

Day 297 - TUESDAY: November 28th

2 Samuel 1

2 Samuel 2:1-32 NKJV

It happened after this that David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?" And the LORD said to him, "Go up." David said, "Where shall I go up?" And He said, "To Hebron." So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. And David brought up the men who were with him, every man with his household. So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul." So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, "You are blessed of the LORD, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. And now may the LORD show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing. Now therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be valiant; for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them." But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only 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. Now Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon. So they sat down, one on one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool. Then Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men now arise and compete before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." So they arose and went over by number, twelve from

Benjamin, followers of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. And each one grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together.

Therefore that place was called the Field of Sharp Swords, which is in Gibeon. So there was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten before the servants of David. Now the three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab and Abishai and Asahel. And Asahel was as fleet of foot as a wild gazelle. So Asahel pursued Abner, and in going he did not turn to the right hand or to the left from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him and said, "Are you Asahel?" He answered, "I am." And Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right hand or to your left, and lay hold on one of the young men and take his armor for yourself." But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. So Abner said again to Asahel, "Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I face your brother Joab?" However, he refused to turn aside. Therefore Abner struck him in the stomach with the blunt end of the spear, so that the spear came out of his back; and he fell down there and died on the spot. So it was that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still. Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner. And the sun was going down when they came to the hill of Ammah, which is before Giah by the road to the Wilderness of Gibeon. Now the children of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became a unit, and took their stand on top of a hill. Then Abner called to Joab and said, "Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter in the latter end? How long will it be then until you tell the people to return from pursuing their brethren?" And Joab said, "As God lives, unless you had spoken, surely then by morning all the people would have given up pursuing their brethren." So Joab blew a trumpet; and all the people stood still and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore. Then Abner and his men went on all that night through the plain, crossed over the Jordan, and went through all Bithron; and they came to Mahanaim. So Joab returned from pursuing Abner. And when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel. But the servants of David had struck down, of Benjamin and Abner's men, three

hundred and sixty men who died. Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at daybreak.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "The book of 2 Samuel spans the 40-year reign of King David, which begins as the book opens.

An Amalekite delivers the shocking news of Saul and Jonathan's death, even reporting that he was the one who had killed Saul at Saul's request. Yet "the Amalekite's report of Saul's death is different from the account in 1 Samuel 31:4, which states that Saul died by falling on his own sword. It appears that the Amalekite's story is a fabrication. Perhaps he sought recognition or reward from David by claiming to have slain Saul" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on 1:6-10; compare 2 Samuel 4:10). But having just had a run-in with a band of Amalekites (1 Samuel 30), and aware of God's judgment on them (Deuteronomy 25:19), David was in no mood to consider the merits of the story and whether or not some sort of mercy killing had been in order. The Amalekite is thus rewarded with execution—on the basis of his own testimony.

Furthermore, "David's execution of the Amalekite was a strong statement to those under his command that he had no part in Saul's death and did not reward it in any way. Thus he exemplified respect for authority and distanced himself from the charge of being a usurper" (note on 2 Samuel 1:15).

After being chased and persecuted by Saul for so long, we read that David's reaction to Saul's death is not that of a carnal-minded human being. It is rather the reaction of one who lives according to the Spirit of God. Jesus Christ Himself taught this attitude, as revealed in Matthew 5:44: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." The type of eulogy given in this chapter is just

another testimony of David's respect, mercy, love and compassion for Saul and his sons.

David's greatest mourning is, of course, for his best friend Jonathan. Recall how Jonathan deeply loved David, and David evidently loved Jonathan nearly as much in return: "The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Samuel 18:1; see also 18:3; 20:17; 19:1).

Sad to say, there are those who have perversely twisted Jonathan's love for David expressed in 2 Samuel 1:26—"surpassing the love of women"—to be what God would consider an abomination. But let's look at the facts:

David's sexual interest was toward women, as evidenced by his many wives and concubines—and his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. And Jonathan evidently married because he had at least one child—Mephibosheth (see 2 Samuel 4:4).

God had specific instructions regarding sexual relationships. "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination" (Leviticus 18:22). "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: *they shall surely be put to death*. Their blood shall be upon them" (20:13).

Immediately before in 2 Samuel 1:26, the very same verse in question, David focuses on Jonathan being like a *brother* to him—and yet, *more* than a brother. David's son, Solomon, used this proverb to denote a close relationship, saying, "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). What David and Jonathan shared was deep and true friendship—and perhaps even spiritual fellowship if Jonathan had God's Spirit." [END]

Verse 17 – The two different Hebrew words translated "lament" and "lamentation" each can involve "striking a musical note" as well as "wailing & mourning". Most other translations record in verse 17 that

David composed a funeral song for Saul and Jonathan. We will see in the following verses the likely song that David composed and wanted taught to the children of Judah.