



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

www.bibleradio.org.au

BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2284 ~ Intrigue Around the Throne.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

At this point in time of Israel's history, the Israelite tribes were in civil war over who should be the next king of Israel. God had clearly indicated that David, the son of Jesse, was His choice for the next king. If the people had followed God's will for their nation, there would have been unity between the tribes, and not division and bloodshed.

In defiance of God's will, Saul's commander general, Abner, placed Saul's youngest son, Ish-Bosheth, on the throne of Israel. King David had already been made King of Judah for the past 5 years. Abner was the power behind Ish-Bosheth's throne and was playing him as a political puppet, which Ish-Bosheth didn't like. Just like his father Saul, Ish-Bosheth thought he was so important that he didn't need Abner to advise him.

As the civil war progressed, the house of David grew stronger and stronger while the house of Ish-Bosheth became weaker and weaker. Abner was no fool and would have realised this. In ancient times when a king died, one way of claiming the dead king's throne was to sleep with the dead king's secondary wives. Apparently Ish-Bosheth heard a report that Abner had been doing just that, and he immediately suspected that Abner was trying to take his place as Israel's king. We're not told if this report was true or not. However, Abner used the incident as an excuse for leaving Ish-Bosheth and going over to David's side. By this time, Abner no doubt thought it was in his own best interests to do so.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound](#).

When Abner made arrangements to meet with David, the king of Judah, David put one condition on seeing Abner: Abner was to bring David's first wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul with him. David also communicated to King Ish-Bosheth, the king of Israel, that David wanted Michal back. To do this, they had to break up the marriage Michal was currently in. Her husband wasn't at all happy about losing Michal and followed the king's messenger for a good distance until the group met up with Abner himself, on his way to visit David in Hebron. Abner ordered Michal's 2nd husband to return to his home.

Why did David want Michal back after so many years apart? Initially she'd helped him to escape his enemies when her father was looking to kill David. But it wasn't that David didn't have plenty of wives already. When he'd moved from Ziklag to Hebron, he already had 2 wives but then he also took 4 more in Hebron, and they each bore him a son, as listed in 2nd Samuel, Chapter 3. David was clearly breaking Moses' teaching in Deuteronomy, Chapter 17, that kings weren't to multiply the number of wives they had. David's disobedience to this would soon result in conflicts within his own household.

In an interesting side note, there are at present 150 people in the world who have proved their ancestry link back the 90 generations to be declared a descendant of King David's. This has also been confirmed by DNA tests.

As soon as Abner and the 20 men with him had left David, David's commander-in-chief, Joab, returned with a band of soldiers and a large amount of spoil from a raiding party. Joab was very upset that David had received Abner in peace and had given him and his party a banquet feast. Joab told David that Abner had come to spy out David's plans and that Abner had deceived him by offering to bring all Israel under the leadership of David. There may have been hidden jealousy in Joab's heart as well, because Abner was very experienced as a warrior and he may have been looking to take over Joab's job. David set Joab's mind at rest that he had no plans about changing his army commanders.

However, Joab still thought that he still had a score to settle with Abner over the death of his younger brother, Asahel. He used the king's name to lure Abner back to the palace in Hebron, where he took Abner aside privately and stabbed him to death in revenge. Hebron was a 'city of refuge' and Joab should have brought his case against Abner before the elders of the people of Hebron. Abner had killed Asahel in battle, and couldn't be accused of murdering him. Payback killings don't bring closure to bad situations. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 26, that all those who draw the sword will die by the sword.

Abner's murder was a great embarrassment to David. He'd just received the support of the northern tribes, and then suddenly his own military commander murdered their chief representative. David announced that he was innocent of the murder and that the guilt should fall upon the head of Joab.

Because Abner's murder had the potential to undo the union of the northern and southern tribes under David's rule, David publicly did everything possible to prove that he was innocent. He took part in a public ceremony of mourning and he sang a lament about Abner. He and all the people wept at Abner's grave. David succeeded in convincing the Israelites in the north that he wasn't responsible for Abner's death. He likened Abner to a prince and a great man.

It's hard to say if David really believed the good things that he'd said about Abner. Abner had sided with Ish-Bosheth against David, all the while knowing that David was God's anointed king; Abner then betrayed Ish-Bosheth and sided with David. These are not the actions of a great man. David admitted that Joab and Abishai were too strong for him to discipline at that time. So he left it to the Lord to repay them for the evil that they'd done.

With Abner dead and buried in Hebron, what could King Ish-Bosheth of Israel do in the northern tribes? Ish-Bosheth knew how dependent he was on Abner and without him, Ish-Bosheth lost heart. This caused the northern tribes to become alarmed; there was now no strong leader in the north, and the possibility of chaos and trouble became great. Two brothers of the king's captains took advantage of the situation and murdered Ish-Bosheth as he rested on his bed. They hoped to gain favours from King David for their actions, and travelled all night from Ish-Bosheth's headquarters on the eastern side of the Jordan River, to Hebron to bring Ish-Bosheth's head to David as proof of the deed that they had done.

Those two captains justified their murder of Ish-Bosheth by telling David that the Lord had avenged him against Saul and his descendants after Saul had for so long sought to kill David. But David sentenced those two murderers to death. They were executed and their hands and feet were cut off – the hands that carried out the murder and the feet that carried the news to David. Their bodies were hung up in public so that all would know that David hadn't ordered Ish-Bosheth's murder.

In this 4th chapter of 2nd Samuel, we hear about Saul's grandson and Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, who was one of the few surviving members of Saul's family left. When Mephibosheth was 5 years old, news had come from the battlefield that both Saul and Jonathan had been killed. When Mephibosheth's nurse heard this, she picked him up and fled. In her flight, she had a fall and Mephibosheth was injured. He became a cripple in both feet for the rest of his life. At the time of Ish-Bosheth's death, Mephibosheth was about 12 years old, but not suitable to be considered as a king for the northern tribes. This opened the way for David to become king over all Israel.

What can we learn from all this trouble and bloodshed in today's *Bible Adventure*? Life can be short, and can end abruptly. In Psalm 90, Moses says: "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." We live short and uncertain lives, and we need to deeply consider and follow God's plans for our time here while on earth. We need to have our hearts prepared for the Lord Jesus' return by keeping Jesus as the most important person we'll ever meet. For every single person on earth, the divine Jesus in heaven took on a human body to live down here 2,000 years ago, so that He could destroy the gulf of sin that caused people to be separated from their creator God.

When the Lord Jesus died on a Roman cross to pay the penalty for our sins that we had earned before God, our Holy Father, Jesus showed us God's love for us by making a way of reconciliation for all those who will believe what Jesus says, beg for His forgiveness, ask for His free gift of salvation, and surrender our lives into His eternal keeping. Then the Lord Jesus forgives, makes new and seals such a repentant person with His Holy Spirit. In the not-too-distant future, the Lord Jesus will come to call out His faithful followers and gather them to Himself in heaven, while the earth continues to be wracked with wars, destruction and death.

Although many people would prefer otherwise, our planet does have a 'use by' date as predicted in the Bible, and we seem to be getting closer to the end-time events that are predicted in the Bible books of Daniel, Zachariah and Revelation. The Lord Jesus Himself made predictions about the state of the earth in the end times. In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 24, He said: "Take heed that no one deceives you ... you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences (that's deadly disease epidemics) and earthquakes in various places."

Today, we're also seeing a major decline in social care and behaviour regarding one another in many countries. In 2nd Timothy, Chapter 3, it says: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God ..." Has our society declined already to this level in neglect of responsibilities and self-absorption that the Bible warns us about?

Because life on this planet can be very painful and difficult, people desire to escape into a fantasy world of their own making. They want to be someone else – hopefully rich, famous and powerful. The reality is, however, that they aren't any of those things unless God wills it, and that it's only in facing reality and trusting Jesus' great wealth, leadership and power, will they be fully successful in moving forward, being able to forgive and overcoming their particular difficulties.

There are times when many of us think that life should be easier, and not be so difficult or painful. But often, the problems of life do the work of making us live closer and more dependently on the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit, who is God's guide, teacher and comforter within a Christian's spirit. In the struggles of life, we tend to pray more intensely, read our Bibles more diligently, seek the help and counsel of godly people, and grow more spiritually.

In all of King David's dealings with people, he was careful in how he treated them. He was prepared to wait for God's timing for his kingly reign to be established over all Israel, and not before. We need to trust God in all our situations too and not take revenge for the wrongs that others commit against us. In Psalm 37, Verse 7, it says: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

< END OF SCRIPT >
