

E2E- Part 80

2 Samuel 18:6-18, 32-33

Mark Kring, Senior Pastor

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1. The heartbreak, shattered relationships, and rebellion of his son Absalom are earthly consequences that David faces due to his sin with Bathsheba. He now must prepare for battle against his own son.

2. Despite Absalom's destructive arrogance and treachery, David instructs his generals to "deal gently" with his son.

3. The battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim, where David's experienced troops hold an advantage. The loss of life is immense.

4. David's men watch Absalom riding a mule through the forest. The mule passes under a massive oak tree with thick branches. When it emerges on the other side, there is no rider. Absalom's hair becomes caught in the branches, leaving him dangling.

5. The very things that Absalom takes pride in – the status symbol of royalty and wealth represented by the mule, and his hair, which serves as the crown of his appearance – are also the aspects that ensnare and doom him in his rebellion.

6. Joab disregards David's orders to spare Absalom's life and puts an end to the civil war. With the death of Absalom, David has now lost three sons because of his sin with Bathsheba.

7. Absalom memorializes himself by commissioning a monument in his honor, yet when he dies, he is buried in a pit in the forest, not even in the family tomb.

8. Most are ecstatic about the victory and expect David to reciprocate. However, when the messenger informs David of his son's fate, he responds with loud weeping, calling out his deceased son's name as he leaves.

9. The saga of David and Absalom has been compared to Jesus and humanity. It comes into full focus when we see the King's son who worked to take the Father's throne, contrasted with the Father who would die to save His son.

TODAY'S WORSHIP

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There is One Gospel
Only A Holy God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Is there a character in this story that you can most easily identify with personally? Why is that?

Absalom had tried to make a name for himself during his life that he had planned to be remembered even after his life ended. (v. 18) So much of our society today sees this as commendable for someone to pursue.

- Do you think it is all right to seek to make a name for ourselves? Why?
- What do you think are commendable goals for our lives as Christians?

Joab was clearly under orders from his King to bring Absalom back alive if possible. However, his decision brought an immediate end to the massive killing of Israelites by Israelites.

- Do you think Joab's decision regarding Absalom was right or wrong? Why?
- What principle(s) do you think should have been applied in this kind of situation?
- How might we need to apply these principles more in our lives today to better honor God?

Neither of the main human characters in this passage, David or Absalom, got what they wanted from these circumstances. This story (like all of the Bible's stories) reveals how God is at work to bring about His goals.

- In what ways do we see God at work in this passage? What different means does He use to accomplish His purposes? Consider both what we might see as positive or negative from our perspective.
- What assumptions can we draw from how He worked in these terrible circumstances about how God may perhaps be at work in and around our lives today?

In what ways can we see David's heart for Absalom as a reflection of God's heart for humanity in general, and us in particular?