

THRU BIBLE

2 Samuel 1—2 | “David’s Reign Over Judah”

I. THE REPORT TO DAVID OF SAUL’S DEATH. (1)

A. (v. 1-11)

1. “*Now it came to pass after the death of Saul...*”

- a. **NOTE:** Saul lost his kingship because he didn’t destroy the Amalekites (1 Sam. 28:18), and now an Amalekite claims to have killed Saul.
- b. **Q** = How do we reconcile the 2 accounts of the death of Saul (1 Sam. 31 vs. 2 Sam. 1). Two possible options:
 - 1) The Amalekite was telling the truth.
 - a) Saul attempted suicide by falling on his sword (1 Sam. 31:4), but it didn’t kill him, and the Amalekite showed up and Saul wasn’t quite dead, so the Amalekite ended up killing him.
 - 2) The Amalekite was lying.
 - a) It seems from the Text in 1 Samuel 31:4-6 that the narrator (which is an inspired account) says that Saul died from the sword wound and committed suicide.
 - i. The narrator said that after the armourbearer “*saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, **and died with him. So Saul died...***”
 - ii. Also, why would Saul ask a pagan Amalekite to kill him just to avoid being killed by the Philistines?

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- b) The Amalekite would have said this to get in good with David, not knowing how David really felt about the matter.

B. (v. 12)

1. **“And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.”**
 - a. Cf. **Proverbs 24:17-18** - *“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.”*

C. (v. 13)

1. **“And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.”**
 - a. “stranger” - Heb. *“guest; sojourner; immigrant”*
 - 1) This young man was the son of an immigrant to the Land of Israel, thus under Saul’s jurisdiction.
 - 2) He was also an Amalekite by ethnic origin.

D. (v. 14)

1. **“And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD’S anointed?”**

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- a. Cf. **Psalm 105:15** - The LORD said, “*Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*”

E. (v. 18)

1. “(Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)”

- a. “the use of the bow”

- 1) This really has the idea of “the Song of the bow”.

- b. “the book of Jasher”

- 1) Cf. **Joshua 10:13**

- 2) It seems to be a book with a collection of poems and songs commemorating the significant national victories of Israel, but this book is now lost. However, we do have some quotations from that book within the Biblical Text, which means that those texts that were inspired are contained within the Biblical record.

II. DAVID ANOINTED OVER JUDAH. (2)

A. (v. 4)

1. “And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah...”

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- a. David was already anointed by Samuel (1 Sam. 16:13) to be king over all Israel, but this is the first step by becoming king over Judah.
 - 1) It’s always exciting when God has a call on someone’s life and it is recognized by the people.

B. (v. 8)

1. **“But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul’s host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim;”**

- a. “Ishbosheth” - Heb. “Man of Shame”
 - 1) He is also called *Esh-Baal* (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39), which means “Fire of Baal”.
 - a) Baal became known as *Bosheth*, which means “shame” (Jer. 3:24; Hosea 9:10).
 - 2) People that had *Baal* in their name, later were changed to *Bosheth* saying, “Shame on you that you would have this name *Baal* in your name.”
 - a) So, *Esh-Baal* (“Fire of Baal”) became *Ishbosheth* (“Man of Shame”).
 - b) Other examples:
 - i. *Jerubbaal* was changed to *Jerubosheth* (Jud. 8:35; 11:21).
 - ii. *Meribaal* was changed to *Mephibosheth* (2 Sam. 4:4; 1 Chron. 9:34).

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- 3) Ishbosheth was not mentioned among the sons of Saul (1 Sam. 14:49), which indicates that he was born after Saul became king.
 - a) Saul reigned for 40 years (Acts 13:21), and was a young adult when he began to reign (1 Sam. 9:2).
 - b) Saul would have probably been at least 20 years old when Jonathan was born, and by the second year of his reign (1 Sam. 13:2), Jonathan was in command of part of his army (1 Sam. 13:2; 14:14), which means that Jonathan would have been 20 years (Num. 1:3). Thus, Jonathan could have been 19 years old when Saul began to reign, and Saul would have been at least 38 years old.

b. *“and brought him over to Mahanaim”*

- 1) *“Mahanaim”* - Heb. *“two hosts; two camps”*
 - a) Jacob named this place “Two Hosts” because this was the place where the angels of God met Jacob (Gen. 32:1-2).
 - b) This town is located on the east side of the Jordan River in the Trans-Jordan area, and is a border town between the tribes of Manasseh and Gad (Josh. 13:26, 30).

C. (v. 9)

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1. “And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.”

a. “Gilead” - Heb. “Hill Country; Rocky Region”

1) This area is a fertile, mountainous area east of the Jordan River in the Trans-Jordan area ([Josh. 13:24-31](#)).

b. “Ashurites”

1) This refers to the Tribe of Asher, which was located on the Northern coast of Israel, north of the plain of Esdraelon.

a) The Vulgate and Syriac versions read “Geshurites”, which is in the district south of Mt. Hermon ([Josh. 13:13](#)).

c. “Jezreel”

1) This is the Lower Galilee region, the great plain of Esdraelon.

D. (v. 10-11)

1. “Ishbosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.”

a. **Q** = How do we correlate the fact that David reigned over Judah for 7 1/2 years, but Ishbosheth reigned for only 2 years?... Two possibilities:

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- 1) Ishbosheth only reigned for the last 2 years of David’s reign in Hebron.
 - a) It may have taken 5 1/2 years for Abner to recover this territory from the Philistines.
- 2) Ishbosheth was anointed king shortly after Saul’s death, but he ruled over “all Israel” for 2 years.
 - a) It may be that he began to reign over part of Israel when David began his reign in Hebron, and it took 5 1/2 years to expand Ishbosheth’s reign over “all Israel.”

E. (v. 12)

1. **“And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.”**
 - a. They went out from *Mahanaim* (Trans-Jordan area) to *Gibeon*¹ (about 6 miles NW of Jerusalem).

F. (v. 13)

1. **“And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.”**
 - a. “the pool of Gibeon”

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- 1) This is located² in the village of Jib, and the pool was discovered by archeologists in 1957.
- 2) The pool is 37 feet in diameter, and 35 feet deep.

G. (v. 14)

1. **“And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.”**

a. “play” - Heb. “*amuse; compete; sport*”

- 1) It has the idea of a *war-play* of a single combat.
- 2) Rather than having the full armies fight each other, they choose to pick certain men to fight it out.
 - a) **Illust.** - This is like an early form of the Roman gladiators.

H. (v. 16)

1. **“And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together:...”**

a. The 12 vs. 12 battle (v. 15) ended with all 24 men dead.

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2. “...wherefore that place was called *Helkathhazzurim*, which is in Gibeon.”

a. “*Helkathhazzurim*” - Heb. “*Field of Sharp Edges, Knives, or Swords*”

I. (v. 18)

1. “*And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel:...*”

a. *Zeruiah* was David’s sister (1 Sam. 26:6; 2 Sam. 17:25; 1 Chron. 2:16), so that makes *Joab*, *Abishai*, and *Asahel* DAVID’S NEPHEWS.

1) “*Joab*” - Leader of David’s men (v. 13)

2) “*Abishai*” - He ventured with David down to Saul and offered to kill Saul with one strike (1 Sam. 26:6-11), but David wouldn’t let him and spared Saul’s life.

3) “*Asahel*” - David’s third nephew that is dealt with in the narrative here.

2. “...and *Asahel* was as light of foot as a wild roe.”

a. “*roe*” - Heb. “*gazelle*”

1) *Asahel* was light on his feet, and very quick as a runner!

J. (v. 19)

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1. “And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner.”

- a. *Asahel* probably figures that it is *Abner* that is keeping *Ishbosheth* in power, so if he can take out *Abner*, that would benefit his Uncle David.

K. (v. 32)

1. “And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Bethlehem...”

a. “his father”

1) Asahel’s father would have been Zeruiah’s husband and David’s brother-in-law.

2) Evidently, Asahel’s father:

a) Was from *Bethlehem* just like David’s family.

b) Had already died by this time, leaving Zeruiah a widow.

i. How sad for Zeruiah, that she lost her husband and now has lost one of her sons.