

## **The King is Dead – 2 Samuel 1:1-27**

### **Introduction:**

David's family, and the families of his men, were kidnapped by the Amalekites, enemies of Israel. The city they called home had been burned and all their valuables stolen. David leads his men in pursuit of the Amalekites and God provides a miracle: all the families are safely returned along with all the goods and possessions that had been stolen. On top of that, David and his men gained the loot that had been taken from other cities raided by the Amalekites. While David and his men are celebrating this victory, tragedy strikes Israel.

On the northern borders of Israel, the armies of the Philistines gathered to fight the armies of King Saul. Saul's army is easily routed by the large, well mobilized Philistine army, and in that battle the king is killed, along with three of his sons. The Philistines so routed the armies of Israel that they were able to take over cities that belonged to Israel. This was a dark day for the nation.

For years now David has been fleeing from King Saul knowing that the king desired to put him to death. The king was jealous of David, a mighty warrior and leader of men. Now David's greatest enemy was dead. How will he respond? 2 Samuel opens with a picture of how David responds to the death of his king and his dear friend, Jonathan, the son of the king.

### **David Receives Sad News – 2 Samuel 1:1-5**

1. How long did it take for David to receive the news of the battle and Saul's death? How does this time lag help defend David as the future king of Israel? (vss. 1-2)
2. Describe the messenger who comes to David (v. 2). What did his appearance say to David? How does the messenger approach David? What might be behind this gesture?

3. David wants to know what news he brings, so what does he ask the messenger (v. 3)? What is the response?
4. When David hears this man has come from the battlefield (the camp of Israel), what does David want to know (v. 4)? What do we learn about David here?
5. What was the summary given on how things went on the battlefield (v. 4)?
6. David presses for more information, confirmation of what he just heard. What does he ask the messenger (v. 5)?

### **The Messenger's Story – 2 Samuel 1:6-10**

7. We notice that the account this young man gives about what happened on the battlefield is quite different from the one given in 1 Samuel 31. Most interpreters doubt the young man's account. What, in verse 6, causes one to question this man's man has to say?
8. How does the messenger describe King Saul's last moments (v. 6)? How are they described in 1 Samuel 31:3?
9. What do we learn about the nationality of the messenger in v. 7? Does this impact the way the story would play out?
10. According to the messenger, what request did King Saul make of him (v. 9)? According to 1 Samuel 31:4, who did the king make this request to?
11. According to verse 10, what does this messenger claim to have done? What evidence did he bring to show that the king was dead? Why would he bring these to David?

### **David's Response to the Messenger – 2 Samuel 1:11-16**

12. What was the response of David when he knew the King and Jonathan were dead (vss. 11-12)?

13. According to verse 12, who did David and his men mourn for?
14. David turns his attention once again to the messenger. What does David establish again about his identity (v. 13)? Why was this important?
15. What does David ask the messenger in verse 14? Why was this important?
16. The Amalekite came to David saying he had killed David's enemy. He likely came expecting a reward from David. Instead, what does he receive (v.15)?
17. How does David explain his actions in verse 16?

### **David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan – 2 Samuel 1:17-26**

18. David is known as a writer of songs (which we call Psalms). What gift does David offer up in memory of Saul and Jonathan (v. 17)? Who is meant to know and sing it?
19. Verse 19 says that the glory of Israel is slain, the mighty have fallen. What does this mean?
20. What does David NOT want to happen according to verse 20?
21. In verses 21-22 we are taken to the hills where the battle was fought. First, he expects that the hills themselves will mourn this loss (v.21). Second, he describes the efforts of King Saul and Jonathan. How does he describe their role in the battle (v. 22)?
22. According to David, how were Saul and Jonathan viewed by the people (v. 23)?
23. What is the message of verse 24?
24. In verses 25-27 David focuses on one person. Who is that? What is said about that person? What was David's relationship to that person?

## **Conclusion:**

David hears the sad news that not only did Israel lose the battle against the Philistines, but they also lost their king and his son. He hears it from a foreigner who seems to expect a reward for what he has done - slaying Saul and bringing the crown to David. It seems that this Amalekite knew of the tension between Saul and David, and also understood that David could be/would be the next king.

What the Amalekite did not count on was David's integrity, and his love for Jonathan. Though the king sought to kill David, David still would not speak ill of him at his death. Instead, he glorified him as a warrior. David also had a deep connection with Jonathan and he was deeply moved by the loss of his friend. The Amalekite thought he came as a friend to David, but by his actions proved he was an enemy of David.

Comparing the story of the Amalekite with that given in 1 Samuel 31 it appears that the one the Amalekite gave was fabricated for his own gain. Instead of receiving a reward, he was put to death. His trial consisted of his own story told to David. He had condemned himself.

Once again David is portrayed as a man of justice, integrity and love. This snapshot of David says to the people once again, "He will make a good king."