

Commentary on 2 Samuel 3, by Chuck Smith 1.19.22

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January memory verse, Jeremiah 32:26-27 (NKJV)

²⁶ Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

²⁷ "Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"

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Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David became stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul became weaker and weaker ([2Sa 3:1](#)).

Now David began to display a weakness that ultimately led him to that terrible sin for which he received so much notoriety. He began to add wives and concubines. So we have here a list of six sons that were born to him while in Hebron, and all six of them by different wives. So he just started taking wives and women into his harem, so to speak. Of course, his son Solomon carried this thing to ridiculous extremes, but David started multiplying wives.

Now that was one of the things that the kings were not to do according to the commandment of God in Deuteronomy. "When you set up kings, they're not to multiply wives," and so forth. But David started doing that, and it shows a weakness in David's flesh that ultimately led him to that great sin with Bathsheba.

Now Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah ([2Sa 3:7](#)), Saul of course had done the same thing. He had wives and concubines. This one concubine Rizpah had borne Saul two sons.

So Ishbosheth said to Abner, Why have you gone into my father's concubine ([2Sa 3:7](#))?

Now this evidently was a false charge. It was a grievous charge. Actually, to go into another man's concubine, even though the other man was dead, it was symbolic of taking over his authority and his rule.

You remember later on in David's career when Absalom his son rebelled against him, and David fled from Jerusalem as Absalom was moving up from Hebron with his troops. David deserted from Jerusalem. When Absalom came into the city, he went into David's concubines there in the sight of all the people, went into where David's concubines were, which was equivalent to ascending to David's place and taking over David's place.

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So the accusation, "You've gone into my father's concubine. Why did you do that?" was equivalent of saying, "What are you trying to do? Take over my father's place."

And Abner became extremely upset with this false allegation, and he was very angry with Ishbosheth, and he said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto Saul thy father, and to his brothers and friends, and have I not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me today with a fault concerning this woman? ["And I've not delivered thee into the hand of David. Look what I've done for you and yet you're making this stupid allegation."] So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so I do to him ([2Sa 3:8-9](#));

Now notice, he knew that the Lord had sworn to David, that David should be the king. In spite of the fact that he knew that the Lord had sworn to David that he should be king, yet he had gone against that in establishing Ishbosheth upon the throne. So it was something that he knew was wrong and yet he did it.

[So I swear to David] to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba ([2Sa 3:10](#)).

Now Dan is up in the furthestmost northern part of Israel, it's where the Jordan River comes right out of the ground and begins its course southward. Beersheba was on the southern extreme, just on the border of the wilderness from which area south, it was just desert wilderness area. So it sort of circumscribed the northern and southern borders of Israel from Dan to Beersheba.

And Ishbosheth could not answer Abner a word again, because he was afraid of him. So Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make a league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with you, to bring about all Israel to you. And he said, Well; I will make a league with you: but one thing I require of thee, and that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except you first bring me Michal Saul's daughter, when you come to see my face ([2Sa 3:11-13](#)).

Now Saul had of course done a dirty deal to David and he had promised David his daughter as a wife because of the killing of the Philistine. He promised, "Whoever kills the Philistine giant can marry my daughter." He gave his daughter Merab to another fellow, and then he heard that Michal was in love with David, he said, "Ah, she's a little vixen; she'll fix him, so I'll let him marry her." He was really planning to let her just be an irritant to David. Probably a self-willed, strong little gal, and he figured she'd really give him a bad time. So he allowed David to marry Michal, but when David fled from Saul's presence, then Saul gave Michal to another man, Phaltiel, and he became her husband. But this other guy was really crazy about her.

David sort of is not-a lot of David I admire, and there's some that I don't admire, and this is one part that I really don't admire. He almost is vindictive at this point. He's just wanting almost to just prove something, which he really doesn't need to prove. When

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Abner sent the message, "I'd like to make a league with you. I'll turn all Israel into your hands."

He said, "That's fine, I'll be glad to, but you can't see my face unless you bring Michal," who was his wife. Now as I pointed out, he had already taken a bunch of wives in Hebron, a bunch of concubines and wives, and it wasn't really because of some sexual deprivation or whatever that he was wanting this gal. It was just to prove some kind of an ego point or something.

So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which was espoused to me for [a dowry that he had given to Saul for her.] And Ishbosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from Phaltiel the son of Laish. And her husband [This is a sad scene because evidently he liked her.] and he went after her weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, Go, and return. And he returned. And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, You sought for David in times past to be the king over you: Now then do it: for the LORD has spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. [So he knew that David had been anointed of God, and that God had declared that through David they would be delivered.] And Abner also spake in the ears of the tribe of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and seemed good to all the house of Benjamin. So Abner came to David to Hebron, twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast. And Abner said to David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel to my lord the king, and they will make a league with thee, that you may reign over all that your heart desires. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace. And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop ([2Sa 3:14-22](#)),

Now at this time Joab was gone when Abner was down here, and there was this bitterness that was being harbored in Joab's heart against Abner because Abner killed his brother. So when Joab came back the guys said, "Did you know that Abner was here, and he made a league with David?" Joab said, "No, you sure?" "Yeah."

So Joab sent men after Abner saying, [Come on back there are some further things to discuss.] So Abner returned, and Joab met him in the gate and said, I want to talk to you, and took him in to a place and ran him through the heart, through the fifth rib, [Which is where the position of your heart, so he smote him under the fifth rib.] and he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. Now when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever for the blood of Abner the son of Ner: Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on his father's house ([2Sa 3:26-29](#));

Now here David actually curses Joab and his house for this deed, it's cruel, it's vindictive, it's wrong, and David acknowledges the wrongness of it. He curses the house of Joab. Horrible curse.

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Let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falls on the sword, or that lacks bread ([2Sa 3:29](#)).

Man, he really wiped them out. You know, "Let there be a plague upon his house. Let them be crippled, let them fall by the sword, let them become beggars, let them be destitute."

So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother in Gibeon. And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Tear your clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And David followed the casket. And they buried Abner there in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all of the people wept with him. And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so you fell. And all the people wept again over him ([2Sa 3:30-34](#)).

So David is giving a public demonstration of his disapproval of Joab's deeds. So that everyone knew that David disapproved of the thing that Joab did. Cursing Joab and Joab's house for it, and putting on a big demonstration at the funeral, and lamenting over the death of Abner.

And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or anything else, till the sun goes down. And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: and whatsoever the king did pleased all the people ([2Sa 3:35-36](#)).

Now David was behaving himself very wisely, and allowing God to work, to establish the kingdom with him. In other words, though he knew that he had been anointed by God to be king over Israel, he figured, "If God anointed me king, and God wants me to be king, God is able to work out the circumstances." So David isn't in there trying to work things out for himself. He's letting God take care of all of these things. He's behaving himself very wisely and prudently and the people are noticing it, and are really being attracted and drawn to David because he shows that he does have a heart, and he does desire the right thing. He's not really out promoting himself.

Now in one of the Psalms we are told, "Promotion comes not from the east or the west, but promotion comes from the Lord" ([Psalm 75:6](#)). David really believed that. He wasn't out trying to exalt himself, and promote himself; he was just waiting for God to do it.

That's an important lesson. It would be good if each of us would follow the same thing. It seems that so many people are out to hype themselves, and to hype their programs. The world is filled with big hypes, everybody trying to hype everybody else. But David was not seeking to promote himself. He was just waiting upon God and letting the things fall, and letting God do it. Having that kind of confidence in God, "If this is what God wants, this is what God is able to bring to pass."

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How beautiful it is to have a commitment to the purposes of God knowing that if I just stay open and yielded, God is able to work His purposes out in my life, and not try to push things, or press things, because I know that this is what God wants. I know that this is what's right. So I get in and I push and press. I can actually push myself ahead of God and out of the will of God. It is better if I just kick back, "All right God, if that's what You want, I'm open to it, I'm ready for it, but I'm gonna let You work the thing out." It is so much better when God does the promotion.

I look at what God has done here, without any full-page ads in the paper, and radio ads, and the big hypes and all. Look what God has done. It's absolutely phenomenal. Years ago when we were still over in the other church, God was pouring out His Spirit and blessing us. So many at that time of the hippie kids were coming in and receiving Christ. It was sort of a novelty, as far as the news media was concerned. Of course, CBS had been down and done a story, and Look Magazine had done a story, and there had been a lot of Reader's Digest did a story, and there was just a lot of publicity going out, BBC, the German broadcasting system, magazines in Europe, magazines in South America, everybody.

In fact I was in Israel a couple of weeks ago and a French man came up to me, and he said, "You wouldn't happen to be Chuck Smith would you?" I said, "Yes."

And he said, "Oh praise the Lord. Oh brother, this is exciting." He said, "I read about you ten years ago in a magazine in France, and I saw your picture. I thought I recognized you."

I thought, "All right. Ten years ago and you still recognize me."

So all of this publicity and we weren't out beating bushes, or trying to, you know, it was there and of course people were coming then to see the "hippie church," and the "Jesus people," and all of that.

Well, I read in Time magazine, they had a big write up on Blacks Beach down in San Diego. Twenty kids stripped to the buff and went swimming. It made this big article in Time of these young people in California, the drug scene, and nude bathing and all this kind of stuff, nude public bathing and the whole thing. It was a big splash because there were twenty kids down at Blacks Beach in San Diego that swam in the buff. Well it so happened that we were having a baptismal coming up at Del Mar. There were about a thousand kids to be baptized. I thought to myself, I ought to call the religion editor of Time magazine, and tell him that other things are happening in the beaches of California than just a few kids swimming in the nude. That's some exciting thing. I mean, if you got twenty kids swimming in the nude, but you've got a thousand kids who are getting baptized, committing their lives to Jesus Christ. If twenty kids swimming in the nude were worthy, the article in Time and all, space and Time, surely ought to be worthy a little article in Time magazine also. Sort of as a contrast kind of an article.

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As I was driving home, I was thinking about, "Well, I just need to call the religion editor of Time Magazine and let him know what's going on because he could maybe send a reporter out, and cover the story, and it would just make a good, good story for Time." As I was thinking this, driving home, the Lord spoke to my heart, and He said, "Who has been your publicity agent up till now?"

I said, "Well, You have Lord." He said, "Aren't you satisfied with the job that I'm doing? You've been in Look Magazine, you've been in Reader's Digest, you've been on CBS, and NBC. Aren't you satisfied with the job I'm doing?"

I said, "Oh Lord, forgive me. How stupid of me of thinking to call somebody to try to get some publicity to what is happening here." I just repented and asked the Lord to forgive me for even thinking of trying to publicize what God was doing.

I got home and there was a stranger in my living room. It was rather unusual in those days. So my wife said, "Honey this fellow is a reporter from Time Magazine and he's been sent out here to do a story on the Jesus people." So the fellow introduced himself, shook hands, he said, "Do you have anything like a baptism or something coming up that we could-"

I said, "Oh Lord, You're just always a step or two ahead." You don't have to get out and hype something. You don't have to get out and promote, and you don't have to get out and spend a lot of God's dollars in advertising. God is able to do His work. How good it is for us to rest in God.

The work of the Lord, the purposes of God, He is fully able to accomplish. David had this as a deep consciousness. "God is able to accomplish His purposes, I don't have to get in and push, I don't have to get in and strive, God's able to do it." He was using real wisdom just letting the things fall as God directed, rather than getting in and striving. Thus, we can learn much from David's example in these things. So everything that David did was pleasing the king. He was behaving himself properly.

And all of the people throughout all of Israel understood that it wasn't David's desire to destroy Abner. And the king said to his servants, [These are beautiful words.] Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? And I am this day weak, though I'm the king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah they're too much for me: may the Lord reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness ([2Sa 3:37-39](#)).

So Joab and his brother Abishai, David said, "They're just too much for me, may God take care of them." Well, David took care of them later. We'll get to that as we move on in Samuel. David got Joab ultimately.