

FIRST DAY:

- Review the lecture, Read the notes and the references

SECOND DAY:**Read 2 Samuel 13****Amnon and Tamar**

[13:1] In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.

[2] Amnon became frustrated to the point of illness on account of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her.

[3] Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. [4] He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?"

Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."

[5] "Go to bed and pretend to be ill," Jonadab said. "When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand.'"

[6] So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand."

[7] David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him." [8] So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. [9] Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat.

"Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him. [10] Then Amnon said to Tamar,

"Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. [11] But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."

[12] "Don't, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me. Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. [13] What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." [14] But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.

[15] Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

[16] "No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me."

But he refused to listen to her. [17] He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of here and bolt the door after her." [18] So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing a richly ornamented robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. [19] Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

[20] Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.

[21] When King David heard all this, he was furious.

[22] Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

Absalom Kills Amnon

[23] Two years later, when Absalom's sheepshearers were at Baal Hazor near the border of Ephraim, he invited all the king's sons to come there.

[24] Absalom went to the king and said, "Your

servant has had shearers come. Will the king and his officials please join me?"

[25] "No, my son," the king replied. "All of us should not go; we would only be a burden to you." Although Absalom urged him, he still refused to go, but gave him his blessing.

[26] Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon come with us."

The king asked him, "Why should he go with you?"

[27] But Absalom urged him, so he sent with him Amnon and the rest of the king's sons.

[28] Absalom ordered his men, "Listen! When Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine and I say to you, 'Strike Amnon down,' then kill him. Don't be afraid. Have not I given you this order? Be strong and brave." [29] So Absalom's men did to Amnon what Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled.

[30] While they were on their way, the report came to David: "Absalom has struck down all the king's sons; not one of them is left." [31] The king stood up, tore his clothes and lay down on the ground; and all his servants stood by with their clothes torn.

[32] But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, said, "My lord should not think that they killed all the princes; only Amnon is dead. This has been Absalom's expressed intention ever since the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar. [33] My lord the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead."

[34] Meanwhile, Absalom had fled.

Now the man standing watch looked up and saw many people on the road west of him, coming down the side of the hill. The watchman went and told the king, "I see men in the direction of Horonaim, on the side of the hill."

[35] Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons are here; it has happened just as your servant said."

[36] As he finished speaking, the king's sons came in, wailing loudly. The king, too, and all his servants wept very bitterly.

[37] Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But King David mourned for his son every day.

[38] After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. [39] And the spirit of the king longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death.

Question 3

Exodus 20:1-17; [20:1] And God spoke all these words:

[2] "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

[3] "You shall have no other gods before me.

[4] "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. [5] You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, [6] but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

[7] "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

[8] "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. [9] Six days you shall labor and do all your work, [10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. [11] For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

[12] "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

[13] "You shall not murder.

[14] "You shall not commit adultery.

[15] "You shall not steal.

[16] “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

[17] “You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Leviticus 18:9; [9] “Do not have sexual relations with your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether she was born in the same home or elsewhere.

Question 4

Leviticus 18:9-11; [9] “Do not have sexual relations with your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether she was born in the same home or elsewhere.

[10] “Do not have sexual relations with your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter; that would dishonor you.

[11] “Do not have sexual relations with the daughter of your father's wife, born to your father; she is your sister.

Deuteronomy 22:25-27; [25] But if out in the country a man happens to meet a girl pledged to be married and rapes her, only the man who has done this shall die. [26] Do nothing to the girl; she has committed no sin deserving death. This case is like that of someone who attacks and murders his neighbor, [27] for the man found the girl out in the country, and though the betrothed girl screamed, there was no one to rescue her.

THIRD DAY

Read 2 Samuel 14-15:12

Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

[14:1] Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart longed for Absalom. [2] So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there. He said to her, “Pretend you are in mourning. Dress in mourning clothes, and don't use any cosmetic lotions. Act like a woman who has spent many days grieving for the dead. [3] Then go to the king and

speak these words to him.” And Joab put the words in her mouth.

[4] When the woman from Tekoa went to the king, she fell with her face to the ground to pay him honor, and she said, “Help me, O king!”

[5] The king asked her, “What is troubling you?”

She said, “I am indeed a widow; my husband is dead.

[6] I your servant had two sons. They got into a fight with each other in the field, and no one was there to separate them. One struck the other and killed him.

[7] Now the whole clan has risen up against your servant; they say, ‘Hand over the one who struck his brother down, so that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed; then we will get rid of the heir as well.’ They would put out the only burning coal I have left, leaving my husband neither name nor descendant on the face of the earth.”

[8] The king said to the woman, “Go home, and I will issue an order in your behalf.”

[9] But the woman from Tekoa said to him, “My lord the king, let the blame rest on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt.”

[10] The king replied, “If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he will not bother you again.”

[11] She said, “Then let the king invoke the LORD his God to prevent the avenger of blood from adding to the destruction, so that my son will not be destroyed.”

“As surely as the LORD lives,” he said, “not one hair of your son's head will fall to the ground.”

[12] Then the woman said, “Let your servant speak a word to my lord the king.”

“Speak,” he replied.

[13] The woman said, “Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son?”

[14] Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take

away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.

[15] “And now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. Your servant thought, ‘I will speak to the king; perhaps he will do what his servant asks. [16] Perhaps the king will agree to deliver his servant from the hand of the man who is trying to cut off both me and my son from the inheritance God gave us.’

[17] “And now your servant says, ‘May the word of my lord the king bring me rest, for my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil. May the LORD your God be with you.’”

[18] Then the king said to the woman, “Do not keep from me the answer to what I am going to ask you.”

“Let my lord the king speak,” the woman said.

[19] The king asked, “Isn't the hand of Joab with you in all this?”

The woman answered, “As surely as you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything my lord the king says. Yes, it was your servant Joab who instructed me to do this and who put all these words into the mouth of your servant. [20] Your servant Joab did this to change the present situation. My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God—he knows everything that happens in the land.”

[21] The king said to Joab, “Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom.”

[22] Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, “Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant's request.”

[23] Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. [24] But the king said, “He must go to his own house; he must not see my face.” So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.

[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 from time to

time when it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard.

[27] Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. The daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman.

[28] Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. [29] Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. [30] Then he said to his servants, “Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire.” So Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

[31] Then Joab did go to Absalom's house and he said to him, “Why have your servants set my field on fire?”

[32] Absalom said to Joab, “Look, I sent word to you and said, ‘Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, ‘Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!’” Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death.”

[33] So Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.

2 Samuel 15

Absalom's Conspiracy

[15:1] 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 he gets 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 men of Israel.

[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.

FOURTH DAY

Read 2 Samuel 15:13-16:14 and Psalm 3

David Flees

[13] A messenger came and told David, "The hearts of the men 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 upon 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 a place some distance away. [18] All his men marched past him, along with all the Kerethites and Pelethites; and all the six hundred Gittites who had accompanied him from Gath marched before the king.

[19] The king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you come along with us? Go back and stay with King Absalom. You are a foreigner, an exile from your homeland. [20] You came only yesterday. And today shall I make you wander about with us, when I do not know where I am going? Go back, and take your countrymen. May kindness and faithfulness be with you."

[21] But Ittai replied to the king, "As surely as the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether it means life or death, there will your servant be."

[22] David said to Ittai, "Go ahead, march on." So Ittai the Gittite marched on with all his men and the families that were with him.

[23] The whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. The king also crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the people moved on toward the desert.

[24] Zadok was there, too, and all the Levites who were with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving the city.

[25] Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. [26] But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him."

[27] The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Aren't you a seer? Go back to the city in peace, with your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan son of Abiathar. You and Abiathar take your two sons with you. [28] I will wait at the fords in the desert until word comes from you to inform me." [29] So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there.

[30] But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their

heads too and were weeping as they went up.

[31] Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."

[32] When David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head.

[33] David said to him, "If you go with me, you will be a burden to me. [34] But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; I was your father's servant in the past, but now I will be your servant,' then you can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice. [35] Won't the priests Zadok and Abiathar be there with you? Tell them anything you hear in the king's palace. [36] Their two sons, Ahimaaz son of Zadok and Jonathan son of Abiathar, are there with them. Send them to me with anything you hear."

[37] So David's friend Hushai arrived at Jerusalem as Absalom was entering the city.

2 Samuel 16

David and Ziba

[16:1] When David had gone a short distance beyond the summit, there was Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, waiting to meet him. He had a string of donkeys saddled and loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred cakes of raisins, a hundred cakes of figs and a skin of wine.

[2] The king asked Ziba, "Why have you brought these?"

Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fruit are for the men to eat, and the wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the desert."

[3] The king then asked, "Where is your master's grandson?"

Ziba said to him, "He is staying in Jerusalem, because he thinks, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom.'"

[4] Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours."

"I humbly bow," Ziba said. "May I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king."

Shimei Curses David

[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 man of blood, 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 handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood!"

[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 do you and I have in common, 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, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life. 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 see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving 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. [14] The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

Psalm 3

[3:1] O LORD, how many are my foes!
How many rise up against me!

[2] Many are saying of me,
"God will not deliver him."

Selah

[3] But you are a shield around me, O LORD;
you bestow glory on me and lift up my head.

[4] To the LORD I cry aloud,
and he answers me from his holy hill.

Selah

[5] I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.
[6] I will not fear the tens of thousands
drawn up against me on every side.
[7] Arise, O LORD!
Deliver me, O my God!
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;
break the teeth of the wicked.
[8] From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people.

Question 10

Psalm 41:7-9; [7] All my enemies whisper together against me; they imagine the worst for me, saying,

[8] “A vile disease has beset him; he will never get up from the place where he lies.”

[9] Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

FIFTH DAY:

Read 2 Samuel 16:15-18:33

The Advice of Hushai and Ahithophel

[15] Meanwhile, Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.
[16] Then Hushai the Arkite, David's friend, went to Absalom and said to him, “Long live the king! Long live the king!”

[17] Absalom asked Hushai, “Is this the love you show your friend? Why didn't you go with your friend?”

[18] Hushai said to Absalom, “No, the one chosen by the LORD, by these people, and by all the men of Israel—his I will be, and I will remain with him.

[19] Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve the son? Just as I served your father, so I will serve you.”

[20] Absalom said to Ahithophel, “Give us your advice. What should we do?”

[21] Ahithophel answered, “Lie with your father's concubines whom he left to take care of the palace.

Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench in your father's nostrils, and the hands of everyone with you will be strengthened.” [22] So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

[23] Now in those days the advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel's advice.

2 Samuel 17

[17:1] Ahithophel said to Absalom, “I would choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David. [2] I would attack him while he is weary and weak. I would strike him with terror, and then all the people with him will flee. I would strike down only the king [3] and bring all the people back to you. The death of the man you seek will mean the return of all; all the people will be unharmed.” [4] This plan seemed good to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.

[5] But Absalom said, “Summon also Hushai the Arkite, so we can hear what he has to say.” [6] When Hushai came to him, Absalom said, “Ahithophel has given this advice. Should we do what he says? If not, give us your opinion.”

[7] Hushai replied to Absalom, “The advice Ahithophel has given is not good this time. [8] You know your father and his men; they are fighters, and as fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs. Besides, your father is an experienced fighter; he will not spend the night with the troops. [9] Even now, he is hidden in a cave or some other place. If he should attack your troops first, whoever hears about it will say, ‘There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.’ [10] Then even the bravest soldier, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a fighter and that those with him are brave.

[11] “So I advise you: Let all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba—as numerous as the sand on the seashore—be gathered to you, with you yourself leading them into battle. [12] Then we will attack him wherever he may be found, and we will fall on him as dew settles on the ground. Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive. [13] If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it down to the valley until not even a piece of it can be found.”

[14] Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel.” For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

[15] Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, “Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do such and such, but I have advised them to do so and so. [16] Now send a message immediately and tell David, ‘Do not spend the night at the fords in the desert; cross over without fail, or the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up.’”

[17] Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En Rogel. A servant girl was to go and inform them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they could not risk being seen entering the city. [18] But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So the two of them left quickly and went to the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they climbed down into it. [19] His wife took a covering and spread it out over the opening of the well and scattered grain over it. No one knew anything about it.

[20] When Absalom's men came to the woman at the house, they asked, “Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?”

The woman answered them, “They crossed over the brook.” The men searched but found no one, so they returned to Jerusalem.

[21] After the men had gone, the two climbed out of the well and went to inform King David. They said to him, “Set out and cross the river at once; Ahithophel has advised such and such against you.” [22] So David and all the people with him set out and crossed the Jordan. By daybreak, no one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

[23] When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

[24] David went to Mahanaim, and Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel. [25] Absalom had appointed Amasa over the army in place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether, an Israelite who had married Abigail, the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah the mother of Joab.

[26] The Israelites and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.

[27] When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Makir son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim [28] brought bedding and bowls and articles of pottery. They also brought wheat and barley, flour and roasted grain, beans and lentils, [29] honey and curds, sheep, and cheese from cows' milk for David and his people to eat. For they said, “The people have become hungry and tired and thirsty in the desert.”

2 Samuel 18

Absalom's Death

[18:1] David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. [2] David sent the troops out—a third under the command of Joab, a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. The king told the troops, “I myself will surely march out with you.”

[3] But the men said, “You must not go out; if we are forced to flee, they won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care; but you are worth ten thousand of us. It would be better now for you to give us support from the city.”

[4] The king answered, “I will do whatever seems best to you.”

So the king stood beside the gate while all the men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands. [5] The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, “Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.” And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

[6] The army marched into the field to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.

[7] There the army of Israel was defeated by David's men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men. [8] The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword.

[9] Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's head got

caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

[10] When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, “I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.”

[11] Joab said to the man who had told him this, “What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a warrior's belt.”

[12] But the man replied, “Even if a thousand shekels were weighed out into my hands, I would not lift my hand against the king's son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, ‘Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.’ [13] And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me.”

[14] Joab said, “I'm not going to wait like this for you.” So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. [15] And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.

[16] Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.

[17] They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.

[18] During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King's Valley as a monument to himself, for he thought, “I have no son to carry on the memory of my name.” He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

David Mourns

[19] Now Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, “Let me run and take the news to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the hand of his enemies.”

[20] “You are not the one to take the news today,” Joab told him. “You may take the news another time, but you must not do so today, because the king's son is dead.”

[21] Then Joab said to a Cushite, “Go, tell the king what you have seen.” The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.

[22] Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joab, “Come what may, please let me run behind the Cushite.”

But Joab replied, “My son, why do you want to go? You don't have any news that will bring you a reward.”

[23] He said, “Come what may, I want to run.”

So Joab said, “Run!” Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran the Cushite.

[24] While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates, the watchman went up to the roof of the gateway by the wall. As he looked out, he saw a man running alone. [25] The watchman called out to the king and reported it.

The king said, “If he is alone, he must have good news.” And the man came closer and closer.

[26] Then the watchman saw another man running, and he called down to the gatekeeper, “Look, another man running alone!”

The king said, “He must be bringing good news, too.”

[27] The watchman said, “It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok.”

“He's a good man,” the king said. “He comes with good news.”

[28] Then Ahimaaz called out to the king, “All is well!” He bowed down before the king with his face to the ground and said, “Praise be to the LORD your God! He has delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king.”

[29] The king asked, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

Ahimaaz answered, “I saw great confusion just as Joab was about to send the king's servant and me, your servant, but I don't know what it was.”

[30] The king said, “Stand aside and wait here.” So he stepped aside and stood there.

[31] Then the Cushite arrived and said, “My lord the king, hear the good news! The LORD has delivered you today from all who rose up against you.”

[32] The king asked the Cushite, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

The Cushite replied, “May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man.”

[33] The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: “O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son, my son!”

Question 12

2 Samuel 16:15-23; See above

2 Samuel 12:11-12; [11] “This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. [12] You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”

Question 13

2 Samuel 17:1-23; See above Day 5

2 Samuel 15:31; [31] Now David had been told, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.” So David prayed, “O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness.”

Sixth Day

Review 2 Samuel 13 -18 and Psalm 3

(See above scriptures)