David was content to once again be among his fellow countrymen, as king of his Tribe of Judah. Abner, however, was hungry for more power. He wanted all of Israel.

After installing Ish-Bosheth in the royal city of Mananaim, Abner gathered his troops for battle. Josephus (the historian), tells us that, “Abner made haste with a select body of soldiers, to fight with such of the tribe of Judah as were disposed to it, for he was angry that this tribe had set up David for their king.” (7.1.3) Abner personally rejected David’s kingship.

Hundreds of years later, the religious leaders of Israel would reject the “Son of David” as their Savior and King with shouts, “We have no king but Caesar.” Today, people also reject the “Son of David” as their Savior and King, because the way of this world seems more enjoyable...for a season.

Abner’s struggle for power began. He led his troops across the Jordan River into the territory of Benjamin, so that he could wage war against David, and conquer Judah.

Joab, David’s general and David’s nephew, learned of Abner’s advance, took David’s mighty men, and met with Abner at a pool in the city of Gibeon. The pool must have been a beautiful showpiece and center of attraction in Gibeon. Josephus tells us that there was a fountain in the pool.

Abner and his men stood on one side of the pool, while Joab and his men remained on the other side of the pool. Abner spoke first. He made a proposition to Joab. “Let the young men now arise and play before us.” (v. 14 K.J.V.) It would appear that Abner had learned to take death lightly while commanding Saul’s army. Abner’s challenge was spoken in a casual way; much like a group of young men today might challenge each other to a football game. But it wasn’t a football game. It was bloodshed. Twelve of Abner’s young men faced off against twelve of Joab’s young men. All died. We can only guess that Abner’s intention was to gain victory over Judah, if his young men succeeded in killing Joab’s young men without being killed themselves. However, there is no victory in foolish bloodshed.

Today, we think of ourselves as more civilized and less given to open shedding of blood. Yet every major city has street gangs. Young men roam our streets, randomly shooting opposing gang members as well as innocent bystanders. Still others work at or frequent abortion clinics, which kill innocent children from early morning until late at night. God help us to repent of national sins, and to once again become a people whose standard is righteousness before You, Lord.

Civil War Begins in Israel (2 Samuel 2:17-32)

The result of Abner's frivolous confrontation was more bloodshed—much more. The first recorded battle between Israel and Judah took place. We are told that it was a fierce battle. Joab led Judah to victory. Abner was soundly defeated. He and his men ran for their lives, as Joab and his men pursued them until sunset.

David's nephew, and Joab's younger brother, Asahel, was known throughout Israel as the "marathon champion". Josephus tells us that Asahel could not only run faster than any man; he had actually raced against a horse, and won.

As Joab's troops pursued Abner's army, Asahel set his eyes on Abner. He knew he could outrun him, and he hoped to catch and kill him. But Abner was a seasoned warrior, and Asahel was not.

When Abner realized that he was being pursued by Asahel, he called out to him, repeatedly warning him to stop. But Asahel continued to pursue Abner, and literally ran himself through Abner's outstretched spear, which ended his life. Likewise, any ability we have, which is not yielded to God, can become detrimental to us.

Joab's young brother, Asahel, was one of twenty casualties that day for Judah.

Israel was not as fortunate. As the sun set, Abner called for a truce. His army had lost three hundred sixty men.

Asahel's body was carried by his brothers to Bethlehem, the city of David, where it was laid in his father's tomb.

Civil war had begun in Israel, and it would not end quickly.

Conclusion

David's rejection by most of Israel is a shadow of Christ, the "Son of David," who was rejected by most of his fellow Israelites. The Apostle John tells us, "He came to...His own, but His own did not receive Him. Yet to all who received Him...He gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:11, 12)

David had been anointed by Samuel many years before to be the next king of Israel. Most of the citizens of Israel recognized that David was to be the next king. Even the Amalekite who brought David Saul's crown and armband recognized that David was to be Israel's next king. Abner was certainly not an exception. Abner realized that David was God's choice to be the next king. But Abner set his heart against the Lord's will. He wanted personal power more than God's will.

There is always a price to pay when we choose our way rather than God's way. The first day of battle, it cost Abner three hundred sixty of his men. Soon it would cost him his life.

Even though David knew God had chosen him to be the king of all of Israel, he did not seek to take his position of authority by force. David desired not only God's anointing, but also God's timing.

David's rise to power was gradual, just as the rise of God's Kingdom here on earth is gradual. It grows person by person, steadily, slowly, but ever so surely. *Are you part of his Kingdom?*

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Heavenly Father, make us instruments of Your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
For You have pardoned the debt of our sin
By showing us Your love, on Calvary.
Amen.

2 Samuel 3:1-7

1. What prophecy did Jesus make in Matthew 24:6?

2. Civil War had begun by the pool in Gibeon. What are we told about the war as chapter three begins? _____
3. David had come to Hebron with two wives, Ahinoah, and Abigail, and no children. How had his family changed, and state your opinion of David's polygamous lifestyle.

4. What did Abner do which upset Ish-Bosheth, and why was Abner's action so upsetting to him? (1 Kings 1:2-4) (1 Kings 2:22)

2 Samuel 3:8-16

5. What message did Abner send to David?

6. Before David agreed to talk with Abner, what request did he make?

7. Why had Saul allowed David to marry his daughter, Michal? (1 Samuel 18:20, 21) _____
8. What price had David paid for his first wife? (1 Samuel 18:25-27)

2 Samuel 3:17-21

9. Elections were not held in Israel at this time, but who did the people want to be their king? _____
10. What knowledge of God's Word did Abner possess? _____

11. Although Abner knew God's Word, how had he refused to obey it?

12. Share with your class a time in your life when God spoke to you through His Word, and you listened and obeyed Him.

13. Why did Abner take time to speak to the Benjamites personally? (1 Samuel 9:21)

14. How did David welcome Abner and his twenty men, and what did Abner promise David that he would do for him?

2 Samuel 3:22-25

15. Describe how Joab reacted when he learned of David and Abner's meeting.

16. When talking to David, what accusation did Joab bring against Abner, and do you think there was any truth in what Joab said?

17. How did Joab get Abner to return to Hebron?

18. When Abner returned to Hebron, what did Joab do to Abner, and why did he do it?

19. How did David show disapproval of Joab's action?

20. Although David had been at war against Abner, list ways that he now showed respect for Abner.

21. David sang a lament at Abner's funeral. Which words in his lament show displeasure with Joab and his brother, Abishai?

22. What did David's sincere mourning over Abner's death prove to the people of Israel?

