

**BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL**  
**ANOTHER WRONGFUL DEATH**  
**2 SAMUEL 4:1-12**

**Introduction**

Let us not forget that this story of David is part of Jesus' story that eventually leads us to the fulfillment of God's promise that the Son of David will one day come and rule and reign.

Didn't we hear about that Sunday night in our Christmas Program? Well, the house and lineage of that Jesus of Christmas partially lies here in what has become a rather gruesome tale.

I want to look at it tonight from two perspectives, from, first of all, the perspective of the north — that is, Ish-bosheth and Israel — and secondly from the perspective of David at Hebron in the south.

**Ish-bosheth's And Israel's Perspective**

Israel's top leader, Abner, has just been killed by Joab in revenge for Abner having slain his brother Asahel and Abner has been buried by David.

Abner is the one who anointed Ish-bosheth as King and Abner is the one who had really been in charge of running things since the death of Ish-bosheth's father Saul and three of Saul's other sons.

Abner had made him king and then there came a rift between Abner and Ish-bosheth over an accusation that Ish-bosheth made against Abner regarding one of Saul's concubines. So Abner got an attitude and went and unmade Ish-bosheth as king and was in the process of delivering over Israel to David when He was killed by Joab.

**Vs 1**

Literally, his hands dropped...His courage failed him. He never really acted much like he wanted to be king in the first place. He was ill-equipped to be king. He was never meant to be king. He didn't want the job and furthermore he couldn't do the job. And it appears that the nation of Israel realized this too!

Sometimes life isn't fair like that! He was a puppet-king. He was put in power by others. He really didn't want to be in this situation to begin with.

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His courage failed him. And you almost feel sorry for him! You know, you wouldn't even know about him if he wasn't here in these few chapters. It would be much like if your Pastor was thrust into the position of leadership in our country! No thank you!

He's the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time. He's weak. He's a patsy. He's a man under the control of others.

And now two would-be young pretenders, tried to be opportunists in accelerating what they felt was going to happen anyway — the downfall of the northern kingdom!

**Vs 2-7**

Now I'm sure that these two captains of Israel were thinking that they might help themselves to have David's favor and maybe get some top government jobs maybe with a pension and health benefits, so they killed got together and killed Ish-bosheth in cold blood!

Such brave young men we see here—NOT!...They killed Ish-bosheth while he was asleep in his bed!

Again, life wasn't fair to Ish-bosheth. You know, he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time, and he's killed. He's murdered by these two who had been his captains!

Whatever Ish-bosheth was, he most certainly didn't deserve to die that way. He was an innocent victim of these two ambitious and unscrupulous men.

There's no one, here tonight who's saying, "*I want to be like Ish-bosheth.*" No, he's dead...murdered in cold blood...used as a stepping stone by others. He's beheaded by these two opportunists who take his head down to Hebron to David.

Ok, so now, let's move away from that side of the story. Let's go south to Judah. Things are always a little different down south! Let's go to David's camp —probably a two day journey.

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**Vs 8**

These two captains of Israel come to David and they're real proud of themselves holding the head of Ish-bosheth, who has for two days now been decomposing in their hands!

They make it sound like they are doing the LORD's work!  
*"The LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed."*

Well, let's think about that for a minute, this piece of theological self-justification they used. They claimed that what they were doing was avenging the attempts of Saul to kill David.

Hadn't God promised that David would rule over a united kingdom? Yes, He had. Hadn't God promised that David would rule at the downfall of Saul's kingdom? Yes, He had.

So, doesn't the end justify the means? I mean, this brought an abrupt end to Saul's kingdom. There was only one other heir left, Mephibosheth, and he was a cripple. His nurse had dropped him, fleeing when she heard of the death of his father, Jonathan.

The northern kingdom is over. David is now going to be the united king of a united north and south, and they had just accomplished the wiping out of every obstacle in that path to glory. Doesn't the end justify the means?

That's what the world tries to do with stem-cell research! Much good they say can come from this stem-cell research! But much of the stem-cell research being done is done at the expense of the deaths of millions of unborn children. Does the end justify the means? NO!

That's what these two are saying to David. They are saying *"Look, how we've advanced the kingdom of God. It was an opportunity. It was a providence. The door was open and God had given the promise. We're helping you, David!"*

Except that David didn't see it that way.

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**Vs 9-11**

They obviously did not know what David had done to the Amalekite who came running to David in chapter 1 of 2 Samuel with king Saul's crown and bracelet, suggesting to David that he in fact had killed him.

And what had David done to the Amalekite? He told his young men to kill him because he had killed, at least he had confessed to have killed, the Lord's anointed. It was justice.

**Vs 12**

David has his young men kill these two young opportunists, their hands and feet are cut off, and they're hung like an advertisement from a billboard on Blanding Blvd, only it's Hebron.

**Conclusion**

What kind of kingdom did David want to bring in? What kind of kingdom did David want to rule over? A kingdom governed by the ethics of the end justifies the means?

No...at least initially, he wanted it to be a kingdom governed by justice and righteousness.

These two young men that committed murder...the murder of a king while he's sleeping in his bed — this was a murder with intent. They got what the Law, what the Torah had prescribed—capital punishment. That's all that happened to them.

David is bringing in a kingdom that is built on the foundations of righteousness and justice, not the end justifying the means.

Now we know that David later on will forget, because power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, for human beings anyway. Within a few chapters we'll see David sending murderers to battlefield to ensure that the husband of the wife that he has now impregnated be killed. But at least here, at least here in chapter 4, David's concern is for a kingdom that is built on the foundation of justice and righteousness.

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David is introducing a kingdom. He's ushering in a kingdom. He's on the very threshold of that kingdom. Now in the next few chapters, he's going to be **anointed yet once again** and the LORD's covenant with him is going to be established. That's one of the most important things in all the Old Testament. And it's going to point to the coming of Jesus.

Now David isn't Jesus. He sometimes acts as a type of Jesus, but David could never save us.

Only Jesus can save us. Only the righteous one. Only the just one. Only the perfect one.

Three people are dead in this small chapter. Yet God in His providence, is working out His purposes that ultimately leads to Christ Himself, the only true and just and righteous King.