

David
Part 21
“Absalom’s Betrayal”

- In **2 Samuel 12** David demanded fourfold restitution for the man in Nathan’s parable. Now David will pay a four-fold restitution for Uriah from four of his own: The child born to Bathsheba, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.
- God forgave David of his sin with Bathsheba but that doesn’t pardon David from the consequence. The word of the Lord to David in **2 Samuel 12:10** “Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.”
- The well known story of Absalom’s betrayal begins with what takes place in **2 Samuel 13** where Amnon, the first born son of David, rapes his half sister Tamar. When David finds out he is angry but does nothing. This leads to Absalom, also a son of David and the full brother of Tamar, two years later taking vengeance into his own hands. Absalom kills Amnon and then flees to Geshur for three years in refuge.
- This is a Family Feud like non other. There is great dissension and a growing resentment and distrust in the heart of Absalom towards his father David. Because David failed to bring justice to Amnon for what he did to Tamar.
- The story of Absalom’s Rebellion is written in 2 Samuel 14-18. I will not cover all of it in one Sermon. Today I will cover the first part.

2 Samuel 14 NIV

25 In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. **26** Whenever he cut the hair of his

head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard (5 pounds).

28 Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face.

- There are a couple things about Absalom that he takes after his father. One is that he is handsome in appearance. 1 Samuel 16:12 tells us “David was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.” Absalom also had a heart to defend the innocent much like the shepherd heart in David.
- Unlike David, Absalom uses his appearance and charm to win the approval of man. Where David pursues the approval of God and those in authority over him.

Galatians 1:10 NIV

“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

- The fact that Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing his father and also three years Geshur, this tells us Absalom didn't see or speak to his father David for 5 years even though scripture tells us David's heart longed for Absalom (2 Samuel 14:1).

2 Samuel 15 NIV

1 In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. **2** He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, “What town are you from?” He would answer, “Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.” **3** Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your claims are valid and

proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.” **4** And Absalom would add, “If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice.”

5 Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him.

6 Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

These 6 verses tell us a lot about Absalom and his disgruntled heart towards David.

To begin it says:

Vs. 1 In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him.

- This seems to be the theme for Absalom. He provides for himself a chariot and horses and men. He later provides for himself a monument in 2 Samuel 18:18. Because Absalom is not chosen and appointed by the Lord, he will take it upon himself to do the work. Self appointment and exaltation are a sure sign that God is not in it.
- Even Jesus asked his disciples Matt. 16 “Who do people say the Son of Man is” and then to his disciples “Who do you say that I am”.

Matthew 23:12

For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Vs. 2 He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him... He

would say; Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative...

Vs 4 ...“If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice.”

- Absalom’s bitterness becomes his motivation. Bitterness is definitely a motivation but it’s not a good one. Some people are driven in business by bitterness. Some are motivated personally because of resentment or bitterness. This may energize to get the job done but resentment and bitterness will never be a motive that is blessed by the Lord.
- Ultimately the heart will have to be dealt with and changed before God will allow his presence into that person’s life.

Vs. 6 Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

- The fact that Absalom stole the hearts of the people tells us everything we need to know. Absalom was not a help but a pot stirrer. Absalom didn’t look to help but to add others to his own misery.
- The text seems to imply that by Absalom hearing their complaints they never actually made it to the king, who could do something to help them. Therefore they were only heard and never served.
- If Absalom had a true heart to help he would have arranged a meeting with his father to get a solution. But because Absalom distrusted his father he also misguided these people leaving them with the same feeling of distrust towards David.

Vs. 7-12

7 At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, “Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. **8** While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.” **9** The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he went to Hebron.

10 Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’” **11** Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter.

12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom’s following kept on increasing.

- Absalom committed treason under the guise of worship. He knew that the appearance of spirituality could work in his favor.
- Once again Absalom unlike his father David arranges his own coronation. David’s story was very different, he was a shepherd boy tending his father’s sheep when Samuel the prophet appeared on the doorstep of his father Jesse and then Samuel anointed David unexpectedly. Later when David was made King of Judah it says in 2 Samuel 2:4 “Then the men of Judah came to Hebron, and there they anointed David king over the tribe of Judah.” this happens after the death of Saul.
- Once again bitterness was Absalom’s motivation, and that is not a good motive. It is definitely not one that God will bless.
- Absalom’s Rebellion is reminder that offense and bitterness will grow if it’s not dealt with.

- Absalom's story is also a reminder that even though Absalom was hurt and offended by his father's lack of dealing with Amnon that doesn't give him the right to become bitter and unforgiving.
- Absalom's own bitter spirit will ultimately lead to his own destruction.

"It's not the trials in your life that develop you or destroy you, but rather your response to those hardships." **Charles Stanley**

Vs. 13-17

13 A messenger came and told David, "The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom."

14 Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword."

15 The king's officials answered him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses."

16 The king set out, with his entire household following him; but he left ten concubines to take care of the palace. **17** So the king set out, with all the people following him, and they halted at the edge of the city.

2 Samuel 16:5-13 NIV

5 As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul's family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. **6** He pelted David and all the king's officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left. **7** As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you murderer, you scoundrel! **8** The Lord has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have

reigned. The Lord has given the kingdom into the hands of your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a murderer!”

9 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head.”

10 But the king said, “What does this have to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who can ask, ‘Why do you do this?’”

11 David then said to Abishai and all his officials, “My son, my own flesh and blood, is trying to kill me. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone; let him curse, for the Lord has told him to.

12 It may be that the Lord will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.”

13 So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt.

- Shimei was a distant relative of King Saul, and he still resented David for replacing the dynasty of Saul.

“Shimei was about as offensive as a person could be. He wanted to destroy any shred of dignity or confidence that David had left. There are always people ready to rejoice when a leader falls. Shimei had this heart against David for a long time, but he could only show it when David was down and out.” **Guzik**

“It is very hard to bear a cowardly attack. One is very apt to reply and use hard words to one who takes advantage of your position and deals you the coward’s blow. Only the coward strikes a man when he is down.” **(Spurgeon)**

- The account of Shimei is proof that it's impossible to go through life without a hater. Even David the greatest king Israel ever knew, who won every battle, was picked, appointed and anointed by God had a hater.
- If there is a text where David will forever be remembered as humble it is this one.
- Shimei's accusations of David are a good reminder that when someone attacks you in a wrong spirit much of what they say will be absolutely false.

1. The NKJV say in vs. 7 that Shimei accused David of being a blood thirsty man, a rogue. This is simply not true, David was a warrior but he was not out to kill for the sake of killing. David was not a rogue who was dishonest and good nothing. David was a man who kept his word even when it was difficult.

2. Shimei was wrong about David when he said in Vs. 8 "The Lord has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul". David actually protected Saul and his household even when running for his life from Saul.

3. Shimei was right when he called David a Murderer and in this David knew he was guilty. He continued to carry the guilt for taking Uriah's life and humbly receives this as from the Lord.

- In this barrage of insults and being pelted with stones. David humbles himself and proves he is a true leader and man of God.

David has modeled courage on the battle field...

David has modeled persistence when running from Saul...

David has modeled being a worshipper in the house of the Lord...

Now David is modeling humility and trust in the Lord...

David's default is never to exalt himself but to allow God to protect and establish him.

David even reminds himself in:

Vs. 12 It may be that the Lord will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.”

Vs. 14

14 The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

- David was not without hope or comfort. God allowed comfort to find him, even if it was in the small things. David was able to receive comfort because he was at peace and he knew that God would ultimately work through this whole situation his good and perfect will.

At this time of David fleeing from his own son Absalom he writes

Psalm 3 NKJV

1

Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!
Many *are* they who rise up against me.

2

Many *are* they who say of me,
“*There is no help for him in God.*” *Selah*

3

But You, O Lord, *are* a shield for me,
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

4

I cried to the Lord with my voice,
And He heard me from His holy hill. *Selah*

5

I lay down and slept;
I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.

6

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.

7

Arise, O Lord;
Save me, O my God!
For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8

Salvation *belongs* to the Lord.
Your blessing *is* upon Your people. *Selah*

Closing:

David in one of the greatest trials of his life responds with a humble heart.

David trusted the Lord and received this trial as the correction of the Lord in his life.

David will ultimately be vindicated by the Lord but Absalom in his own self righteous, self exalted, pride will find himself humbled and destroyed.

David reminds himself in the 3rd Psalm

1. Many are they who rise up against me who say there is no help
2. But You *are* a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.
3. Salvation *belongs* to the Lord.