

“Lessons from the Life of David” – Pastor Jim Ruddy

Study # 40 – An Absalom Spirit – 2 Samuel 13:20 – 15:12

I. ABSALOM’S REVENGE 2 Sam. 13:20-33

- Absalom is introduced in 2 Samuel 13:1. His name will appear approx. 100 times in the Old Testament, with more than 90% of those occurring in 2 Samuel Chapters 13 through 20.
- Absalom, David’s third son, was half-brother to Amnon, and the full-brother of Tamar, whose rape he violently avenged.
- The possibility exists that Absalom was behind the entire ordeal, seeking to place Amnon, the firstborn, in disfavor with David and then ultimately having him annihilated.

II. ABSALOM’S RETREAT 2 Sam. 13:34-39

- Fearing retribution from the King’s sons (*surely not from David!*), Absalom fled to the home his maternal grandfather and remained in self-imposed exile for three years. cf. v34, 37, 38
- In a political marriage, David had taken Maacah, the daughter of the king of Geshur, who became the mother of Absalom.
 - cf. 1 Sam. 3:3 - *Geshur* = “bridge”

III. ABSALOM’S RETURN 2 Sam. 14:1-33

A. THE ANGER OF A TROUBLED KING 2 Sam. 14:1

- David was angry at Absalom, or perhaps more so, angry over the predicament his son’s act of revenge had created.
- David apparently loved Absalom, yet was unable to find a way of restoring his son without it detrimentally affecting David’s position as King.

B. THE ACTIONS OF A SHREWD MAN 2 Sam. 14:2-3

- Joab sought to maintain the favor of King David, while at the same time positioning himself before Absalom who he believed to be the heir-apparent in Israel.
- Hoping to further his own ends, Joab enlists the help of a woman to guide and direct the decision of the King in restoring Absalom.

C. THE APPEAL OF A WISE WOMAN 2 Sam. 14:4-20

- Inventing a story that was roughly similar to David’s, the woman appeals to the King to render a merciful verdict.
- Reminding David of the brevity of life and the mercy of God, the crafty woman is able to persuade the King that it is proper for him to suspend judgment and extend mercy to Absalom.
- Similar to what had happened with Nathan, David is once again trapped by his own moral wisdom and is obligated to call for his banished son to be returned. cf. 2 Sam. 12:1-7
- Recognizing Joab’s hand in the scheme, David orders him to bring Absalom back from exile.

D. THE ARRIVAL OF A BITTER SON 2 Sam. 14:21-33

- Believing that restoring Absalom too quickly would be misinterpreted by the people, David refused to welcome his son, causing Absalom to wait two more years for closure.
- Absalom expressed his complete frustration when speaking with Joab. Either he should be completely punished (“*execute me!*”) or be completely forgiven, and not be left in between.
- Ultimately, David’s heartfelt meeting with Absalom would prove too-little, too-late. His son was embittered against him and would soon make David pay for his indecision and delay.

IV. ABSALOM’S REVOLT 2 Sam. 15:1-12

A. STEALING THE HEARTS OF MEN (Absalom Spirit)

1. HIS MOTIVATION

- Absalom’s actions arose from an unforgiving, offended, bitter heart. cf. Matt. 18:28-30; 24:10; Heb. 12:15
- Absalom sought the affection and admiration of man rather than the approval and affirmation of God. cf. Jn. 12:43

2. HIS METHOD

a) Physical Allure

- Like Saul, Absalom is described only in physical terms.
 - cf. 1 Sam. 9:1,2; 2 Sam. 14:25-27; 1 Sam. 16:7; John 7:24
- He set himself up as someone to be followed (15:1), assuming a place of leadership near the gate (15:2), positioned between the King and the people (15:2-3).
- He used smooth words to discredit David’s leadership.
 - cf. 2 Sam. 15:3-4; Ps. 55:21

b) Emotional Appeal

- Absalom used his charm to play upon the insecurities and offenses of others. cf. 2 Sam. 15:3-5; Prov. 31:30
 1. Choosing *Hebron* would attract those who were offended by David when he *changed* his seat of government to Jerusalem. cf. 2 Sam. 3:1-5; 5:1-5
 2. Ahithophel, David’s counselor, was the grandfather of Bathsheba and was undoubtedly carrying an offense.
 - cf. 2 Sam. 11:3; 23:34

B. BREAKING THE HEART OF GOD

- Absalom used kisses, religious words, and the things of God to deceive others. cf. John 12:5-6; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Pet. 2:1-2
- Absalom thought nothing of invoking The LORD’s Name to make his charade more believable. cf. Ex. 20:7; Num. 30:2
- Beware of charisma without character! cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-13