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Beware Of Absaloms
2Sam. 13-20

There are some people who mean well but end up making a mess of things.

There are others who do not mean well, having the sole purpose of benefiting themselves with no regard for those they injure, damaged or destroyed, yet they seem to have a cunning ability to cover up their wickedness and make it appear as good.

Such is the tragic story of Absalom, David's favorite son.

1. He was the 3rd son of King David by Maacah, the daughter of King Talmai of Geshur, making him of royal descent on both sides. 2Sam. 3:3
2. He was born in Hebron. 2Sam. 3:2
3. He was praised for his good looks, more than any other from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, for there was no blemish in him. 2Sam. 14:25
4. Absalom would cut his hair yearly and weigh it at two-hundred shekels. 2Sam. 14:26
5. He fathered three sons and one daughter, whom he named Tamar, after his sister who was like her aunt in beautiful appearance. 2Sam. 14:27

6. He was left to himself, without restraint, discipline or correction his life, nor ever made to confront and acknowledge his sins.
7. He was the epitome of the pride of Lucifer. Ezk. 28:15
 - * "You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you."
8. I am sure that being very aware of his beauty, talent, charisma and right to sit on the throne of his father David, not to mention the admiration of the people, only catered to his ego.
9. I am equally sure, that seeing the favorite place and care David gave to Solomon, as he grew up, only increased his disdain for David.
 - * The Proverbs tell us how Solomon was instructed by David.
10. His crimes were nurtured and bathed in pride, selfishness and greed for power, without any concern for anyone else, from the murder of Amnon to the overthrow of his father from the kingdom.
11. Absalom represents a specific type of person in Scripture, one who would enter into the church to achieve his or her own end, without regard for the people, bringing division to the church.

As we examine the life of Absalom, we want to identify three things, about Absalom type people.

- I. The characteristics of an Absalom.
- II. The objectives of an Absalom.

III. The outcome of an Absalom.

I. The characteristics of an Absalom.

A. Absalom's are patient individuals, when it comes to achieving their ends. 2Sam. 13

1. When King David heard of the rape of Tamar by Amnon he was very angry but did nothing. And it says that, "Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar." 2Sam. 13:21-22

a. They have that canny ability to put on a convincing act.

b. They are people, who do not forget anything or miss opportunities.

2. We read next that after two full years, Absalom ordered the slaying of Amnon as he invited all the kings sons to a feast at Baal Hazor. 2Sam. 13:23-29

a. He commanded his servant to watch him to give the orders kill Amnon, once his heat was merry with wine. vs. 28a-g

b. He exhorted them not to be afraid, "Have I not commanded you? be courageous and valiant." vs. 28h-j

B. Absalom's are students of people. 2Sam. 13, 14

1. Absalom knew David's weakness in confronting and not holding his children accountable, also that time would regain him favor with David and he was right, "So David lamented the death of Amnon as Absalom fled to his grandfather, the king of Geshur but after three years David longed for Absalom." 2Sam. 13:36-39

2. This is brought about as Joab saw David's concern about Absalom and sent a woman from Tekoa to plead fictitiously for her son who had kill her other son, that his life would be spared from the family, then turning the tables on David she declared that he ought to be a doer of what he declared, so Absalom was allowed to return to Jerusalem but he could not see the face of David for two years. 2Sam. 14:24, 28

C. Absalom's are obsessed with power. 2Sam. 15:1-2

1. They love to be in control and display power, Absalom provided himself with chariots and fifty horsemen to run before him. vs. 1

a. Presenting himself as proficient heir to the throne.

b. One that was among the people, not like his father.

2. They love to be seen and heard, as he rose up early and stood by the gate. vs. 2
 - a. The gate of the city was always the place where civil lawsuits were made by the king and elders for the people.
 - b. Lot sat at the gate of the city of Sodom as one who judged. Gen. 19:1
 - c. Boaz went up to the gate of the city to redeem Ruth. Ruth 4
 3. They love to be thought of and told how loving and great they are, basking in the glory of people around them, but they are not a people person, they use people, being shallow in relations and commitments. vs. 2
 - * Absalom would ask, “What city are you from?”
- D.** Absalom’s exalt themselves by undermining the existing authority. 2Sam. 15:3-4
1. They affirm the needs of the people, while at the same time pointing out the flaws and insinuate the lack of care by the existing leadership, to undermine their authority. vs. 3
 - * “Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your case is good and right; but there is no deputy of the king to hear you.”
 2. They declare that if they were in authority, they would do a better job,

- implying they care for the people more than the present authority. vs. 4
- * “Moreover Absalom would say, “Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.”
- E.** Absalom’s used flattery and played on people’s emotions. 2Sam. 15:5
1. They give an appearance of genuine concern by their seeming tender affection while having ulterior motives. vs. 5
 - * “And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him.”
 2. They appear to be so humble but are not.
 - a. These individuals are hypocrites in reality acting out their part.
 - b. My experience has been that when people give an appearance of being overly humble, they usually aren’t!
 - * “Even a child is known by his doings whether his works be pure and whether it be right.” Prov. 20:11
- F.** Absalom’s are masters at timing. 2Sam. 14, 15

1. They execute their plan through their position of privilege, even as Absalom's plan took full swing after David had allowed Absalom to see his face, it didn't take long for Absalom to begin his systematic plot to overthrow his father David, a treacherous betrayal which some believe went on unsuspected and undetected, but I rather believe it was ignored as everything Absalom ever did. 2Sam. 14:33
 * "So Joab went to the king and told him. And when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king. Then the king kissed Absalom."
2. They count on the consistent gullibility and blind trust of individuals, as it says, "After four years, not 40, Absalom petitioned David to go to Hebron to pay a vow to cover up his overthrow." 2Sam. 15:7
 - a. These individuals have an air of being very spiritual but are not!
 - b. These individuals are heartless, yet so charismatic in personality.

Illustration

There was a pastor who fell and married his secretary and later he gave what seemed to be

genuine repentance and was restored to ministry. He was then given a position of privilege only to use it for his own advancement. Ultimately he attempted to establish his own ministry with the staff he had been entrusted with, at which time he was asked to leave with all who agreed with him.

These are some of the characteristics of an Absalom!

II. The Objectives of an Absalom.

- A. Absaloms attempt to create disunity where there is unity, bringing division, it says "Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." 2Sam. 15:6b
 1. By presenting themselves as interested in the people.
 2. By undermining others in authority.
 3. By exalting self in order to gain authority.
 * "A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, And a **flattering** mouth works ruin." Prov. 26:28
- B. Absaloms turn loyal friendships against each other. 2Sam. 15:12, 31
 1. Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, as he was offering sacrifices. vs. 12a-d

- a. What a contradiction, to worship God and be involved in a treacherous overthrow of God's chosen king.
 - b. Absalom took advantage of Ahithophel's disappointments and bitterness towards David to pull him in to the conspiracy.
2. The conspiracy grew stronger and continually increased. vs. 12e-f
- a. Just as it always does, as an undercurrent, through divisive people.
 - b. It is fed by the people's carnality and gullibility.
3. The effects of betrayal by close friends is always painful and devastating, yet one must trust God for it, "Then someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!" 2Sam. 15:31
- * "For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng." Ps. 55:12-14

- C. Absaloms use people in order to get the best results, without any concern for people. 2Sam. 17
1. Ahithophel gave his plan to pursue David. 2Sam. 17:1-4
- a. He wanted to pursue David with 12,000 men, while he was weary and weak and kill David. vs. 1-2
 - b. He would bring the people back, except David, to secure peace. vs. 3
2. Hushai gave his plan and was chosen over Ahithophel's. 2Sam. 17:5-14
- a. That Ahithophel's advise was not good at that time. vs. 5-7
 - b. That David was a seasoned warrior, resulting in many casualties. vs. 8-10
 - c. That Absalom should lead the battle. vs. 11-13
 - d. It was God's hand that overturned the council of Ahithophel! vs. 14
3. Ahithophel went home and committed suicide, "Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb." 2Sam. 17:23
- * Once people are pulled into a division and then not considered part of the main core, as at first, they feel

rejected and at the same time regret their involvement, feeling guilty and embarrassed to return, so they just flounder from church to church or stop attending church altogether!

D. Absaloms rule over people, this is their main objective.

1. He commanded the murder of Amnon. 2Sam. 13:28
2. He burned Joab's fields to summon him to come. 2Sam. 14:30-31
3. He undermined his father's authority, even those of his closest friends. 2Sam. 15:12
4. He was a self acclaimed king. 2Sam. 15:10
5. He demonstrated it by the most disrespectful act that could never be reversed, he had sex with the ten concubines David left to demonstrate his conquest over his father, that all might know. 2Sam. 16:21-22
* Ahithophel was the one that advised Absalom, no wonder he committed suicide!

Illustration

It has been said that, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

These are some of the objectives of an Absalom!

III. The outcome of an Absalom.

- A.** Some innocent people are even dragged into it without knowing. 2Sam. 15:11
* 200 men who were innocent accompanied Absalom to Hebron.
 1. New believers and young Christians.
 2. Naive people, despite their maturity.
- B.** Tragically many of the people deceived, end up getting hurt and destroyed. 2Sam. 18:7-8
* 20,000 fell in battle that day.
 1. Some are stumbled for a long time. vs. 7
 2. Others become bitter towards Christianity or the church. vs. 7
 3. Still others are scattered, never really belonging to a church. vs. 8
- C.** Inevitable destruction to self. 2Sam. 18:9, 14-15
 1. Their vain glory usually becomes their downfall, even as Absalom prided himself in his hair, becoming the object of his downfall, "Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth.

And the mule which was under him went on.” vs. 9

* “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before the fall.” Prov. 16:18

2. Their ultimate end is to reap in kind to their own sowing, even as Absalom’s beauty was mutilated by the sword in judgment, Joab thrust three spears through Absalom’s heart and the young men killed him. vs. 14-15

* There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Prov. 14:12

D. Love ones hurt and grieve over the consequences. 2Sam. 18:33-19:1-2

1. Some times family members suffer much, due to the ex-communication of their love one’s from the church, due to their involvement in divisions, “Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom--my son, my son Absalom--if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!” vs. 33

* “Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads **slander** is a fool.” Prov. 10:18

2. Some times their grief and mourning is great, due to seeing their backslidden condition by their disobedience to correct and discipline them, “And Joab was told, “Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.” So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people. For the people heard it said that day, “The king is grieved for his son.” vs. 1-2

* “Your own wickedness will correct you, And your **backslidings** will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing That you have forsaken the LORD your God, And the fear of Me is not in you,” Says the Lord GOD of hosts.” Jer. 2:19

E. There are those who are like weathervanes, depending which way the wind is blowing.

1. There are Shimei’s who act, as if they are seemingly repentant, only for their own benefit. 2Sam. 19:18-23

* Shimei’s will end up sooner or later being part of some other trouble or problem, sooner or later.

2. There are Ahithophel’s, embittered and disgruntled people, who merely will join in to take revenge for their own reasons. 2Sam. 16:21, 17:3

* “The heart knows its own **bitterness**,
And a stranger does not share its joy.”
Prov. 14:10

3. There are Amasas, those who remain in the body and still sympathize with the Absalom’s and are nothing but trouble to the body. 2Sam. 20:6

* These have extended webbing in the body, being part of the body and be part of undermining constantly!

F. The most tragic outcome is when a church is divided. 2Sam. 20:1

1. The division is not subtle, but bold by blowing the trumpet, “And there happened to be there a rebel, whose name was Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjamite. And he blew a trumpet, and said: “We have no share in David, Nor do we have inheritance in the son of Jesse; Every man to his tents, O Israel!”

* “Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause **divisions** and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.” Rom. 16:17

2. The virtue of faithful loyalty to the kingdom is cast away.
 - a. Ezekiel has a stern warning, “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to the

shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.”
Ezk. 34:2-6

- b. He that rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. 2Sam. 23:3c

Illustration

In the 34 years of ministry, I can count on one hand the number of people who have ever returned to acknowledge their wrong and ask forgiveness.

These are some of the outcomes of an Absalom!

Conclusion

We have identified three things about Absaloms:

- I.** The characteristics of an Absalom: learn to identify them!
- II.** The objectives of an Absalom: Don't forget them!
- III.** The outcome of an Absalom: only destruction of lives and themselves!