

Responses to Saul's Death

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Man, Ahinoam, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 1

ABIGAIL: After the death of Saul and defeating the Amalekites, David returned to Ziklag.

MAN: (with torn clothes, falling to the ground to pay homage) I've escaped from the Israelite camp. The troops fled from the battle, Many have fallen and Saul and his son Jonathan are dead.

DAVID: How do you know Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?

MAN: I happened to be on Mount Gilboa when the chariots and the cavalry were closing in on Saul. He begged me to kill him so I did. I took the crown that was on his head and the armband that was on his arm, and I've brought them here to my lord.

DAVID: How is it that you were not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? (to servant) Come here and kill him! (to MAN) Your blood is on your own head because your own mouth testified against you by saying, 'I killed the Lord's anointed.'

ABIGAIL: David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and all the men with him did the same.

AHINOAM: They mourned, wept, and fasted until the evening for those who died by the sword—for Saul, Jonathan, the Lord's people, and the house of Israel.

ABIGAIL: David sang the following lament for Saul and Jonathan

DAVID: Let the Judahites be taught this Song of the Bow

ABIGAIL: written in the Book of Jashar,

DAVID: The splendor of Israel lies slain on your heights.

ALL: How the mighty have fallen!

ABIGAIL: Let not the Philistines rejoice and gloat.

DAVID: Jonathan's bow never retreated, Saul's sword never returned unstained,

ALL: from the blood of the slain, from the bodies of the mighty.

DAVID: Saul and Jonathan, loved and delightful,

ALL: were not parted in life or in death.

DAVID: They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.

ABIGAIL: Daughters of Israel, weep

ALL: How the mighty have fallen in the thick of battle!

DAVID: Jonathan lies slain on your heights. I grieve for you, Jonathan, my brother. You were such a friend to me. Your love for me was more wonderful than the love of women.

ALL: How the mighty have fallen and the weapons of war have perished!

David, King of Judah

CHARACTERS: David, Abner, Messenger, Asahel, Joab, Voice of God

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 2

DAVID: Lord, should I go to one of the towns of Judah?

VOICE OF GOD: Go to Hebron.

ABIGAIL: We went to Hebron with the men who were with David, each one with his household, and they settled in the towns near Hebron.

ELDER of JUDAH: We anoint you, David, king. The men of Jabesh-gilead buried Saul.

DAVID: Send messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead to say, 'The Lord bless you, because you have shown this kindness to Saul your lord when you buried him'.

MESSENGER: *(to Jabesh-Gileadites)* May the Lord show kindness and faithfulness to you, and David, who has been anointed king in Judah, will also because you have done this deed.

ALL: Therefore, be strong and courageous,

ABNER: As commander of the army, I proclaim Saul's 40 year old son Ish-bosheth the king.

ABIGAIL: David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

DAVID: Joab, take the army out to meet General Abner who has marched to Gibeon.

JOAB: Right.

ABIGAIL: The battle that day was extremely fierce, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by David's soldiers.

JOAB: Asahel, my brother, was a fast runner, like one of the wild gazelles. He chased Abner and did not turn to the right or the left in his pursuit of him.

ABNER: Asahel, stop chasing me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How could I ever look your brother Joab in the face?

ASAHEL: No. I will chase you.

JOAB: Abner hit him in the stomach with the end of his spear. My brother died right there.

ABNER: Must the sword devour forever? Don't you realize this will only end in bitterness? How long before you tell the troops to stop pursuing their brothers?

JOAB: As God lives, if you had not spoken up, the troops wouldn't have stopped pursuing their brothers until morning. Blow the horn and stop this fight. Bury Asahel in our father's tomb.

David or Saul's family?

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Ahinoam, Ish-bosheth, Abner, Voice of God, Joab, Man

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 3

ABIGAIL: The war between the house of Saul and the house of David was long and drawn out, with David growing stronger and the house of Saul becoming weaker.

AHINOAM: Sons were born to David in Hebron. My son Amnon was firstborn.

ABIGAIL: My son Chileab was second.

DAVID: The third was Absalom, son of Maacah the daughter of King Talmai of Geshur;

AHINOAM: Also 3 more

ABIGAIL: Meanwhile in Israel, there was bad blood between Abner and Ish-bosheth.

ABNER: All this time I've been loyal to the house of your father Saul, and haven't handed you over to David, but now you accuse me of wrongdoing with a woman!

ISH-BOSHETH: (*aside to audience, fearful*) Oh no!

ABNER: May God punish Abner and do so severely if I don't do for David what the Lord swore to him: to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish the throne of David over Israel and Judah.

ISH-BOSHETH: (*aside to audience*) I cannot answer Abner because I am afraid of him.

ABNER: Send messengers to say to David: Whose land is it? Make your covenant with me, and you can be certain I am on your side to hand all Israel over to you.

DAVID: Good, I will make a covenant with you. However, there's one thing I require of you: Do not appear before me unless you bring my wife, Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see me.

ABNER: (*to elders of Israel*) In the past you wanted David to be king over you. Now take action, because the Lord has spoken concerning David:

VOICE OF GOD: Through My servant David I will save My people Israel from the power of the Philistines and the power of all Israel's enemies.

ABIGAIL: When Abner came to David at Hebron, David held a banquet for him and his 20 men.

ABNER: I will gather all Israel to my lord the king. They will make a covenant with you, and you will rule over all you desire.

DAVID: Do it. Go in peace.

MAN: Joab, did you know Abner came to see the king, the king dismissed him, and he went in peace?

ABNER: *(to David)* What have you done? Abner son of Ner came to deceive you and to find out about your activities and everything you're doing. *(aside to MESSENGER)* Tell Abner David wants him to return for a private message.

ABIGAIL: When Abner returned, Joab pulled him aside, as if to speak to him privately, and stabbed him in the stomach.

JOAB: Now Abner has died in revenge for the death of my brother Asahel.

DAVID: I and my kingdom are forever innocent before the Lord concerning the blood of Abner. May it hang over Joab's head and his father's whole house.

JOAB: *(defiant)* He killed my brother.

DAVID: Everyone, tear your clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn over Abner. I will walk behind the funeral procession.

ABIGAIL: When they buried Abner, the king wept aloud at Abner's tomb.

JOAB: All the people wept, and the king fasted and sang a lament for Abner.

ABIGAIL: All the people took note of this, and it pleased them. In fact, everything the king did pleased them.

DAVID: On that day all the troops and all Israel were convinced that I had no part in the killing of Abner.

Ish-bosheth Assassinated and David Crowned King

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Baanah, Rechab, Voice of God, Joab, Elder 1 & 2, Jebusite

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 4 and 5

JOAB: Saul's only remaining son had two men, Baanah and Rechab, who were leaders of raiding parties.

BAANAH: Let's assassinate Ish-bosheth.

RECHAB: Yeah. And cut off his head to take to David.

BAANAH: I bet we get a big reward!

RECHAB: (to DAVID) Here's the head of Ish-bosheth son of Saul, your enemy.

BAANAH: He wanted to kill you but we saved you.

DAVID: God is the One who has redeemed my life from every distress. (to Soldiers) Execute them.

ELDER 1: Even while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led us out to battle and brought us back.

ELDER 2: The Lord also said to you,

VOICE OF GOD: You will shepherd My people Israel and be ruler over Israel.

ELDER 1: We crown you king over all Israel, not just the tribe of Judah.

ABIGAIL: David was 30 years old when he began his reign; he reigned 40 years.

DAVID: Gather the army, we march to Jerusalem.

JEBUSITE: (to David) You will never get in here. Even the blind and lame can repel you. (aside to audience) David can't get in here.

DAVID: We'll go through the water shaft for a surprise attack.

ABIGAIL: David captured Jerusalem, which he named the city of David.

ELDER 1: David became more and more powerful, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him.

JOAB: When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they came to fight.

DAVID: (inquiring of the Lord) Should I go to war against the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?

VOICE OF GOD: Go, for I will certainly hand the Philistines over to you.

JOAB: David defeated the Philistines but they came back with another army.

DAVID: (to God) Shall I fight them?

VOICE OF GOD: Yes. Do not make a frontal assault. Circle around behind them and attack them opposite the balsam trees. When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, act decisively, for then I will have marched out ahead of you to attack the camp of the Philistines.

JOAB: With God's help, David defeated them again.

David Moves the Ark and God's Covenant with David

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Abishai, Uzzah, Voice of God, Joab, Michal

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 6-7

DAVID: Assemble all 30,000 choice troops in Israel to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem.

ABIGAIL: The ark is called by the Name, the name of Yahweh of Hosts who dwells between the cherubim.

DAVID: Put the ark of God on a new car. I'll follow, leading the celebration.

UZZAH: Oh n, the ark is about to topple over. I'll just steady it.

ABIGAIL:

ABIGAIL: God struck him dead on the spot for his irreverence.

DAVID: How can the ark of the Lord ever come to me? Obed-edom, keep it at your house.

ABIGAIL: Three months passed.

ABISHAI: The Lord has blessed Obed-edom's family and all that belongs to him because of the ark of God.

DAVID: We'll go get it but this time have the priests carry it. We'll sacrifice an ox and a fattened calf for every six steps they take.

ABIGAIL: David was dancing with all his might before the Lord wearing a linen ephod while his first wife, Saul's daughter Michal, watched from a window

DAVID: May all you people of Israel be blessed in the name of Yahweh of Hosts.

ABIGAIL: David distributed a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake to each one in the entire Israelite community, both men and women.

MICHAL: (*sarcastic to David*) How the king of Israel honored himself today!

DAVID: I was dancing before the Lord who chose me over your father and his whole family to appoint me ruler over the Lord's people Israel.

MICHAL: (*disgusted*) You acted like some vulgar person in the sight of the slave girls of your subjects.

DAVID: I will celebrate before the Lord, and I will humble myself even more and humiliate myself. I will be honored by the slave girls you spoke about.

ABIGAIL: Michal had no child to the day of her death.

DAVID: (to Nathan the prophet) Look, I am living in a cedar house while the ark of God sits inside tent curtains.

NATHAN: Go and do all that is on your heart, for the Lord is with you.

VOICE OF GOD: (to NATHAN) Tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord says: From the time I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until today I have not lived in a house; instead, I have been moving around with a tent as My dwelling.

NATHAN: Yes, Lord.

VOICE OF GOD: Remind David that I took him from the pasture and from following the sheep to be ruler over My people Israel.

NATHAN: You have been with him wherever he went and destroyed all his enemies.

VOICE OF GOD: I will make David's name like that of the greatest in the land and establish a place for My people Israel and plant them, so that they may live there and not be disturbed again.

NATHAN: I will.

VOICE OF GOD: Evildoers will not afflict them as they have done ever since the day I ordered judges to be over My people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

NATHAN: Thank you, Lord.

VOICE OF GOD: Tell David I will raise up his son and establish his kingdom. He will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me.

NATHAN: What if he does wrong?

VOICE OF GOD: When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a human rod and with blows from others. But My faithful love will never leave him as I removed it from Saul; David's throne will be established forever.'

ABIGAIL: Nathan spoke all these words and this entire vision to David.

DAVID: Who am I, Lord God, and what is my house that You have brought me this far? What You have done so far was a little thing to You, Lord God,

ALL: for You have also spoken about Your servant's house in the distant future.

DAVID: You know Your servant, Lord God. Because of Your word and according to Your will, You have revealed all these great things to Your servant.

ALL: This is why You are great, Lord God. There is no one like You, and there is no God besides You, as all we have heard confirms.

DAVID: God came to one nation on earth in order to redeem a people for Himself, to make a name for Himself, and to perform for them great and awesome acts,

ALL: driving out nations and their gods before Your people

DAVID: You established Your people Israel to be Your own people forever, and You, Lord, have become their God.

ALL: Do as You have promised, so that Your name will be exalted forever.

DAVID: Lord God, You are God; Your words are true.

ALL: For You, Lord God, have spoken, and with Your blessing Your servant David's house will be blessed forever.

David's Victories & Kindness

CHARACTERS: David, Abigail, Joab, Messenger, Advisors 1 & 2, Hanun, Abishai, Mephibosheth, Ziba

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 8-10

David has defeated the Philistines, Moabites, Edomites, the king of Zobah, and the Arameans of Damascus who came to assist the King of Zobah,

The Lord made David victorious wherever he went.

King David dedicated the spoils including silver and gold to the Lord.

David reigned over all Israel, administering justice and righteousness for all his people.

DAVID: Is there anyone remaining from Saul's family I can show kindness to because of Jonathan?

ZIBA: There is still Jonathan's son Mephibosheth who is crippled in both feet.

DAVID: How did that happen?

ZIBA: Mephibosheth was five years old when the report about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan came. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she was hurrying to flee, he fell and became lame.

DAVID: Bring him to me.

MEPHIBOSHETH: (*bowing down to the ground*) I am your servant.

DAVID: Don't be afraid since I intend to show you kindness because of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all your grandfather Saul's fields, and you will always eat meals at my table.

MEPHIBOSHETH: What is your servant that you take an interest in a dead dog like me?"

DAVID: Ziba, you, your 15 sons, and your 20 servants are to work the ground and bring in the crops so your master's grandson will have food to eat. But Mephibosheth is always to eat at my table.

ABIGAIL: So Mephibosheth ate at David's table just like one of the king's sons.

MESSENGER: King David, the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun is king in his place.

DAVID: I'll show kindness to Hanun, just as his father showed kindness to me. Send emissaries to console Hanun.

HANUN'S ADVISOR 1: Just because David has sent men with condolences for you, do you really believe he's showing respect for your father?

ADVISOR 2: David has sent his emissaries to scout out the city, spy on it, and demolish it.

HANUN: Shave off half their beards, cut their clothes in half at the hips, and send them back to David humiliated.

ABIGAIL: When this was reported to David, he sent someone to meet them, since they were deeply humiliated.

DAVID: Stay in Jericho until your beards grow back; then return.

ADVISOR 1: Oh oh! We've ticked off David.

HANUN: Hire 20,000 foot soldiers from the Arameans, 1,000 men from the king of Maacah, and 12,000 men from Tob.

DAVID: Joab, you and the fighting men take care of these enemies.

JOAB: *(to his brother Abishai)* I'll fight the the Arameans. You engage the Ammonites.

ABISHAI: Right.

JOAB: If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you will be my help. However, if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I'll come to help you.

ABISHAI: Be strong! We must prove ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God.

JOAB: May the Lord's will be done.

ABIGAIL: David's army won. Our enemies made peace with Israel and became David's subjects.

JOAB: After this, the Arameans were afraid to ever help the Ammonites again.