

*TO TELL
THE STORY*



LUKE ITALIANO

The Death of the King

David's men rejoiced! Their families – their families were safe. They returned home to Ziklag in great spirits.

And on the third day he arrived.

The boy stumbled out of the hills, his clothes torn, the filth of battle still on his face – he hadn't even stopped to wipe off his face! The young man came and collapsed in front of David, huddling into a bow.

David asked, "Where have you come from?"

"I – I've escaped from the Israelite camp."

"What happened?" David stands. "Tell me." Now at last he'll find out what happened at the battle. Now at last he'll find out – what's happened to his home country.

The young man answers, "The young men fled from the battle. Many of them fell and died. And Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

David turned away. "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

"I—I happened to be on Mount Gilboa. And there was Saul. He was already injured. He couldn't even stand up. He was leaning on his spear! And the chariots! The Philistine chariots were coming to, to kill him! And - and he looked at me, and he called out to me! And...and, and I answered, 'What can I do?' And he asked 'Who are you?' And I answered, 'I'm an Amekite!' And he said to me, 'Stand over me and kill me. I'm in the throes of death, but I'm still alive.' So, so I stood over him and killed him, because I knew that after he had fallen he couldn't survive. And I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm, and I've brought them here to my lord."

And the young man shows the crown, and he shows the armband.

David doesn't know the truth. David doesn't know that it's far worse than the young man says. That Saul actually committed suicide when he saw that he'd lost. All David knows is that the man who had hunted him for so many years, the man who had wanted David dead – he was gone.

And this is what the Bible says about David's reaction: "Then David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and tore them. They mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword."

How could David? How could he mourn that villain Saul?

He mourned because he knew that he and Saul were the same: sinners. He mourned because he loved Saul. He mourned because now the king was dead – the king that God himself had chosen.

David mourned.

Brothers and sisters,

It is so easy to laugh in glee when those who have hurt us are hurt. But remember David. Even more, remember Jesus who told us to love our enemies. Jesus, who loved his enemies – who loved us and died for us to take away our guilt.

And this story is true.

II Samuel 1:1-12

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