

2 SAMUEL CHAPTER 3

¹ And there was war for a long time between the house of Saul and the house of David; and the house of David grew continually stronger; but the house of Saul grew continually weaker.

² And sons were born to David in Hebron: and his firstborn was Ammon the son of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess. ³ And his second son *was* Daluiah, the son of Abigail the Carmelitess; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmi the king of Geshur. ⁴ And the fourth *was* Adonijah, the son of Haggith, and the fifth *was* Shephatiah, the son of Abital. ⁵ And the sixth *was* Ithream, the son of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

⁶ And it came to pass while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner was governing the house of Saul. ⁷ And Saul had a concubine *named* Rizpah, the daughter of Jol; and Ishbosheth the son of Saul said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?" ⁸ And Abner was very angry with Ishbosheth for this saying; and Abner said to him, "Am I a dog's head? I have this day showed kindness with the house of Saul your father, and with his brothers and friends, and have not gone over to the house of David, and do you this day seek a charge against me concerning injury to a woman?" ⁹ God do thus and more also to Abner, if as the Lord swore to David, so do I not to him this day; ¹⁰ to take away the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to raise up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan to Beersheba." ¹¹ And Ishbosheth could not any longer answer Abner a word, because he feared him.

¹² And Abner immediately sent messengers to David, at Thailam where he was, saying, "Make your covenant with me, and behold, my hand *is* with you to bring back to you all the house of Israel." ¹³ And David said, "With a good will I will make a covenant with you; only I demand one condition of you: you shall not see my face, unless you bring Michal the daughter of Saul, when you come to see my face." ¹⁴ And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth the son of Saul, saying, "Restore me my wife Michal, whom I took for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines." ¹⁵ And Ishbosheth sent, and took her from her husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish. ¹⁶ And her husband went with her weeping behind her as far as Bahurim. And Abner said to him, "Go, return"; and he returned.

¹⁷ And Abner spoke to the elders of Israel, saying, "In former days you sought David to reign over you; ¹⁸ and now perform *it*; for the Lord has spoken concerning David, saying, 'By the hand of My servant David I will save Israel out of the hand of all their enemies.'" ¹⁹ And Abner spoke in the ears of Benjamin. And Abner went to speak in the ears of David at Hebron, all that seemed good in the eyes of Israel and in the eyes of the house of Benjamin. ²⁰ And Abner came to David at Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made a banquet of wine for Abner and his men with him. ²¹ Then Abner said to David, "I will arise now and go, and gather to my lord the king all of Israel; and I will make a covenant with him, and you shall reign over all whom your soul desires." And David sent Abner away, and he departed in peace.

²² And behold, the servants of David and Joab arrived from their expedition, and they brought much spoil with them. And Abner was not with David in Hebron, because he had sent him away, and he had departed in peace. ²³

Now Joab and all his army came, and it was reported to Joab, saying, "Abner the son of Ner has come to David, and David has let him go, and he has departed in peace." ²⁴ And Joab went in to the king, and said, "What *is* this you have done? Behold, Abner came to you; and why have you let him go, and he has departed in peace? ²⁵ Surely you know the mischief of Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive you, and to know your going out and your coming in, and to know all things that you are doing?" ²⁶ And Joab returned from David, and sent messengers to Abner after *him*; and they brought him back from the Well of Sirah, but David was unaware. ²⁷ And he brought back Abner to Hebron, and Joab caused him to turn aside from the gate to speak to him, laying wait for him; and he stabbed him there in the stomach, and he died for the blood of Asahel the brother of Joab.

²⁸ And David heard *of it* afterwards, and said, "I and my kingdom are guiltless before the Lord, even forever, of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. ²⁹ Let it fall upon the head of Joab, and upon all the house of his father; and let there not be wanting of the house of Joab one that has an issue, or a leper, or that leans on a staff, or that falls by the sword, or that is in need of bread." ³⁰ For Joab and Abishai his brother laid wait continually for Abner, because he slew Asahel their brother at Gibeon in the battle.

³¹ And David said to Joab and to all the people with him, "Tear your clothes, and put on sackcloth, and lament over Abner." And King David followed the coffin. ³² And they buried Abner in Hebron. And the king lifted up his voice, and wept at his tomb, and all the people wept for Abner. ³³ And the king mourned over Abner, and said, "Shall Abner die according to the death of Nabal? ³⁴ Your hands were not bound, and your feet *were* not *put* in fetters; *one* brought *you* not near as Nabal; you have fallen before children of iniquity." ³⁵ And all the people assembled to weep for him. And all the people came to cause David to eat bread while it was yet day. And David swore, saying, "God do so to me, and more also, if I eat bread or anything else before the sun goes down." ³⁶ And all the people took notice, and all things that the king did before the people were pleasing in their sight. ³⁷ So all the people and all Israel perceived in that day, that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. ³⁸ And the king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a great prince has fallen this day in Israel? ³⁹ And that I am this day a *mere* kinsman *of his*, and *as it were* a subject; but these men the sons of Zeruiah are too harsh for me: the Lord reward the evildoer according to his wickedness."