

# THE SAD, SAD DEATH OF THE KING'S SON, ABSALOM

Wednesday, August 5, 2020 / First Assembly of God / Ft. Myers, FL  
with Pastor Dan Betzer



Do you remember how the people of Israel hounded the prophet Samuel for a king so they could be like other people?

Samuel warned them:

I Samuel 8:4-7

*Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, [5] And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.*

*[6] But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. [7] And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto*

1 *thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I*  
2 *should not reign over them.*

3

4 Samuel prophesied correctly that this is what would happen:

5

6 I Samuel 8:10-17

7 *And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of*  
8 *him a king. [11] And he said, This will be the manner of the king that*  
9 *shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for*  
10 *himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run*  
11 *before his chariots. [12] And he will appoint him captains over*  
12 *thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground,*  
13 *and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and*  
14 *instruments of his chariots. [13] And he will take your daughters to be*  
15 *confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. [14] And he will take*  
16 *your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of*  
17 *them, and give them to his servants. [15] And he will take the tenth of*  
18 *your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his*  
19 *servants. [16] And he will take your menservants, and your*  
20 *maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put*  
21 *them to his work. [17] He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall*  
22 *be his servants.*

23

24 King David had fulfilled all those predictions - and more - with his  
25 adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. The prophet Nathan told David  
26 he would pay four-fold for his sin:

27

28 II Samuel 12:1-12

29 *And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said*  
30 *unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other*  
31 *poor. [2] The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: [3] But*  
32 *the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had*  
33 *bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with*  
34 *his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and*  
35 *lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. [4] And there came*  
36 *a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and*

1 *of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him;*  
2 *but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come*  
3 *to him. [5] And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and*  
4 *he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing*  
5 *shall surely die: [6] And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he*  
6 *did this thing, and because he had no pity.*  
7 *[7] And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord*  
8 *God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out*  
9 *of the hand of Saul; [8] And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy*  
10 *master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of*  
11 *Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto*  
12 *thee such and such things. [9] Wherefore hast thou despised the*  
13 *commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah*  
14 *the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and*  
15 *hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. [10] Now*  
16 *therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou*  
17 *hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy*  
18 *wife. [11] Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee*  
19 *out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and*  
20 *give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight*  
21 *of this sun. [12] For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before*  
22 *all Israel, and before the sun.*

23  
24 And how David paid! Now in II Samuel 17, David reaps the whirlwind.  
25 How devastating it must have been to him when his favorite son,  
26 Absalom, attempted to unseat him, his own father, from the throne of  
27 Israel. As we come to this chapter, David has fled Jerusalem, primarily, I  
28 think, to spare the holy city from military destruction as Absalom's army  
29 arrives. Now Absalom gets conflicting advice from his advisors:

30  
31

## AHITHOPHEL

32  
33  
34

35 Up to this point, Ahithophel had been a follower of King David. But now  
36 he shifts loyalty.

1 II Samuel 17:1-4

2 *Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve*  
3 *thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: [2]*  
4 *And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak handed, and will*  
5 *make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I*  
6 *will smite the king only: [3] And I will bring back all the people unto*  
7 *thee: the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people*  
8 *shall be in peace. [4] And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the*  
9 *elders of Israel.*

10

11 *There was no one who could hold a candle to Ahithophel in his day as an*  
12 *able politician.*

13

14 II Samuel 16:23

15 *And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was*  
16 *as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of*  
17 *Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.* But he turned against  
18 David and gave him counsel which might have assisted the King had he  
19 taken it. But instead, David listened to Hushai's counsel which helped him  
20 defeat Ahithophel. Ahithophel was so dismayed over the collapse of his  
21 influence that he went home, a broken man, set his affairs in order and  
22 committed suicide.

23

24 What caused this man's disloyalty we are not told in Scripture. But his  
25 decision was tragic.

26

## 27 HUSHAI

28

29 What a faithful friend to David! When he learned of Absalom's treachery  
30 toward his father and that David had to vacate Jerusalem, he met the King  
31 outside the city with his clothes rent and covered with dirt [a sign of  
32 humility and servitude]. David advised his friend that if he, Hushai, went  
33 with him he might become actually a burden to him, but he might do  
34 important service if he should remain in Absalom's company as an  
35 advisor. (Sort of a double-agent.)

36

1 Hushai returned to Jerusalem to refute the advice from Ahithophel, as  
2 noted earlier in these notes.

3  
4 Now the line was clearly drawn in the sand and David and his son  
5 prepared for battle against one another.

6  
7 II Samuel 17:24-26  
8 ***Then David came to Mahanaim. [\*Near the Jabbok River which itself is***  
9 ***near the Jordan River] And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the***  
10 ***men of Israel with him. [25] And Absalom made Amasa captain of the***  
11 ***host instead of Joab: [26] So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land***  
12 ***of Gilead.***

13  
14 David at this point is on the run. He had to do this quickly and was not  
15 really adequately prepared. It is interesting to read from Scripture his  
16 provisions hastily acquired:

17  
18 II Samuel 17:28-29  
19 ***Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley,***  
20 ***and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse,***  
21 ***[29] And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David,***  
22 ***and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people***  
23 ***are hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.***

24  
25 At this point, the tide has turned toward David. He was always “the  
26 people's king” and they loved him.

27  
28 David wanted to lead his forces into battle but wisdom prevailed here and  
29 he was talked out of it.

30  
31 II Samuel 18:1-3  
32 ***And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of***  
33 ***thousands and captains of hundreds over them. [2] And David sent forth***  
34 ***a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under***  
35 ***the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part***  
36 ***under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I***

1 *will surely go forth with you myself also. [3] But the people answered,*  
2 *Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us;*  
3 *neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten*  
4 *thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of*  
5 *the city.*

6

7 Despite all his failures and sins, David was truly loved by the people. And  
8 to this day, in Israel, should you ask just about anyone, “Who was your  
9 greatest King,” you will get the response: KING DAVID!

10

11 As the battle between David’s and Absalom’s armies raged on, there was  
12 a slaughter and 20,000 men died. Absalom’s army somehow ended up in  
13 the woods of Ephraim which helped lead to their terrible defeat. And now  
14 Absalom flees for his life:

15

16 II Samuel 18:9-10

17 *And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a*  
18 *mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his*  
19 *head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven*  
20 *and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. [10] And a*  
21 *certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom*  
22 *hanged in an oak.*

23

24 David emphatically had commanded that he did not want his son Absalom  
25 harmed. However:

26

27 II Samuel 18:11-17

28 *And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest*  
29 *him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would*  
30 *have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. [12] And the man said*  
31 *unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine*  
32 *hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king’s son: for in*  
33 *our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware*  
34 *that none touch the young man Absalom. [13] Otherwise I should have*  
35 *wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from*  
36 *the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me. [14]*

1 *Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts*  
2 *in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he*  
3 *was yet alive in the midst of the oak. [15] And ten young men that bare*  
4 *Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him. [16]*  
5 *And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after*  
6 *Israel: for Joab held back the people. [17] And they took Absalom, and*  
7 *cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones*  
8 *upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.*

9  
10 King David had never stopped loving his son Absalom, despite the man's  
11 treachery and deceit. Note the king's remorse when he learned of  
12 Absalom's death:

13  
14 II Samuel 18:32-33

15 *And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And*  
16 *Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise*  
17 *against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.*

18 *[33] And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over*  
19 *the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my*  
20 *son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my*  
21 *son, my son!*

22  
23 Remember the prophet Nathan had warned David that divine judgment  
24 was coming upon him for his sin with Bathsheba. One might think,  
25 "Enough is enough!" But, alas, God's judgment had only begun.

26  
27 More next week.