

Shape of 2 Samuel 2.1-5.5

2.1-4: David anointed king of Judah

Division between Judah and Israel over the monarchy

2.5-11: David sends messengers to Jabesh-gilead, urging them to support him, but Abner made Ishbaal king

2.12-17: the battle at the Pool of Gibeon: tide turning toward David

2.18-32: Abner kills Asahel; Joab and Abishai pursue Joab; a temporary peace is reached

3.1-6: War between the houses; David's six sons from six women

An attempt to broker a covenant

3.7-11: Abner and Ishbaal: Abner defects to David

3.12-16: Abner makes a covenant with David in exchange for the return of Michal

3.17-19: Abner speaks to the elders of Israel and the Benjamites about having David as king

3.20-21: Abner and David share a feast and Abner leaves in peace

The "house of Saul" is eliminated from contention for the monarchy

3.22-30: Joab protests Abner's presence near David, and secretly murders Abner. David disclaims involvement.

3.31-39: David leads lament for Abner and claims powerlessness in the face of "the sons of Zeruiah." All Israel accepts David's stance.

4.1-7: Baanah and Rechab, both Benjaminites, stealthily murder Ishbaal.

4.8-12: When they bring Ishbaal's head to David, he has them killed.

5.1-5: David anointed king over Israel

Unity between Judah and Israel over the monarchy