

2 Samuel 3-4

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[0 : 00] Okay, let's have a word of prayer before we get started. Lord, we thank you for again this time of just precious fellowship with you and with one another.

! Lord, it's just such a blessing to be able to come together and just sit and gather around your word this morning. Lord, I feel a sense of inadequacy as always when I come to bring your word, but I thank you that you are strong when I am weak.

And Lord, I boast in my weaknesses because then you are shown to be strong. So Lord, I pray that you would indeed prove yourself to be strong. Lord, let your word be magnified. Let it be exalted. Let the truth of your word be lifted up.

And Lord, may we all have ears to hear what you have to say. Lord, speak, I pray. Bring glory to your name. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

All right. So we've been studying our way through the books of Samuel, actually, over a number of months. And all of the recordings are online, by the way, if you do want to listen back.

[1 : 11] But what we've done by way of a brief summary is we've been tracking through 1 Samuel, the ministry of the prophet Samuel. And we've seen him guiding the nation of Israel out of this Wild West time of the judges, where everyone was just doing what was right in their own eyes, and into this new age of the kings.

And when the people demanded a king, which they did really for unrighteous reasons, because they wanted to be like the surrounding nations, Samuel did go to the Lord, and the Lord said, well, they've rejected me, but do as they've asked.

And Samuel anointed a man by the name of Saul, Shaul, as king. And in spite of some early good that Saul did, he very quickly proved himself to be unworthy.

Or I suppose we should say he proved himself to be a type of the kingdoms of man. Weak and ineffective and unclear on his role and just not good.

And so God rejected Saul. And God said to Samuel, I'm seeking a man after my heart, which is David. And we've seen the anointing of David. And then many years pass before David is actually able to reign.

[2 : 35] And actually, we're still not quite there yet. And what we saw, what we've seen over the many chapters and the many years is this incredible patience and forbearance from David, not taking any, he's not being proactive in trying to eliminate Saul, his rival.

He's waiting for God. He's waiting for God to remove him. And actually, he rebukes his own men who say, hey, take this opportunity. Get rid of Saul. And he's like, no.

So what we've seen at the end of 1 Samuel, we saw the book close with Saul and his three most prominent sons die. They died at the hands of the Philistines, the very people whom Saul was not able to defeat, even though David gave them a bit of a helping hand with the defeat of Goliath.

But Saul wasn't able to finish them off, even with that. And indeed, they brought about his downfall. And amazingly, David expressed this grief, this authentic, heartfelt grief over the death of Saul and his best bud, Jonathan.

And he even put to death the man who claims to have killed Saul, thinking that, hey, David, I was the one. It was me. I did it. And Saul's like, how were you not afraid to strike down the Lord's anointed?

[3 : 57] So Saul has died. The throne is empty. And again, David is patient. He sought the Lord. Lord, what do I do? Go up to Hebron. So up he went.

And there he was anointed king over Judah. Judah alone. And in the meanwhile, there was a rather unknown son of Saul. I say unknown because his name hadn't even shown up before then.

Ish-bosheth, whose name means man of shame. The shameful man. Saul was obviously very proud of his son. And he was anointed by Abner, Saul's commander. And so Ish-bosheth has been reigning from Gilead over the rest of the people. So that's where we are. And then in the last chapter, chapter 2 of 2 Samuel, we read about this, a bit of a contest at the Pool of Gibeon, where David's men led by Joab, Ish-bosheth's men led by Abner. They had a bit of a 10 v 10, and all 20 died. So that was strange. And then there's a bit of a skirmish. And Saul's men are overcome.

[5 : 11] And then when Abner's trying to leave, Abner, again, was the leader of Saul's band. He wants to leave. But there's this guy called Asahel who won't let it go.

He says, I'm not letting it go. He's pursuing him. He's fast. And Abner's like, bro, let it go. Just don't turn around. Don't make me kill you. And Asahel's like, nope, nope, I'm coming for you.

And so Abner has to kill him. Abner did not want to strike him down, but he did it. He can't persuade him. And we see Abner presented then as a man who is trying to make peace.

He's trying to do, I think, what he believes is the right thing, albeit he is on the wrong side. He's on the wrong side. He's on the side of Saul and not David.

For now. And that brings us nicely to 2 Samuel chapter 3 and verse 1, which says, Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David.

[6 : 11] And David became steadily stronger while the house of Saul became steadily weaker. And that really gives us an introduction to today's couple of chapters.

We're going to try and study through 3 and 4 today. There should be time. And that's what we read. We read the ongoing downfall of the house of Saul and the ongoing increase or raising up of David's house.

And indeed, in chapter 5, we will see David anointed as king over all of Israel. Verse 2. The sons were born to David in Hebron.

His firstborn was Amnon by Ahinoam, the Jezreelites. And his second, Chiliab by Abigail, the widow of Nabal, the Carmelite. And the third, Absalom, son of Ma'aka, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur. And the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Hagit. And the fifth, Shephethiah, the son of Abital. And the sixth, Ithriam, by David's wife, Eglah. These sons were born to David in Hebron.

[7 : 21] And we think, really, David? So we knew that David had two wives. Ahinoam and Abigail. We knew that already.

We've been reading about that. And in 1 Samuel 17, we talked a bit about this polygamy, or polygyny, I suppose, taking of multiple wives.

But now he has six sons. And they are by six different women. Wow.

Six sons. One less than the perfect seven, you might say. A picture of man. So how are we meant to read this?

This is an example where the author doesn't tell us what to think. He just says, this is what happens. David had a bunch of sons by a bunch of women. And he leaves it to us to discern the righteousness or lack thereof.

[8 : 22] So, and I was like, how much time do I spend on this? I don't think this is really an issue today. Yes, it's a sin, in case anyone's wondering. Yes, polygamy is a sin. Yes, it falls short of the God's standard.

But the challenge is, how do you show that from the Bible? Because it turns out there is no specific law or commandment that calls it out. You do have Deuteronomy 17, verse 17, which says, and it's directed to the kings who will come to Israel.

And God says of the kings that he shall not acquire many wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn away, nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. But that's directed to the kings only.

And it should be noted that taking a wife required the payment of a dowry price. Expensive. So really, it's only kings and the rich who could afford to do it more than once.

Hence why it's directed at kings. But then how many is many? Is six many? It's 700 many, Solomon? How many is many?

[9 : 35] And so because the practice isn't expressly forbidden, and because of guys like David, who are otherwise exemplary, for much of Jewish history, it seems to have been never celebrated, but sort of tolerated, I guess.

So how do we show it's a sin? And the answer is this. Because in Genesis, God created one man and one woman. And he said, therefore, a husband shall cling to his wife.

And in that statement, God is saying, this is the divine ideal. Monogamy. One man and one woman. Male and female.

The pattern for all of humanity. And then, of course, Matthew 19, verses 4 through 6, Jesus re-emphasizes it.

The two shall become one flesh. Not three or seven. Or 701. And also this. We do see a bunch of men taking multiple wives.

[10:39] For how many of these men do things go well? Zero. Zero. So let's think. We've got Sarah who actually asked Abraham, hey, take my servant Hagar.

Maybe God needs a bit of a helping hand. He's made a promise. And maybe God's bitten off more than he can chew. Let's have a child through Hagar. Well, what's the result? The result is Ishmael. And we are still, to this day, experiencing the effects of the descendants of Ishmael and their rivalry with the sons of Isaac, the sons of promise.

And Galatians 4 makes a whole thing about the sons of the flesh and the sons of promise. Not a good plan, Abraham. Who else? Well, we've got Jacob, of course.

Now, Jacob was deceived into marrying both Leah and Rachel. And then when barrenness is, well, barrenness?

[11:39] Anyway, he also takes their two maids, for better or worse. And he ends up with 12 sons, which is the 12 tribes. Well, that's good, right? Well, ask Joseph how good that was. Ask Joseph how good it was to be in that family and to experience the rivalry and the strife that came.

And actually, in our studies, we saw right at the off, we read about a guy called Elkanah and he had two wives, Panina and Hannah. And what happened? They had a bitter rivalry and it was heartbreaking.

And Elkanah was like, aren't I better to you than 10 sons, Hannah? And Hannah's like, dude, you don't get it. It causes problems. It's as if God knew that it should be one man and one woman.

And what's going to happen to David? If you've read ahead, you know the story. What's going to happen with Amnon? He's going to sin against his sister Tamar. What's going to happen with Absalom? He's going to make a grab for the throne.

It doesn't go well. It does not go well. Anyway, verse six. Now, it happens that while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was strengthening himself in the house of Saul or making himself prominent.

[12:58] It's tricky to translate that. Making himself strong, making himself firm. Anyway. And Saul had a concubine whose name was Ritzpah, the daughter of Aiah.

And Ish-bosheth said to Abner, why have you gone into my father's concubine? Then Abner became very angry over Ish-bosheth's question and said, am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I show kindness to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers and to his friends, and have not let you fall into the hands of David. Yet today you call me into account for wrongdoing with that woman.

May God do so to me and more so if, as the Lord has sworn to David, I do not accomplish this for him, to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to establish the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.

And Ish-bosheth could not say, could no longer say a word in response to Abner because he was afraid of him. Wow. Wow. Ish-bosheth accuses Abner.

[14:06] Now remember, Abner is, he is a respected elder. He is a wise leader. He was a wise leader for Ish-bosheth's father, Saul.

Saul. He is the one who installed Ish-bosheth to the throne. You would think that he had done enough to earn the respect and honour.

But Ish-bosheth accuses him of having relationships with Ritspa, who is one of Saul's concubines. Now we haven't come across Ritspa before. I can't tell you anything about her.

I can't even tell you if there really was a relationship between Ritspa and Abner. It doesn't say. Now, what we can say is this. If Abner had taken her, if he had done anything inappropriate with her, then that would for sure have been political.

It would have most likely been something to view as a grab for the throne. When we get to chapter 16, we will read of Absalom doing the same thing, doing a similar thing with David's concubines in

an attempt to take the throne.

[15:18] So definitely it would have been. But again, the text is not clear. All we know is Ish-bosheth accuses, and Abner doesn't deny it.

He just resents the accusation. He resents the accusation. He says, Am I a dog's head? Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah?

What does that mean? It's not an expression that I've heard used in contemporary English. It's a strange, idiomatic expression.

A dog, unfortunately not like puppies, puppies that we all saw on WhatsApp, not cute and fluffy. Dogs in this age were low, wretched, unclean creatures.

And it would have meant a traitorous person. Abner is saying, I think, are you accusing me of being a wretched, low-down traitor for Judah? Is that what you're saying I am, Ish-bosheth?

[16:19] And then he doesn't wait for an answer. He's like, that's it, I'm offended. And then he's going to do, he's going to do what the Lord has sworn to David.

Interesting, isn't it? Because that means he knew the promise. He knew the promise, and he installed Ish-bosheth anyway as king.

Hmm. Anyway, so my reading is, Ish-bosheth is being paranoid. He is, which probably speaks a lot to his mental health and his disposition.

He's afraid. He's like, I don't know what to do. Who can I trust? Well, he could have trusted Ish-bosheth. He could have trusted Abner. But Abner doesn't explicitly deny it.

He expects that his faithful conduct would have spoken for itself. And I think that, I think that it's right that our conduct should speak for itself.

[17:17] I was reminded of 1 Peter 3, 16. There's a few verses that are on this topic. 1 Peter 3, 16 says that we are to keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are being slandered, those who disparage your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

So there's a sense of you don't need to defend yourself when we're slandered. Just keep a good conscience and let your good works be a testimony. Let your good behavior be a testimony to put to shame the accusers.

Anyway, so Abner's made his promise. He's made his choice. I am going to do what is right. Verse 12. Then Abner sent messengers to David at his place saying, Whose is the land?

Make your covenant with me and behold, my hand shall be with you to bring all Israel over to you. And he said, Good, I will make a covenant with you. Only I require one thing of you, namely, that you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see me. So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's son, saying, Give me my wife, Michal, to whom I was betrothed for 104 skins of the Philistines. Ishbosheth sent men and had her taken from her husband, from Patiel, the son of Laish.

[18:38] And her husband went with her, weeping as he went, following her as far as Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, Go, return. And so he returned.

So, Abner writes to David to make good. Wastes no time. Let's get this thing done. David, I'm on your side. Let's make a covenant.

My hand shall be with you to bring all Israel over to you. So Abner clearly has a lot of influence. And he knows it. And David knows it.

He is confident that he can do it. And so is David. David's like, Awesome. Right on. Let's do this thing. But first, he wants his first wife, Michal, back.

Because six wasn't enough, apparently. He wants his first wife back. So you may recall her from 1 Samuel 18 and verse 20 and forward.

[19:38] So Michal was Saul's younger daughter and she fancied David. And David felt too humble to marry a princess. And he felt that, I think he felt that the dowry price for Michal would have been ridiculously high.

So he's like, I'm out. I'm out. Not happening. And Saul said, Well, let the price be 104 skins of the Philistines because he was hoping it would be impossible for David to go and kill 100 Philistines. And that he would die trying because Saul didn't like David. Saul saw him as a rival. But actually, he did achieve it and if memory serves, he doubled up. And they got married.

100 4 skins was the price. But we haven't seen Michal since she helped David escape. As I said, Saul became very paranoid, was seeking to kill David and he had to flee.

And she helped him to flee and then she stayed behind. And that's the last we saw of her. David kind of moves on. He gets married to Ahinoam and then to Abigail.

[20 : 42] And Saul marries Michal off to a chap by the name of Palti or Palti El here. And so we have a big mess. Now, technically, the bride price, if you could call it that, hasn't been returned.

And you. So David and Michal are technically still married. They're still married. So David should not have taken other women and Saul should not have given her away again.

It's not stated why Saul did that. It's not stated why David wants her back now either. Why does David want her back now? My best guess is that this is a test of loyalty for Abner.

Bear in mind, Michal is house of Saul. Saul. She is Saul's daughter. If Abner is willing to do this thing which will be injurious to the house of Saul, it is evidence that his loyalty is with David.

That's my best guess. And then David would see a proof of the commitment. But what we see is heartbreak.

[21 : 53] We see weeping and upset for Palti, Palti El. We do not see how Michal feels about this. If she is grieving and upset, her tears are not seen.

And I got to thinking how whenever families are broken up, it's always painful. Broken homes, they are an aspect of a fallen and broken world.

And in a case like this, it's very difficult to say, you can't simply lay the blame on that guy for what that guy did. Saul and David both have done wrong, for sure.

Maybe Palti El as well. If he knew that Michal was already married, he did wrong. Michal, it's unlikely that she had any say in what happened. So, it's just a mess.

It's a mess. And the text draws out the grief of one, but not the other. And it reminded me how sometimes you see the grief and sometimes you don't. Sometimes you see how people will express how they feel and other times it's not expressed.

[23 : 03] It's internal. But what I wanted to share this morning was how in Christ we are one body. We are one family.

And whether we come from a nuclear family or whether we come from a broken home, we are brought into this new family. Always in the New Testament we see this word adelphos, which is traditionally translated brothers.

The New American Standard 2020 puts brothers and sisters because really it's siblings. it is its siblings. And we are brothers and sisters. Jesus himself said in Luke 8, 21, he said that my mother and my brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.

Those who hear the word of God and do it. And then Galatians 3, 26 through 29 says this. He says, Paul writing to the church in Galatia says that for you are all sons and daughters, you are adelphos, brothers and sisters, you are sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female for you're all one in Christ Jesus.

[24 : 27] And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs, according to promise. one family adopted as children of God and earthly families that can be precious, that can be very difficult, but we are brought into an adopted family and it's an eternal family and it isn't a perfect place yet, but it is being perfected and it is one that will last forever.

Hallelujah. Verse 17 then of 2 Samuel 3. Now, Abner had a consultation with the elders of Israel saying, in times past, you were seeking for David to be king over you.

Now then, do it. The Lord has spoken regarding David saying, by the hand of my servant David, I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hands of all their enemies. Abner also spoke to Benjamin and in addition, Abner went to speak to David in Hebron, everything that seemed good to Israel and to the entire house of Benjamin.

So Abner immediately gets to work using his influence and it's the classic, you know this is what you want, you know you want to, so let's just get it done. And I read that and I thought, hmm, when in times past were they seeking David as king?

[25 : 56] Reading back, can't find that. And then I'll also note that Abner appeals to the general knowledge that God is calling David as king. The Lord has spoken regarding David, by the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hands of all their enemies.

And again, it's not a quote you will find verbatim in scripture, but by Abner's words we learn that there is a general awareness, a general public awareness that David is going to be king. Again, you recall, he was anointed by Samuel in secret. It was in secret. Probably, I don't know. I was going to say probably his father knew, but actually I don't know. But what we have seen and what has been public knowledge is David defeating Goliath, saving the entire nation from servitude. And even when David was on the run from Saul, we saw him acting more like a king than Saul ever did. He saved Kyla from the Philistines in 1 Samuel 23 when he himself was on the run. [27 : 04] And if you remember the story, he then discerns from the Lord that the people of Kyla are going to give you up. So they weren't the most grateful of people. But David is acting like a king. And even Saul himself said in 1 Samuel 24 verse 20, he said, I know that you will certainly be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand.

Everyone knows it. Everyone knows it. So they knew. And Abner knew they knew and so the conversation. And actually next week when we read next time when we read chapter 5 it begins with these two verses.

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, Behold, we are your bone in your flesh. Previously when Saul was king over us you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the Lord said to you you will shepherd my people Israel and you will be leader over Israel. So they knew. Interesting then isn't it that despite knowing this the people by and large accepted Ish-bosheth as king for two years.

But we never do that right. We never know the will of God and then do something different. Never done that. James 4.17 So for the one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it for him it is sin.

[28 : 29] Anyway. So Abner speaks to Israel and then Benjamin is explicitly named. Of course Benjamin is the tribe from whom Saul came.

So it is the tribe of Saul. It is the tribe of Ish-bosheth. It is a tribe that would have likely needed the most influencing and convincing and they're all up for it and so there's a negotiation and Abner comes to David with their terms.

Verse 20 then. Then Abner and twenty men with him came to David in Hebron and David held a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. Abner said to David let me set out and go and gather all Israel to my lord the king so that they may make a covenant with you and that you may be king over all that your soul desires.

So Abner I'm sorry so David let Abner go and he went in peace. So things are looking positive. Abner has proven himself earnest. He has done what he said he would do.

What could go wrong? Verse 22. And behold the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought a large amount of plunder with them.

[29 : 46] But Abner was not with David in Hebron since he had let him go and he had gone in peace. When Joab and all the army that was with him arrived they informed Joab saying Abner the son of Ner came to the king and he has let him go on his way and he has gone in peace.

Then Joab came to the king and said what have you done? Behold Abner came to you why then have you let him go so that he is already gone. You know Abner the son of Ner that he came to gain your confidence and to learn of your going out and coming in and to find out everything that you were doing.

So Joab returns from whatever pillaging he's been doing the hot headed commander of David who hates Abner ever since Abner killed his brother Asahel and he presents to David as if Abner has been deceptive and the only reason Abner has come down is to learn David's weaknesses.

Now the first century historian Josephus had a lot to say about this so he wrote that Joab foresaw that David would exalt Abner to the first rank of dignity resulting in himself being lower remember Abner is the elder he is older he is wiser and Abner is the young I think he's nephew yes he is the son of David's sister Zeruihah so he's like I don't want this older guy coming in and taking the first rank and me being lower and so again Josephus interpretation argues that this is just a disingenuous cover that he wants to convince David he wants to convince David that Abner is not sincere but he himself is insincere because he is just trying to ensure that he preserves his rank well let's see verse 26 when

Joab left David's presence he sent messengers after Abner so actually just note we don't even see how David responds to this it's not stated what David thinks it leaves the emphasis on Joab just going out and doing his own thing he's going to fix it he sent messengers after Abner and they

brought him back from the well of Syrah but David did not know about it so when Abner returned! [32 : 21] to Hebron Joab took him into the middle of the gate to speak with him privately and there he struck him in the belly so that he died on account of the blood of his brother Asahel afterward when David heard about this he said I and my kingdom are innocent before the Lord forever for the blood of Abner the son of Ner may it turn upon the head of Joab and all his father's!

and may there who falls by the sword or lacks bread so Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner because he had put their brother Asahel to death in the battle at Hibion wow so thus Joab goes behind King David's back to get his revenge it's only a couple of miles or so to the well of Syrah the location isn't known precisely but it's about that Josephus put it at 20 furlongs brilliant google what that is it's a couple of miles and then we read that Joab took him aside to the middle of the gate and so we need to remind ourselves that the gates of the city the gates of the ancient cities were not like just a gate it included all of the surrounding areas where there were benches and there were places for public meetings there were hubs the gates of the cities were hubs where people would meet legal matters would be attended to and it turns out there were private porticos as well again Josephus says this about the episode so he took him aside from his followers so that is to say Joab took Abner aside from his men as if he would speak with him in private and brought him into a void place of the gate having himself nobody with him but his brother Abishai then he drew his sword and smote him so that's how Josephus understands the event is playing out so Joab takes him aside into this little booth where Abishai is already and the two of them conspire to put him to death so David's words I and my kingdom are innocent may his blood be on the head of Joab and his house and I sort of pause on that phrase because we you see that his blood be on his head and it's an interesting phrase that is referring to the fact that

God says there is a blood guilt for murder there is a blood guilt we could track back and look at the very first murder Genesis 4 Cain and Abel where God says that Abel's blood is crying out to him from the ground testifying to his guilt it is a sin that has ongoing repercussions Genesis 9 6 this is where God introduces a covenant to Noah and we all of us here every human being is a descendant of Noah so this is still in effect whoever sheds human blood by man his blood shall be shed for in the image of God he made mankind which is to say life is precious and murder is wrong in numbers 35 it says there's actually quite a long passage where it says how murder defiles a land it defiles a land and it specifically says

God says that it is unacceptable for a ransom to be paid in order to atone it it says in verse 33 of numbers 35 so you shall not defile the land in which you live for blood defiles the land and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it except by the blood of the one who shed it oh wow and there is only one process to avoid the avenger of blood and that is to flee to a city of refuge that's a topic for another day which will come up actually because we will indeed see Joab clinging to the altar anyway so bearing this in mind and observing that David knows Joab is the murderer I don't understand why David let Joab live he didn't deserve to live now some suggest that it's because David saw him as too useful as a military commander maybe some suggest it's well because he's family

[37 : 11] Joab is David's nephew true we don't know what we see is David pronounces a curse and it's a curse that may seem a bit strange to us leprosy skin diseases discharges those are about ceremonial uncleanness and exclusion it's exclusion and the other parts are about weakness Joab is a strong man proud man may his family be excluded and weak okay but later David is going to charge his son Solomon to put Joab to death in 1st Kings chapter 2 but you know by then Joab will have killed again in very similar circumstances he'll have murdered another man in cold blood so Joab baddie anyway the death of Abner then it is it's a problem oops don't don't worry the death of Abner is a problem politically speaking because remember he was the one leading the negotiations he was the one who brought the terms who is now going to go back to the tribes and say hey it's all good let's do this and now he's dead and that could be seen now it may be seen it was all a ploy just to get rid of the strongest leader in

Israel so how is David going to respond and again why not put to death the murderer anyway who knows so how will he respond verse 31 then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him tear your clothes and put on sackcloth and mourn before Abner and David walked behind the bier and they buried Abner in Hebron and the king raised his voice and wept at the grave of Abner and all the people wept and the king sang a song of mourning for Abner and said should Abner die as a fool dies your hands were not bound nor your feet put in bronze shackles as one falls before

the wicked you have fallen and all the people wept over him again then all the people came to provide food for David in his distress while it was still day but David vowed saying may God do so to me and more so if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down now all the people took note of David's vow and it pleased them just as everything that the king did pleased all the people so all the people and all

Israel understood on that day that it had not been the desire of the king to put Abner so so so we see the author devote a big chunk of text here a lot of space is devoted to show David's grief over Abner's death which in turn shows that he was not involved he was not desirous of it and David is commanding mourning that would be fit for a prince David himself following behind the beer burying him in Hebron the city in which he is reigning so it's mourning that we fit for a prince and he even commands

Joab the murderer to do the same thing now I have commented before in our studies that David is a man willing to show emotion that was when we studied 1st Samuel 30 and we saw how David was grieved he was super grieved by what happened he gave time and space to express how he felt and then he saw the Lord what to do next and we see how David's grief is seen positively it is seen as sincere and David also says may the Lord repay the evildoer in proportion to his guilt so he's entrusting the Lord to deal with Joab and it's an important reminder isn't it again all sin stores up judgment all sin stores up judgment and I was reminded as I on this and I paused for a moment because nothing that's done in secret will stay that way forever you know when I thought actually is it possible is it possible that the fact that

Joab was involved isn't even public knowledge I don't know I don't know but if it was done in secret it will not stay that way forever it's in the Bible but at the end of Revelation 20 there is that scene there's that judgment scene before the throne of God and it says that the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds and there are books written with all of the deeds that everyone has done and God cannot just hand wave away those books it's written down justice must be satisfied there has to be a reckoning and that's why the cross is so essential because Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world he made a full atonement and when he was about to die he said to tell us die we know the word it is finished or fully accomplished and Colossians 2 speaks of this certificate of debt that has been wiped clean erased erased and for us those books are wiped clean they are wiped clean and our names are now found in the [43 : 19] Lamb's book of life and I love that Revelation 20 15 if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire and I just thought but then that verse says whatever was in the former book is no longer of consequence is my name in the book of life and the answer is yes if we have our faith in Jesus Christ you know the lake of fire isn't for the worst of sinners it's for anyone whose name isn't written in the book of life and you may be the worst of sinners but if your name is written in the book of life you will not be condemned and that certificate of debt is erased hallelujah anyway let's shift back we've got a minute or two to cover this last short chapter chapter 4 verse 1 now when Esbrosbeth Saul's son heard that Abner had died in Hebron his courage failed or literally his hands hung limp and all

Israel was horrified terrified disturbed dismayed and Saul's son had two men who were commanders of troops the name of the one was Ba'ana and the name of the other was Rehab the sons of Rimmon of the Be'rothite of the sons of Benjamin for Be'roth is considered part of Benjamin and the Be'roth fled to Gitaim and have lived there as strangers until this day okay thanks for that so two brothers the sons of Rehmon and the names of Ba'ana and Rehab and there's a bit of history for Be'roth that's introduced for us if you go back to Joshua chapter 9 then you will remember or you will learn that the residents of Be'roth were part of that Gibeonite deception do you remember there was a bunch of people who pretended they'd come from a long journey make a covenant with us Joshua and Joshua didn't seek the Lord and he did make a covenant with them but they were natives and they should have been in scope for being under the ban and being removed but they deceived but there was a vow made and they became servants and what we read here is those men had been moved to

Gitaim and I don't know where that is sorry verse 4 now Jonathan Saul's son had a son who was disabled in both feet he was five years old when the news of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel and his nurse picked him up and fled but it happened that in her hurry to flee he fell and could no longer walk and his name was Mephibosheth and this is a bit of a non sequitur really because we're introduced to Mephibosheth and we get the back story as to why he's crippled here and then we

forget about him until chapter 9 so it's odd that he is raised here I think what I would say is this he is the son of the deceased crown prince he his injury would realistically disqualify anybody from accepting him but he would have had a claim and there is a rumor when we get to chapter 16 that he is seeking to make good that claim but I wonder if he's mentioned here because there's a conspiracy happening to dispatch but anyway we'll cover it when we get there verse 5 so the sons of remon the birothite rechab and baanah departed and came to the house of ish in the heat of the day while he was taking his midday rest and they came to the interior of the house as if to get wheat and they struck him in the belly and rechab and his brother baanah escaped now when they had come into the house as he was lying on his bed in the bedroom they struck him and killed him and they beheaded him and they took his head and travelled by way of the arabah all night so the death of ish bosheth then and again if it were not for mephi bosheth this would be the end of the house of saul or the end of the mail line i should say obviously we've got michael and these two brothers expect to receive a blessing got the head they think they're going to get a blessing from david let's see how that goes for them verse 8 now they brought the head of ish bosheth to david at hebron and remember they've ridden all night and they said to the king behold the head of ish bosheth the son of saul your enemy who sought your life so the lord has given my lord the king vengeance this day on saul and his descendants and you know it suits these men to invoke the name of the lord here doesn't it it suits them to say this is the lord's doing this is yahweh the covenant name of god it's not it's your doing you men of flesh you have done this because you wanted to just curry favor so let's see how it goes verse 8 but david replied to rechab and his brother ba'anah the sons of remon the birothite and said to them as the lord lives who has redeemed my life from all distress when the one who informed me saying behold saul is dead also viewed himself as the bearer of good news i seized him and killed him in ziklag which was the reward i gave him for his news how much more when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed shall i not now require his blood from your hands and eliminate you both from the earth then david commanded the young men and they killed them and cut off their hands and feet and hung them up by the pool of hebron but they took the head of ishbosheth and buried it in the grave of abner in hebron so david doesn't accept it he doesn't buy it and he gives them a very miserable end and honor is given to ishbosheth once again honor again to the house of saul there is no end justify the means there is no justification there is no excuse for murder it was a selfish move to try and curry favor and david is not having it so how do

we wrap this up well we've touched on a few points of application as we went on and i thought i would just summarize with this again the first verse we read today that we are watching the kingdom of saul diminish and we are watching the kingdom of david arise the kingdom of the earthly king is ending the davidic kingdom the foreshadowing of the messianic kingdom is beginning now our first verse said that there was a long war and it does feel like a long war sometimes does it not but we know the end of the story jesus is the son of david he is the true and better king and when he came when at his first coming he said repeatedly the kingdom of heaven is at hand and we know that the kingdom of david like the kingdom of christ does not arrive by force this is true of both kingdoms david will not take it by force christ did not take it by force in fact zechariah 4 6 says not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the lord and i did notice this i don't know what you make of it but in the text we see abner turn to david which we could see as a model of repentance and we see him seeking to bring israel over to david and we could see that as a model of evangelism and then he's murdered for it and we could see that as a model of martyrdom maybe we see david grieved by the death of his enemies and you know more than once in the book of ezekiel it says that god takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked ezekiel 18 verse 32 i take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies declares the lord therefore repent and live in another place we see god pleading why will you die oh israel why will you die god gives ample time to the wicked to repent verse 2 peter 3 9 says that the lord is not slow about his promise that is to bring everything to conclusion as some count slowness but he is patient towards you not willing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance david was patient god is patient and our call is to be patient and to be about the lord's business it's been a long war nearly 2,000 years and we're still waiting for the fullness of christ's kingdom but come it most certainly will god is doing it amen praise you lord for these things praise you for your word thank you lord god that you are at work thank you lord that there is nothing that can stop you from fulfilling your purposes we praise you lord god for david and for how he is in so many respects a model but lord we do see and acknowledge where he has his own faults and we praise you because only one is perfect only one is good and that is our lord and

saviour jesus christ we thank you lord that you indeed reign and you you reign today in the heavens and you will come to reign on this earth for a thousand years we see it lord in your scriptures we long for it we pray for it we say may ranitha lord come lord jesus we long for the fullness the fullness of your promise lord and lord we pray that we would see it in our lifetime but we know whether you come in our lifetime or subsequently we will see these things hallelujah in jesus name amen amen