

2[1] And it was, after this, David asked in Yehvah, saying, “Shall I go up in one of Judah's cities.” And Yehvah said to him, “Go up.” And David said, “Where shall I go up?” And he said, “To Hebron.” [2] And David went up there, and also his two women, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail, woman of Fool the Carmelite. [3] And David went up, and his men who were with him, each and his house, and they dwelt in Hebron's cities.

[4] And Judah's men came and anointed David there for king over Judah's house. And it was told to David, saying, “Men of Jabesh Gilead are who buried Saul.” [5] And David sent messengers to Jabesh Gilead's men and said to them, “Blessed are you to Yehvah who has done this kindness with your lords,¹ with Saul; so you have buried him. [6] And now, Yehvah do with you kindness and truth. And also I will do with you this good, because you did this thing. [7] And now, let your hands be strong and be sons of valor, for your lords Saul is dead, and also Judah's house has anointed me for king over them.”

[8] And Abner, son of Lamp, ruler of the army that was Saul's, took Man of Shame,² Saul's son, and made him cross over to Two Camps,³ [9] and made him king to the Gilead and to the Ashurite and to Jezreel and over Ephraim and over Benjamin and over all Israel. [10] And Man of Shame, son of Saul, was a son of forty years in his reigning over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only Judah's house was after David. [11] And the number of days that David was king in Hebron over Judah's house was seven years and six months.

[12] And Abner, son of Lamp, went out, and servants of Man of Shame, son of Saul, from Two Camps to Gibeon. [13] And Joab, son of Zeruiah, and servants of David went out and met them by Gibeon's pool, together. And these sat by the pool from this, and these by the pool from this.⁴ [14] And Abner said to Joab, “Please, let the young men arise and let them compete before us.” And Joab said, “Let them arise.” [15] And they arose and crossed over in number, twelve for Benjamin and for Man of Shame, son of Saul, and twelve from David's servants. [16] And they each seized his neighbor's head and his sword in his neighbor's side and fell together. And they called that place, the Plot⁵ of Rocks⁶ which is in Gibeon.

[17] And the battle was very severe that day, and Abner and Israel's men were beaten before David's servants. [18] And the three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel, and Asahel was swift in his feet, as one of the gazelles who is in the field. [19] And Asahel pursued after Abner and did not turn to go to the right or the left from after Abner.

[20] And Abner turned after him and said, “Is that you Asahel?” And he said,

1 אֲדוֹנֵיכֶם ('adonêykhem) “your lords” - both “your” and “lords” are plural.

2 אִישׁ בֹּשֶׁת ('iysh boshet) “Man of Shame”; NKJV “Ishbosheth”; NAS “Ish-bosheth” - אִישׁ ('iysh) is “man” (2 Samuel 1:2) and בֹּשֶׁת (boshet) is “shame” (e.g. 1 Samuel 20:30[2x]).

3 מַחֲנַיִם (mahanâyim) “Two Camps”; NKJV “Mahanaim” - see footnote for Genesis 32:2.

4 In other words, “they sat down, one on one side of the pool and the other on the other side of the pool.” (NKJV)

5 חֶלְקַת (chelqat) “Plot” (= a plot or portion of ground, e.g. Genesis 33:19); LXX μέρος (= part or portion e.g. 1 Samuel 30:24); NKJV, Green “Field”; YLT “Helkath” (transliteration).

6 צִרִים (tsuriym) “Rocks” (e.g. same exact word e.g. in Numbers 23:9) Green; “Sharp Swords” NKJV; “Blades” CBS; “Daggers” CEV; “Enemies” NOG; “Hazzurim” YLT (transliteration).

“I.” [21] And Abner said to him, “Turn to your right or your left and grab for yourself one from the young men and take for yourself his spoil.” And Asahel was unwilling to turn aside from after him. [22] And Abner added again saying to Asahel, “Turn aside for yourself from after me. Why should I strike you to earth? And how would I lift up my face to Joab your brother?” [23] And he refused to turn aside. And Abner struck him with the back⁷ of the spear to the belly,⁸ and the spear came out from his back,⁹ and he fell there; and died where he was. And all who came to the place where Asahel fell there and died, so they stood.

[24] And Joab and Abishai pursued after Abner, and the Sun was coming in. And they came unto Hill of Cubit¹⁰ which is upon the face of Giah, way of Gibeon's wilderness. [25] And sons of Benjamin gathered together after Abner, and they became one troop and stood on top of one hill. [26] And Abner called to Joab and said, “Will a sword consume forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter in the end? And until when will you not say to the people to turn back from after their brethren?” [27] And Joab said, “The Gods is alive.¹¹ For if you had not spoken, surely then by morning the people would have given up each from after his brother.” [28] And Joab blew in the horn, and all the people stood and did not again pursue after Israel. And they did not continue to fight.

[29] And Abner and his men went on the plain all that night, and they crossed over the Jordan and went all the Bithron¹² and came into Two Camps. [30] And Joab turned back from after Abner and gathered all the people, and they were missing nineteen men from David's servants, and Asahel. [31] And David's servants struck from Benjamin and among Abner's men three hundred and sixty men died. [32] And they carried Asahel and buried him in his father's grave which was in House of Bread. And Joab and his men went all the night and it became light to them in Hebron.

7 אַחַרְיִי ('acharêy) “back”; EXB “back [butt] end” EXB; Green, CSB, EHV, ESV, GW “butt” ; NAS, JUB “butt end,” NKJV “blunt end” NKJV; YLT “hinder part.” Same root word as the following “back” in this same verse.

8 חֻמֶּשׁ (chomesh) “belly” - this particular word for belly is used only in this same kind of context. Found also in 2 Samuel 3:27; 4:6; 20:10.

9 אַחַרְיָו ('acharâyv) “his back”

10 אַמְמָה ('ammâh) “Cubit” (= “cubit” e.g. in Genesis 6:15-16); “Ammah” NKJV, etc. - only here for a location.

11 חַי הָאֱלֹהִים (chay ha'elohiyim) “The Gods is alive” - חַי (chay) “alive” is a singular adjective, הָאֱלֹהִים (ha'elohiyim) “The Gods” plural noun, see footnote for Genesis 1:1.

12 בִּיתְרוֹן (bitron) “Bithron” - only here.