

2 Samuel 3:6-11. *Context for a United Crown.*

David and his six wives were busy in Hebron; six sons were born, including Amnon and Absalom who would later kill his half-brother Amnon for raping his sister, Tamar, and then later seek to overthrow his father David for the throne.

And, furthermore, the war between the divided kingdoms of David and Ish-Bosheth was not going well with the Benjamites—they were losing, big time.

Abner had improved his political and military status within Ish-Bosheth's kingdom, but had the time and the temerity to sleep with one of Saul's concubines, Rizpah. Ish-Bosheth was not happy.

Nonetheless, Abner was incensed because of the accusation—

*Am I the head of a dog, complicit with Judah no less? I am loyal even today. I haven't handed you over to David. But now? You accuse me of getting involved with this woman! May God deal with Abner [note the 3<sup>rd</sup> person] ever so severely if I do not do for David what the Lord God Yahweh promised David on oath and deliver a united kingdom with David ruling over both houses—Israel and Judah, all the way from Dan to Beersheba.*

Ish-Bosheth was quiet, not daring to talk for he was afraid of Abner.

- Q Why was Abner irritated with his king? Do you think he actually did “consort” with Rizpah?
- Q Why did Abner shift to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person in his decree about what was to happen to Israel, Judah, and David?
- Q Why was King Ish-Bosheth so quiet in his response to Abner? [See 1 Samuel 2:8-9]

### 1 SAMUEL 3:6-11

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.

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

<sup>8</sup>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! <sup>9</sup>May God deal with Abner, be it ever so severely, if I do not do for David what the LORD promised him on oath <sup>10</sup>and transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba."

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

2 Samuel 3:12-21. *A Kingdom, United, for a Time.*

Following up, Abner sent emissaries to David calling for an agreement to bring all of Israel over to David.

David was pleased, and indicated he'd make said agreement, with one proviso—Do not even come into my presence unless you bring back Michal my wife with you. [Now Saul had given Michal over to Paltiel, hoping to end David's claim to the throne; see 1 Samuel 25:44].

Similarly, David sent emissaries to Ish-Bosheth declaring the proviso right up front—*Give me my wife Michal who I committed myself for the price of 100 Philistine penis foreskins*. Ish-Bosheth gave the order and she was taken away from her current husband. Paltiel was not happy and refused to leave her



side, weeping while accompanying her on the way back. Abner nipped that in the bud—*Go home!* And Paltiel did.

Meanwhile, Abner conferred with Israel's leaders, saying, *You've wanted David as your king for some time. Now is the time—do it. Yahweh the Lord God has promised David, saying "By My servant David will I rescue My people Israel from the Philistines, and from all their enemies."*

As for the Benjamites, Abner spoke in person. At Hebron, he told David about everything Israel and Benjamin wanted to do. David celebrated with Abner and his 20 men—what a feast. Then Abner made it official:

*Let me go now at once and assemble all Israel for my master the king, so they may compact with you, and that you may rule over all that your heart desires.*

David sent Abner away, and he went away in peace.

- Q Why did David want Michal back to join his other six wives?
- Q Why did he mention the 100 foreskins as a price of betrothal?
- Q Why did Israel want David as king, and the Benjamites not so much?
- Q Without "cheating" [since you know the rest of the history], do you think this new alliance would last? Why not?
- Q Why did Holy Spirit include this information as part of Scripture?

## 1 SAMUEL 3:12-21

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."

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." 14Then 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."

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

16Her 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.

17Abner conferred with the elders of Israel and said, "For some time you have wanted to make David your king. 18Now 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.'"

19Abner 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. 20When Abner, who had twenty men with him, came to David at Hebron, David prepared a feast for him and his men. 21Then 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.

