

What Now? 2 Samuel 2:1-32

Introduction:

It has been many years now since David was anointed to be the next king of Israel. In the meantime, he has been on the run and gathered around him a band of loyal warriors. He has also watched the kingdom crumble as King Saul gave poor direction to the nation. King Saul's greatest deficit was his lack of spiritual discernment. Saul was for Saul, which meant he seldom had time to consult God – unless he was in a bind.

King Saul and his sons have been killed in battle. The nation needs a king, but that is a position only God can grant. What should David do now? Chapter two of 2 Samuel address this question and the response of God, David and the people.

David Anointed King of Judah – 2 Samuel 2:1-7

1. These are days of transition. King Saul is dead and David knows of his anointing. How does David decide what to do next (v. 1)?
2. The land of the Israelites is divided into two areas: the south, which is Judea, and the north, which is Israel. To which area is David drawn (v. 1)? What connection does David have to this area?
3. Which city is David instructed to go to (v. 1)? Who is also associated with this city (Genesis 13:18)?
4. David moved to a city called Hebron. Who moved with him (v.2)? What role did they play in his move to be king?
5. Besides David's family, who else joined David in Hebron (v.3)?
6. What transpired there in Hebron (v.4)?
7. David learns of the kind gesture the people of Jabesh-Gilead showed to Saul (v.4)? In response, what does David do in verse 5? What promise does David make in verse 6? What information does David give them in verse 7? Why is this exchange so important to be mentioned here?

Ish-Bosheth Made King of Israel – 2 Samuel 2:8-11

8. Who is Abner (v. 8)? What does he do (v. 9)? Why go to Mahanaim?
9. Who is Ish-bosheth (v. 10) (also refer 1 Chronicles 8:33) What do we learn of him in verse 10?
10. Who follows David (v.10)? How long does David reign this region (v.11)?
11. Who appears to be the real power behind the throne of Israel?

The Battle of Gideon – 2 Samuel 2:12-17

12. In verses 12-13 we have a description of the way the battle lines were drawn up between David's men and Ish-bosheth's men. Describe the scene. How is this different from the battle lines against the Philistines?
13. What does Joab suggest the armies do in verse 14?
14. Describe the conflict recounted in verses 15-16. Who won?
15. Helkath-hazzurim means "field of sword edges." What is this referring to?
16. Verse 17 describes how the rest of the battle went. Who won?

The Sons of Zeruah – 2 Samuel 2:18-28

17. Zeruah was the sister of David. What were the names of her sons, the nephews of David? (v. 18)
18. What do we learn about Asahel (v. 18)? Who does he set his sights on capturing (v. 19)? Why might this be his target?
19. Abner tries to coax Asahel out of his pursuit (v.21). What does he suggest? Does Asahel change his course?

20. In verse 22 Abner gives Asahel a second chance to turn back. What outcome does Abner predict will come of this chase? Why does Abner want this outcome?
21. When Asahel refused to turn away from pursuing him, what did Abner do (v. 24)? What was the outcome of this action?
22. How did the soldiers respond to what happened there (v.23)?
23. Who continued the pursuit (v. 24)?
24. Who gathered around Abner to support him (v. 25)? Why would they support him (cf. 1 Samuel 9:1-2)?
25. What does Abner suggest in verse 26? What made this battle so bitter (v. 26)?
26. What is Joab's response (v. 27-28)?

Counting the Cost – 2 Samuel 2:29-32

27. Why do you think Abner and his men marched all night through the desert (v.29)?
28. Joab returned to David, and a tally was made of those lost in battle. How many men did Joab (David) lose (30)? How many men did Abner lose (v. 31)?
29. Where was Asahel buried (v. 32)? Why here?
30. Where does Joab take his army (v. 32)? Why?

Conclusion

The time has come for David to take his rightful place as king. God had chosen him and Samuel had anointed him with oil to be the next king. It had been approximately fifteen years since that day, but David would not do anything that would hasten his way to the throne – especially if it meant harming the king.

Now the king has died in battle, and the people need a king. David, under the direction of God, goes to Hebron, the place it all began for the people of God, and

there the people of Judah proclaim David as their king. It was a wonderful day for God's people.

Nonetheless, there was one son of Saul remaining, and Saul's general, Abner, pushed him forward to be the king. Ish-bosheth does not seem to have ambitions to be king, but Abner makes sure he is given a throne.

There cannot be two kings over God's people, so the two generals of the opposing sides gather together. A battle ensues, and the northern tribes come out the losers. But nothing is resolved. The land is still divided, with two kings, and two different calls to allegiance. This is likely not how David saw his coronation playing out. Would there always be a divided kingdom? Or could David bring the people together? The next chapters will chronicle what happens next.