

## **The Death of Abner**

2 Samuel 3:6 – 4:12

by Don Falkos

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Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul, was king of the northern tribes of Israel. But his military commander, Abner, was the real power behind the throne. The two of them had a falling out over one of Saul's concubines. So Abner sent a message to David, "Make an agreement with me, and I will help turn all of Israel over to you."

David had one condition, "Bring back my wife Michal, who was taken from me." And so she was returned. Abner consulted with the leaders of Israel and convinced them to make David their king. Then he went to Hebron to tell David, and they had a feast to confirm their agreement.

After Abner had left, Joab returned from a raid. He was told that Abner had been there to see David and that he had just left. Joab sent men to catch up with Abner. They found him and brought him back. Joab took him aside as if to speak with him privately. But to avenge the killing of his brother, Joab stabbed Abner in the stomach and he died.

David was very upset. He cursed Joab and his entire family. When Abner was buried, David wept openly at the graveside and said, "A great leader of Israel has fallen today." The people wept with him, and everyone understood that David was not responsible for Abner's murder.

Two of Ish-Bosheth's military commanders slipped into his house while he was taking an afternoon nap. They killed him in his bed. They cut off his head and took it to David at Hebron. They thought the king would be pleased. Instead, he ordered their execution.