

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

PART II

STUDY NUMBER TEN

2 Samuel 3:1-4:12

We are at the verge of the birth of the kingdom.
It has been a long, hard battle for David.
David was anointed when he was 16.
He is now 37 years of age.
It has been 21 years of trauma.

We left them in civil war last week and they are still in civil war this week.
The northern tribes are being led by Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul, under Abner's leadership.
All 11 of those tribes are following him.

David is in the south in Hebron; with one tribe, the tribe of Judah. He rules over this one tribe and was anointed by them last week after he left Ziklag, the city of the Philistines, and came to his home tribe, the tribe of Judah.

The battle went on and there were some casualties last week. 360 in the north died and 20 in the south died.
The only thing good about this civil war is that the south wins this one.

The scene of today's study opens with the conflict between these two kingdoms on the land of Israel.

v. 1 The war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time. David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

The conflict continued.

And David, because God is in it, is giving him greater strength and victory is coming his way.

Now if you will look at verses 2-5 we are going to get a little family statistical information.

David did not sit down these 7-1/2 years when they got up to Hebron, he moved into action.

v. 2 Sons were born to David in Hebron; His firstborn was Amnon the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel;

v. 3 his second, Kileab the son of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel;
the third, Absalom the son of Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;

v. 4 the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith;
the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

v. 5 and the sixth, Ithream the son of David's wife Eglah.
These were born to David in Hebron.

Let's look at the children's names and you can tell what is going on in their lives by understanding

the meaning of their children's names.

His firstborn son Amnon, whose name means 'faithful,' came to him by his relationship with Ahinoam.

His secondborn son Kileab was born to Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. His name means 'whom the Father has perfected' or it is magnifying the Creator.

His thirdborn son Absalom, whose name means 'father of peace,' came to him through his relationship with Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

The fourth son Adonijah was the son of Haggith. Adonijah means 'my Lord.'

The fifth Shephatiah, whose name means 'whom Jehovah defends,' is a son of Abital.

And the sixth Ithream, whose name means 'abundance of people,' was born of Eglah.

Now David has six wives and six sons.

What is wrong with that?

Well that is living in disobedience.

It is a violation of the law.

When you violate biblical principle you can get away with it but you are going to pay a price for what you do.

All of this has happened during the 7 1/2 years of ruling in the city of Hebron over the land of Judah.

When David moved to Hebron, he got busy and found himself four new wives. Of course, later, he marries even more. This is a great weakness of David, and it causes his downfall in a lot of ways later in his biography.

Multiplying wives was contrary to God's law in Genesis, and it set a bad example for David's successors. His son Solomon had this same fault.

Three of these boys were real stinkers. Amnon, Adonijah, and Absalom. In fact, Absalom will lead a rebellion against his father a little later in the story.

Now look at verse 6.

v. 6 During the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner had been strengthening his own position in the house of Saul.

Once again, the war is mentioned here in verse 6, like it was back in verse 1.

Abner was using this opportunity to strengthen

his position in the house of Saul.
Abner was in this for political power,
and he is using the opportunity to step upward
in these circumstances.

David is king over one tribe, and Ish-Bosheth
is king over the other eleven tribes.
It looked on the surface like the major part
of the kingdom was lost.
But David waited on God and wanted only
what God gave him.

Waiting on God doesn't just involve time. Discernment was
involved.

We have to listen hard for the still,
small voice of God. I am sure that David really pondered
all of this, thinking back
over the eight years that he had to spend
fleeing from Saul, and then seven years more
in Hebron waiting God's time; while civil war
was going on.

Eccles. 3:11

"He makes all things beautiful in His time."

If we will only give God time,
He'll work things out in our lives.
David's waiting begins to pay off because Abner obviously
wanted Ish-Bosheth on the throne
so he could slip into his place and control the nation.

The harem of a dead king was always the right to the successor. Ish-Bosheth has the right to Saul's harem. Now the problem, verse 7.

v. 7 Now Saul had had a concubine named Rizpah daughter if Aiah. And Ish-Bosheth said to Abner, "Why did you sleep with my father's concubine?"

Now have you ever heard a man who has been confronted with immoral activity say, "well yeah I did it I am sorry?"

You never hear that.

"No, I didn't." He gets mad, gets ticked, and gets defensive. And that is exactly what happened.

Abner gets Rizpah into bed, and Ish-Bosheth puts up a squawk. Having relations with a king's concubine was a treasonous act, for it was in essence making a claim to the throne.

Division comes between the two leading personalities in the administration in the north.

v. 8 Abner was very angry because of what Ish-Bosheth said and he answered, "Am I a dog's head—on Judah's side? This very day I am loyal to the house of your father Saul and to his family and friends. I haven't handed you over

to David. Yet now you accuse me of an offense involving this woman!

This is where the buck stops.

v. 9 May God deal with Abner, be it ever so severely, if I do not do for David what the Lord promised him on oath

Abner realizes he is fighting against God and when you realize you are fighting against God you had better turn around and get on the winning team. And he is ready to do it.

v. 10 and transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba."

The king had a perfect right in rebuking Abner but Abner became so enraged that he immediately began to make overtures to David.

Abner resented any criticism of his conduct from Ish-Bosheth.

Proud men will not take criticism well.

Also, Abner was no dummy.

He was seeing that David was getting stronger and stronger, and that Saul's house was getting weaker and weaker.

That was because God was against it.

v. 11 Ish-Bosheth did not dare to say another word to Abner, because he was afraid of him.

The mouth of Ish-Bosheth is silenced by his own personal fear of Abner and what he might do if he made any further statements of criticism or performed acts of resistance.

v. 12 Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to say to David, “Whose land is it? Make an agreement with me, and I will help you bring all Israel over to you.”

Question: Whose land is it?

They are still trying to decide that over there today between the Arabs and the Jews.
Whose land is it?

Genesis 12:7

“And the Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ So he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him.”

God said to Abram this is your land.
It is their land by an eternal, unconditional covenant it belongs to the Jews.

David is in the royal line so the land

belongs to him rightfully by the Abrahamic covenant and even more so by the Davidic covenant that we will see in a couple of weeks.

If you will make an agreement with me
I will bring all of Israel over to you.
Abner is saying, I am going to scratch your back
I hope you will scratch mine and make me commander of
your forces too when you become king.

v. 13 “Good,” said David, “I will make an agreement with you.
But I demand one thing of you: Do not come into my
presence unless you bring Michal daughter of Saul when
you come to see me.”

Now here comes Michal into this story again.
Do you remember her?
Remember after David slew Goliath he would qualify to
have Saul's oldest daughter for his wife
by the name of Merab and Saul reproached him
by giving her to somebody else and then Michal
fell hopelessly in love with David.

David did not have any dowry and Saul
did not like David anyway because he was so popular with
all the hit songs and everything going around so he
decided he would make the dowry

the death of 100 Philistines. Knowing that David would get killed in the process of trying to do it and everything would be fine.

And so David goes out and kills 200 and ends up married to Michal.

The last time they were together things got so bad in Gibeah that Michal let him down through the window in the back way and David left to Ramah to go up to be with Samuel. That was about 12 to 14 years ago.

That was the last time that they have been together.

During that intervening time, Saul gave Michal to Paltiel in Gallim which is just 2 miles down the road from Gibeah and she has been living with this man since then.

David is no dummy. If Michal is back in his harem he then:

1. Shows that he harbors no ill-will to the house of Saul because this is Saul's daughter.
2. He will demonstrate as the son-in-law that he has a legitimate right to the throne of Saul.
3. He will win to himself the affection of the other 11 tribes that have been under the leadership of Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son.
4. And last but not least, he will enlist the support of the Benjamites because Saul was a Benjamite.

Now I am sure there are some emotions involved in this.

v. 14 Then David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, demanding, “Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for the price of a hundred Philistine foreskins.”

Now David makes Michal an issue with Ish-Bosheth in demanding that she rightfully be returned to him.

v. 15 So Ish-Bosheth gave orders and had her taken away from her husband Paltiel son of Laish.

Ish-Bosheth, Michal's brother is the one who gives this order for the separation to take place.

v. 16 Her husband, however, went with her, weeping behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, “Go back home!” So he went back.

Paltiel had really fallen in love with Michal, and it is demonstrated by the fact that he did two things:

1. He went
2. He was weeping behind her all the way to Bahurim.

v. 17 Abner conferred with the elders of Israel and said, “For some time you have wanted to make David your king.

v. 18 Now do it! For the Lord promised David, ‘By my servant David I will rescue my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.’”

Isn't that a great statement?
You have wanted to do it for a long time,
now do it!

Abner realizes that he has been
fighting against the Lord in his selfish plans,
and now realizing that, he makes a
tremendous speech before the elders of Israel.

Now notice that it was Abner, not David,
who suggests and manages the transference
of the kingdom. He consults with the elders
all over Israel to persuade them to make David king, then
he goes to Hebron with twenty men
to make the deal complete.

v. 19 Abner also spoke to the Benjamites in person. Then he went to Hebron to tell David everything that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin wanted to do.

The Benjamites are Saul's home tribe.

v. 20 When Abner, who had twenty men with him, came to David at Hebron, David prepared a feast for him and his men.

Although the text does not say it, Abner also has Michal with him, or has had her sent on ahead to David because this was the stipulation earlier in the passage back in verse 13: “Do not come into my presence unless you bring Michal, daughter of Saul, when you come to see me.”

David, in this situation, is courteous to Abner and his men and makes them a feast, and then sends them away in peace.

v. 21 Then Abner said to David, “Let me go at once and assemble all Israel for my lord the king, so that they may make a compact with you, and that you may rule over all that your heart desires.” So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

So that you may rule over what?
All that your heart desires.

Do you want all that your heart desires?
Then listen to Psalm 37:5.

Psalm 37:3-9

“Trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. **Delight yourself in the Lord, and**

He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him, and He will do it. And He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath. Fret not yourself; it leads only to evil doing. For evil doers will be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land.”

v. 22 Just then David’s men and Joab returned from a raid and brought with them a great deal of plunder. But Abner was no longer with David in Hebron, because David had sent him away, and he had gone in peace.

Joab and the military have just returned from a victorious raid, but Abner had already departed.

v. 23 When Joab and all the soldiers with him arrived, he was told that Abner son of Ner had come to the king and that the king had sent him away and that he had gone in peace.

Joab hates Abner because he killed his little brother. Also, he fears him as a political enemy.

v. 24 So Joab went to the king and said, “What have you done? Look, Abner came to you. Why did you let him go? Now he is gone!

Joab is angry and filled with several questions:

1. "What have you done?"
2. "Why did you let him go?"

David, he is our enemy!
He killed my brother and your nephew,
and now you are entering into negotiations
with him; and you sent him away in peace.
Now he is gone!

v. 25 You know Abner son of Ner; he came to deceive you and observe your movements and find out everything you are doing."

Joab puts a completely wrong interpretation upon Abner's act. So many times we make wrong judgments of people simply because we do not have all the facts that determine the situation.

Now watch what happens.

v. 26 Joab then left David and sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the well of Sirah. But David did not know it.

Independent of David, Joab sent messengers to get Abner and have him return.

v. 27 Now when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the gateway, as though to speak with him privately. And there, to avenge the blood of his brother Asahel, Joab stabbed him in the stomach, and he died.

So Joab gets Abner back on pretense and murders him in cold blood.

Both Abner and Joab are pretty bad guys, but at least Abner killed Asahel in an open war in his own defense after he had given him fair warning.

But Joab shed the blood of war in peace.

v. 28 Later, when David heard about this, he said, "I and my kingdom are forever innocent before the Lord concerning the blood of Abner son of Ner.

v. 29 May his blood fall upon the head of Joab and upon all his father's house! May Joab's house never be without someone who has a running sore or leprosy or who leans on a crutch or who falls by the sword or who lacks food."

Boy, David puts a curse on them.
Man he is mad.

v. 30 (Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.)

Now the writer tells us the motive behind the murder.

v. 31 Then David said to Joab and all the people with him, “Tear your clothes and put on sackcloth and walk in mourning in front of Abner.” King David himself walked behind the bier.

Here David calls for everyone, including Joab, to lament the death of Abner.

David himself follows the corpse on the bier (which is a framework for carrying the corpse) as the chief mourner and makes an oration at the grave.

v. 32 They buried Abner in Hebron, and the king wept aloud at Abner’s tomb. All the people wept also.

v. 33 The king sang this lament for Abner: “Should Abner have died as the lawless die?”

v. 34 Your hands were not bound, your feet were not fettered. You fell as one who falls before wicked men.” And all the people wept over him again.

David is sick that Abner was fooled out of his life, killed by surprise and treachery.

v. 35 Then they all came and urged David to eat something while it was still day; but David took an oath saying, “May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun sets!”

David refused to eat, and in his mourning had taken an oath that he would fast until the sun set in honor of Abner.

v. 36 All the people took note and were pleased; indeed, everything the king did pleased them.

David's public actions in this situation were very satisfying to the people. They were pleased with what David was doing and how he had conducted himself.

v. 37 So on that day all the people and all Israel knew that the king had no part in the murder of Abner son of Ner.

David is vindicated before the eyes of the people because of his conduct in this situation.

v. 38 Then the king said to his men, "Do you not realize that a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel this day?"

v. 39 And today, though I am the anointed king, I am weak, and these sons of Zeruiah are too strong for me. May the Lord repay the evildoer according to his evil deeds!"

Now we come to the final obstacle to David's throne and it is dealing with Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul.

chap. 4:v. 1 When Ish-Bosheth, son of Saul, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel became alarmed.

Ish-Bosheth is just like his father. He had never really learned to turn to the Lord in the midst of a crisis, and so when one comes, he lost courage.

Now that Abner was dead, Ish-Bosheth knows he can't maintain his kingdom against David.

v. 2 Now Saul's son had two men who were leaders of raiding bands. One was named Baanah and the other Recab; they were sons of Rimmon the Beerothite from the tribe of Benjamin—Beeroth is considered part of Benjamin.

Beeroth is northwest of Gibeah, about 8 or 9 miles. It is also a part of the territory for the tribe of Benjamin.

Baanah and Recab were evidently a part of the secret police or the guerrilla tactical squad which served as a branch of the military under Abner's leadership.

Because of what had happened to Abner, they too turn on Ish-Bosheth and want to save their own hide if at all possible.

v. 3 because the people of Beeroth fled to Gittaim and have lived there as aliens to this day.

Evidently there was some conflict, and the people of Beeroth fled to Gittaim and continued to find residence in that place.

v. 4 (Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became crippled. His name was Mephibosheth.)

Mephibosheth is an unusual name, but we need to remember it because the story about Mephibosheth and David is beautiful and will come into play a little bit later in our biography.

Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son, and as long as he lived he was a constant danger to David because he had throne rights. Since he was Jonathan's son, however, David would never harm a hair of his head!

v. 5 Now Recab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out for the house of Ish-Bosheth, and they arrived there in the heat of the day while he was taking his noonday rest.

Ish-Bosheth is having an afternoon siesta

here in the heat.

v. 6 They went into the inner part of the house as if to get some wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Recab and his brother Baanah slipped away.

v. 7 They had gone into the house while he was lying on the bed in his bedroom. After they stabbed and killed him, they cut off his head. Taking it with them, they traveled all night by way of the Arabah.

v. 8 They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, “Here is the head of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who tried to take your life. This day the Lord has avenged my lord the king against Saul and his offspring.”

They assumed two things in justifying their act that is not true:

1. That Ish-Bosheth was David's enemy
2. That Ish-Bosheth had tried to take David's life.

They also had one other false assumption, and that is, “This day the Lord has avenged my lord the king against Saul and his offspring.”

v. 9 David answered Recab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, “As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of all trouble.

David is now saying, you guys have made a mistake. You have tried to deliver me out of trouble and God has been able to do that – thank you very much!

v. 10 when a man told me, ‘Saul is dead,’ and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and put him to death in Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news!

v. 11 How much more—when wicked men have killed an innocent man in his own house and on his own bed—should I not now demand his blood from your hand and rid the earth of you!”

They were murderers, murderers of a king; and David executed them for taking God’s work out of his hand.

He also calls Ish-Bosheth a righteous man. He was not guilty of any wicked or criminal deed. He merely took over his father’s kingdom at the urging of Abner.

His only crime was being weak and ineffective and not seeking God’s will about the throne.

v. 12 So David gave an order to his men, and they killed them. They cut off their hands and feet and hung the bodies by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in Abner’s tomb at Hebron.

David is never going to be put in the position of ever doing anything to cast dispersions

on the house of Saul.

The bloodshed of the civil war is primarily over at this point.

Now we are ready for David to take the throne and to begin to rule and reign.

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: “A house divided against itself cannot stand.”

LESSON #2: “No man can serve two masters.”

LESSON #3: Christian growth involves the RESIDENT BECOMING PRESIDENT.

When the resident becomes president it is not you getting more of the Spirit it is the Spirit getting more of you.

It is when he resides as Lord in your life you make the greatest progress in the Christian life.

Here is the biggest lesson of today:

LESSON #4: David never tries to force his kingship. He waits for the Lord to remove all the obstacles.

LESSON #5: The Lord will never force His will upon us either (Revelation 3:20).

Rev. 3:20 says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and opens the door I will come to him."

**LESSON #6: The words of Abner have sound advice:
"Now then do it!"**

LESSON #7: The high cost of civil strife between brothers.

Lessons Learned In The Life of David

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v. 5 Now Recab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out for the house of Ish-Bosheth, and they arrived there in the heat of the day while he was taking his noonday rest.

v. 6 They went into the inner part of the house as if to get some wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Recab and his brother Baanah slipped away.

v. 7 They had gone into the house while he was lying on the bed in his bedroom. After they stabbed and killed him, they cut off his head. Taking it with them, they traveled all night by way of the Arabah.

v. 8 They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who tried to take your life. This day the Lord has avenged my lord the king against Saul and his offspring."

v. 9 David answered Recab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of all trouble, v.10 when a man told me, 'Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and put him to death in Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news!"

v.11 How much more--when wicked men have killed an innocent man in his own house and on his own bed--should I not now demand his blood from your hand and rid the earth of you!"

v.12 So David gave an order to his men, and they killed them. They cut off their hands and feet and hung the bodies by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in Abner's tomb at Hebron.

Lessons Learned In The Life Of David:

STUDY NUMBER TEN - 2 Samuel 3:1-4:12

LESSON #1: "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

LESSON #2: "No man can serve two masters."

LESSON #3: Christian growth involves the "resident becoming president."

LESSON #4: David never tries to force his kingship. He waits for the Lord to remove all the obstacles.

LESSON #5: The Lord will never force His will upon us either (Revelation 3:20).

LESSON #6: The words of Abner have sound advice: "Now then do it!" (2 Corinthians 6:2 & James 1:22).

LESSON #7: The high cost of civil strife between brothers.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Samuel 3:1-4:12 several times and in your own words outline what is happening in the life of David.
2. How is the conflict between the house of David and the house of Saul described in verse 1?
3. What is Abner's proposal to David, according to verse 12?
4. What condition does David attach to the contract, according to verse 13?
5. What does Abner want to do, according to verse 21?
6. How does Joab misinterpret Abner's visit, according to verses 24 & 25?
7. How does David respond to the death of Abner, according to verses 28 & 29?
8. What happens to Ish-Bosheth in chapter 4?
9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?
10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

