

2 Samuel 2

Verses 1 - 4

Then it came about afterward that David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?” And the Lord said to him, “Go up.” So David said, “Where shall I go up?” And He said, “To Hebron.” ² So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. ³ And David brought up his men who were with him, each with his household; and they settled in the cities of Hebron. ⁴ Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

Then it came about afterward that David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?”

Afterward refers to the period of time it took Israel to hear about the death of their king, a period of mourning, and some time for the people to agree that they should anoint David as their king.

This is the 6th time that the author has mentioned that David inquired of the Lord. Five times in 1st Samuel and the first time in 2nd Samuel.

See chart 205

David inquires of the Lord			
	Scripture	Event	Year
1	1 Samuel 23:2	David Saves Keilah from the Philistines	1015 BC
2	23:4	David Saves Keilah from the Philistines	1015 BC
3	23:10-11	David Saves Keilah from the Philistines	1015 BC
4	23:12	David Saves Keilah from the Philistines	1015 BC
5	30:8-9	David's Victory over the Amalekites	1010 BC
6	2 Samuel 2:1-2	David Made King over Judah	1010 BC
7	5:17-21	War with the Philistines	1003
8	5:22-24	War with the Philistines	1003
9	21:1	Three year famine because of the Gibeonites	975 BC

These 5 examples are spread out over a period of 40 years but they are presented to let the reader know that David made this a habit in his walk with God. However, if one looks at the pattern it seems David consulted the Lord more in the early years. There is a gap of 28 years between the 4th and 5th time.

And the Lord said to him, “Go up.” So David said, “Where shall I go up?” And He said, “To Hebron.”² So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.³ And David brought up his men who were with him, each with his household; and they settled in the cities of Hebron.

See Map 210



This was an ideal place for the location of David's capital at that time. It was high in the mountains where the Philistines chariots were of little to no consequence.

It was one of the major cities of Judah and a city of refuge.

In the towns or cities of Hebron is a reference to the villages or suburbs of Hebron. David and his 600 men with their families were spread out throughout this area.

⁴ Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

There were three anointing's of David as king:

1. His first anointing was done by Samuel long before David actually became king.

See 1 Samuel 16:13

¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel set out and went to Ramah.

2. Here, when the men of Judah made him king over the house of Judah.

3. The Northern tribes will anoint David king over all of Israel.

See 2 Samuel 5:3 - 4

³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the Lord in Hebron; then they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴ David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty years.

Verses 5 - 7

And they told David, saying, "It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul."

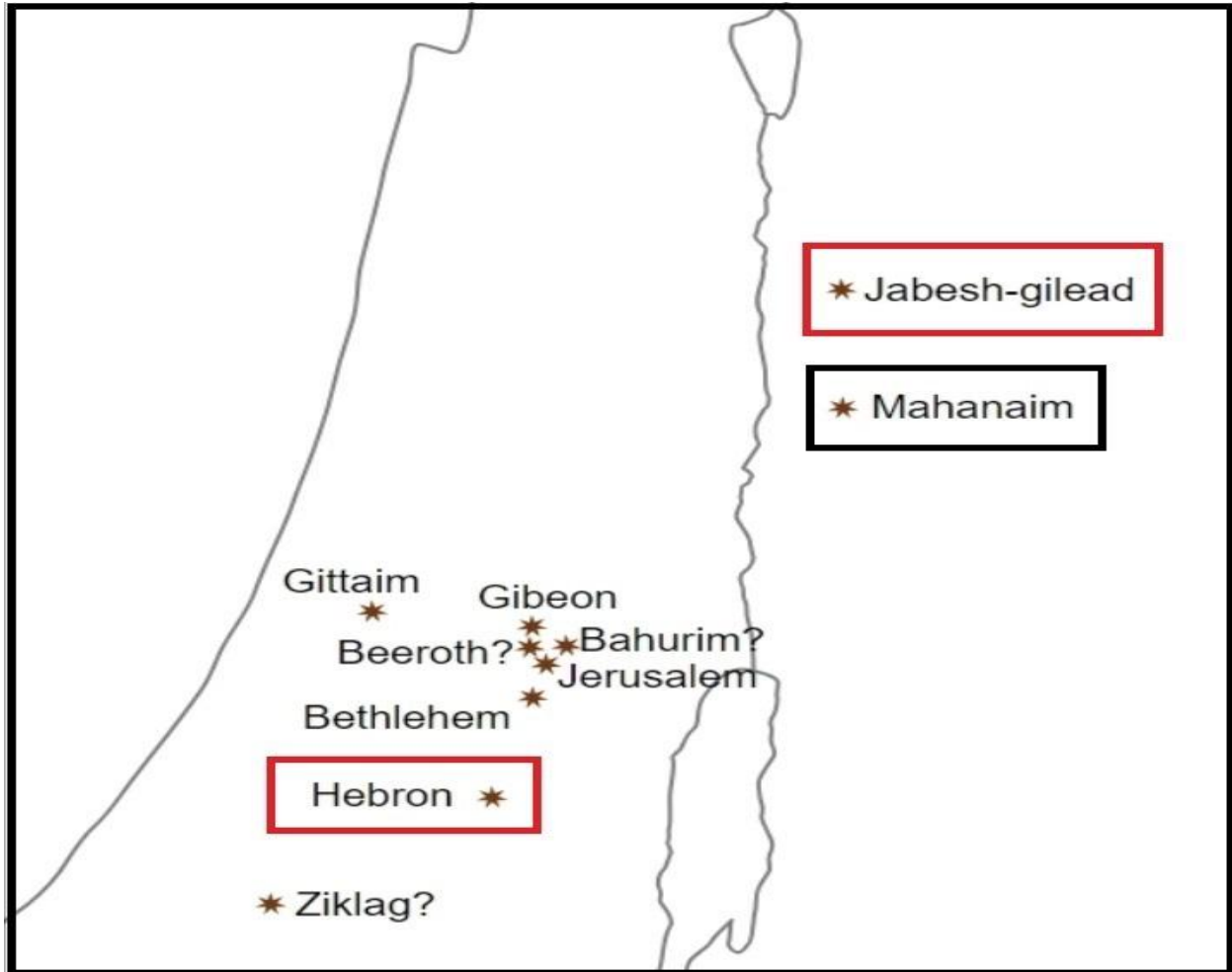
⁵ So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said to them, "May you be blessed of the Lord because you have shown this kindness to Saul your lord, and have buried him. ⁶ And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you; and I also will show this goodness to you, because you have done this thing.

⁷ Now then, let your hands be strong and be valiant, since Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

⁵ So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said to them, "May you be blessed of the Lord because you have shown this kindness to Saul your lord, and have buried him.

The men of Jabesh-gilead did this out of gratitude because Saul had saved them from the Ammonites when he first became king some 40 years ago. See 1 Samuel 11.

See map 215



⁶ And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you; and I also will show this goodness to you, because you have done this thing.

Some think the men of Jabesh-Gilead might have feared vengeance from the Philistines because of their daring raid in rescuing Saul's body, therefore David wanted them to know that he was their friend and he would help them if the need ever arose.

⁷ Now then, let your hands be strong and be valiant, since Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

David tells the men to be strong because their king is dead but David reassures them that they are not alone because he has been made king of Judah. However, all the rest of Israel, including the eastern tribes, would soon be under the leadership of Ishbosheth.

Verses 8 - 11

⁸ But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim. ⁹ And he made him king over Gilead, over the Ashurites, over Jezreel, over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, even over all Israel. ¹⁰ Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he was king for two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David. ¹¹ And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

⁸ But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim.

How did Abner the commander of Saul's army survive the battle with the Philistines while the King and his sons died in battle? When the war had become hopeless it is possible that Saul told Abner to go home and make sure his son Ish-bosheth became king of Israel.

See 1 Chronicles 8:33

³³ Ner fathered Kish, Kish fathered Saul, and Saul fathered Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

Eshbaal is also called Ish-bosheth

So Abner brought Ish-bosheth to Mahanaim and made him king.

See Map 215 above

Abner had to know this was not the will of God because Saul and most of Israel knew that David was God's choice to succeed Saul.

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Usually when we talk about the divided kingdom everyone understands that it was the period of time after Solomon died until the Northern kingdom was defeated by Assyria and taken into captivity in 722 BC. But Israel was divided after the reign of Saul for 7 ½ years.

¹¹ And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

David was king over Judah for 7 1/2 years before the North accepted him as King. So who was in charge of the North for the 5 1/2 years prior to Ish-bosheth taking the throne? Abner was the only person in Northern Israel with any real power and he was in full command of Saul's army following the king's death.

See chart 220

Ch.	Event	Year
2	David King over Judah	1010
2	Who is ruling Israel (Northern tribes)?	1010 - 1005
2	Ish-bosheth king over Israel	1005
2	War between Abner and Joab	
3	Joab murders Abner	
4	Murder of Ish-bosheth	1003
5	David king over Israel	1003
6	Ark brought to Jerusalem	1000

Verses 12 - 17

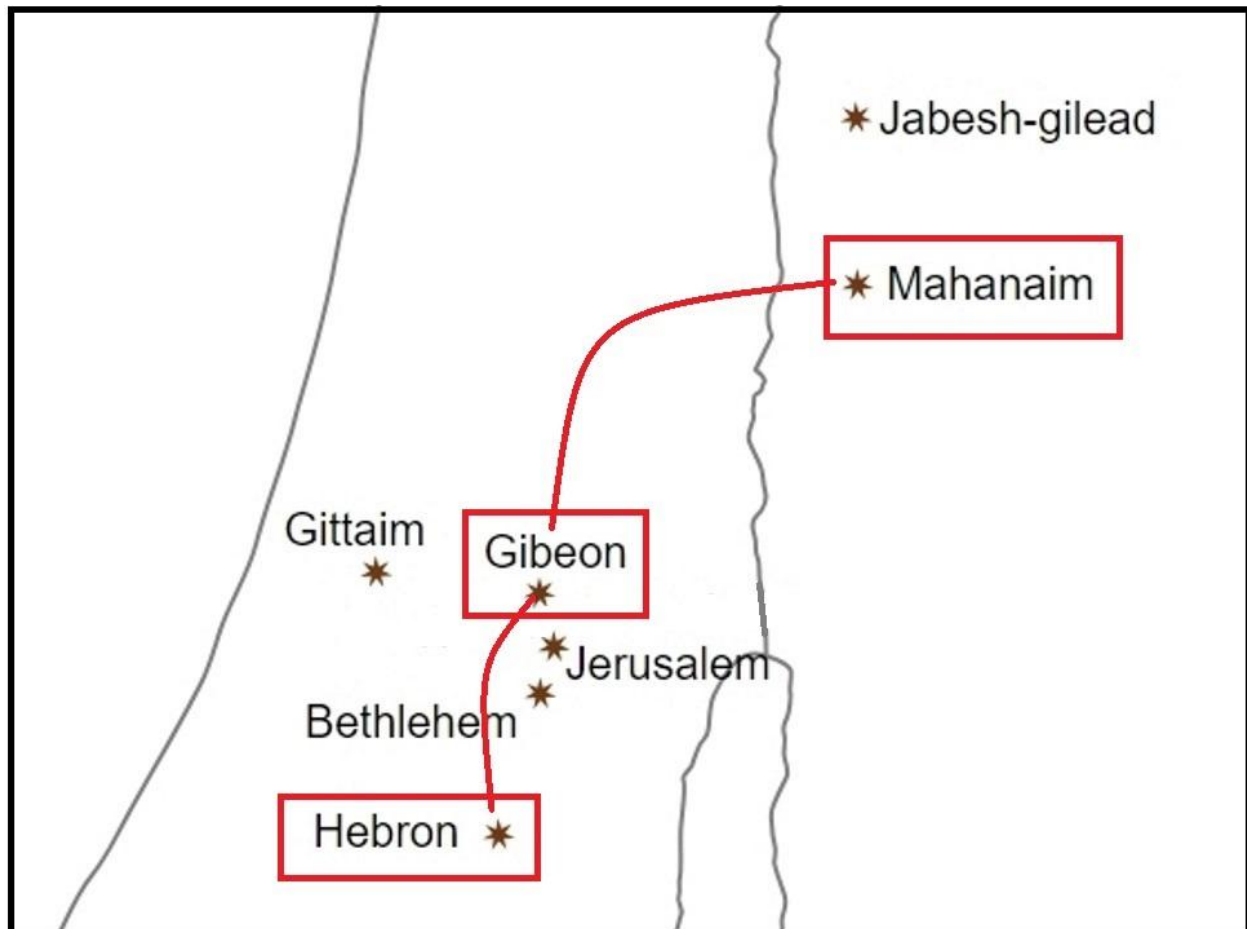
¹² Now Abner the son of Ner, went from Mahanaim to Gibeon with the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul. ¹³ And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon; and they sat down, *Abner's men* on the one side of the pool and Joab's men on the other side of the pool.

¹⁴ Then Abner said to Joab, "Now have the young men arise and hold a martial skills match in our presence." And Joab said, "Have them arise!" ¹⁵ So they got up and went over by count, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. ¹⁶ And each one of them seized his opponent by the head and *thrust* his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. ¹⁷ That day the battle was very severe, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by the servants of David.

¹² Now Abner the son of Ner, went from Mahanaim to Gibeon with the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul. ¹³ And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon; and they sat down, *Abner's men* on the one side of the pool and Joab's men on the other side of the pool.

Abner and Joab, each with their men, met at the pool of Gibeon.

See Map 225



Excavations there have revealed the pool to be 36 feet in diameter and about 36 feet deep.

¹⁴ Then Abner said to Joab, “Now have the young men arise and hold a martial skills match in our presence.” And Joab said, “Have them arise!”

Abner calls this brutal hand-to-hand combat knowing it would result in a war between the forces of David and his army.

17 That day the battle was very severe, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by the servants of David.

This civil war between David and Ish-bosheth should have favored Israel but the one tribe of Judah prevailed over the other 11 tribes.

Verses 18 - 23

18 Now the three sons of Zeruah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel; and Asahel was as swift-footed as one of the gazelles that is in the field. 19 Asahel pursued Abner and did not turn to the right or to the left from following Abner. 20 Then Abner looked behind himself and said, "Is that you, Asahel?" And he said, "It is I!" 21 So Abner said to him, "Turn aside for your *own good* to your right or to your left, and take hold of one of the young men for yourself, and take for yourself his equipment." But Asahel was unwilling to turn aside from following him. 22 Then Abner repeated again to Asahel, "Turn aside for your *own good* from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I show my face to your brother Joab?" 23 However, he refused to turn aside; so Abner struck him in the belly with the butt end of the spear, so that the spear came out at his back. And he fell there and died on the spot. And it happened that all who came *thereafter* to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.

18 Now the three sons of Zeruah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel; and Asahel was as swift-footed as one of the gazelles that is in the field.

Zeruah was a sister of King David and her three sons all held important positions of trust in David's army.

Joab commanded David's army and Abishai and Asahel were two of David's thirty mighty men.

See 2 Samuel 23:18-19, 24

18 Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruah, was chief of the thirty. And he swung his spear against three hundred and killed *them*, and had a name as well as the three. 19 He was the most honored among the thirty, so he became their commander; however, he did not attain to *the reputation* of the three.

24 Asahel the brother of Joab was among the thirty;

Abner fled but was pursued by Asahel.

²² Then Abner repeated again to Asahel, “Turn aside for your *own good* from following me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I show my face to your brother Joab?”

Abner was reluctant to slay Asahel lest he incur the wrath of Joab.

²³ However, he refused to turn aside; so Abner struck him in the belly with the butt end of the spear, so that the spear came out at his back. And he fell there and died on the spot. And it happened that all who came *thereafter* to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.

Abner stopped suddenly and made a backward thrust with his spear that killed Asahel.

The respect for Asahel was such that whenever anyone came to the spot where he died that they would pause to show their respect.

Verses 24 - 29

²⁴ But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner, and when the sun was going down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is opposite Giah by way of the wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵ And the sons of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became one troop, and they stood on the top of a hill. ²⁶ Then Abner called to Joab and said, “Should the sword devour forever? Do you not realize that it will be bitter in the end? So how long will you refrain from telling the people to turn back from pursuing their kinsmen?” ²⁷ Joab said, “As God lives, if you had not spoken, then the people of *Judah* certainly would have withdrawn in the morning, each from pursuing his brother.” ²⁸ So Joab blew the trumpet, and all the people halted and no longer pursued Israel, nor did they continue to fight anymore. ²⁹ Abner and his men then went through the Arabah all that night; so they crossed the Jordan, walked all morning, and came to Mahanaim.

²⁴ But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner, and when the sun was going down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is opposite Giah by way of the wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵ And the sons of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became one troop, and they stood on the top of a hill.

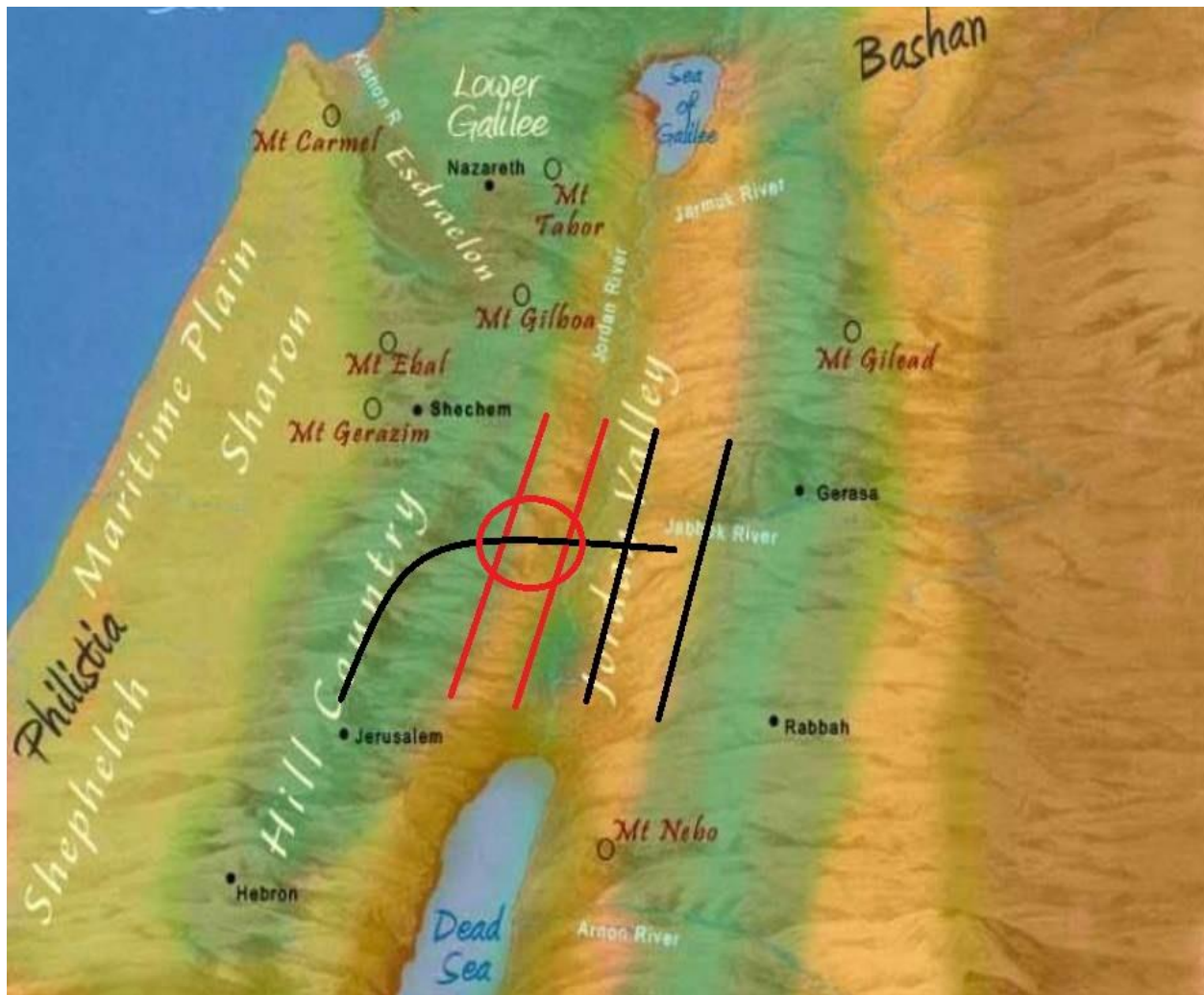
The only thing that prevented Joab and Abishai from killing Abner was a group of Benjaminites that came to the rescue of Abner.

²⁸ So Joab blew the trumpet, and all the people halted and no longer pursued Israel, nor did they continue to fight anymore

The battle which began at the pool of Gibeon was terminated but the war was not over.

²⁹ Abner and his men then went through the Arabah all that night; so they crossed the Jordan, walked all morning, and came to Mahanaim.

See Pics 230



The Arabah regions are a desert area that is east and west of the Jordan River. Abner and his men had to travel thru this desert area (marked in red on the west side) before they reached the Jordan River.

See pic 235



See video 240 8.33 The Arabah Desert

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.33.html>

Verses 30 - 32

³⁰ Then Joab returned from pursuing Abner; but he gathered all the people together, and nineteen of David's servants were missing, besides Asahel.

³¹ However, the servants of David had struck and killed *many* of Benjamin and Abner's men; 360 men were dead. ³² And they carried Asahel away and buried him in his father's tomb, which was in Bethlehem. Then Joab and his men traveled all night until *the day* dawned at Hebron.

³⁰ Then Joab returned from pursuing Abner; but he gathered all the people together, and nineteen of David's servants were missing, besides Asahel.

David lost 20 men

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Abner lost 360 men

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Joab and his men buried Asahel at Bethlehem and then traveled all night until they reached Hebron.

See pic 245

