

Bible Stories for Adults

Absalom's Rebellion

1 Samuel 13 - 18

Opening

Gathering: Give an example where someone's desire for something led to them adding evil upon evil.

Today's Focus: David's poor discipline of his sons led to their poor discernment and pursuit of their desires with evil.

Key Verses: *If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, He will bring me back... But if He says, "I am not pleased with you," then I am ready; let Him do to me whatever seems good to Him.* 2 Samuel 15:25-26

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Amnon and Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22)

What preoccupied the thoughts of David's oldest son, Amnon?

2 Samuel 13:1-2 = He was in love with Tamar, Absalom's sister - his half-sister

What advice did Amnon take from cousin Jonadab to get Tamar into his house?

2 Samuel 13:3-5 (3-10) = Pretended to be ill & asked David to send her

How did Tamar respond to Amnon's advances after making bread for him? = Amnon was eldest

2 Samuel 13:11-13 = She resisted; She'd be outcast, unmarried; He'd lose throne

How did Amnon respond to Tamar's pleas?

2 Samuel 13:14-16 (14-18) = He raped her and sent her away

How did this change Tamar's life?

2 Samuel 13:19-20 = She lived the rest of her life in disgrace

How did David and Absalom feel about what had happened?

2 Samuel 13:21-22 = David was furious, Absalom hated Amnon silently

Why didn't David respond with strong discipline for Amnon?

2 Samuel 12:9 = He had likewise sinned greatly with a woman

Absalom Kills Amnon (2 Samuel 13:23-39)

When and how did Absalom get his revenge on Amnon?

2 Samuel 13:23, 28 (23-28) = 2 yrs later, Had servants kill Amnon during visit

How was this action interpreted by Absalom's brothers and the people?

2 Samuel 13:29-31 = They thought Absalom was attempting a coup

Why would the rumor spread that Absalom was killing all of the princes? = Absalom next in line

2 Samuel 3:2-3 (3:2-5; 5:14-15) = Amnon was heir apparent, Kileab likely dead (no mentions)

Who understood what had really happened and why?

2 Samuel 13:32-33 (32-36) = Wise Jonadab, David's nephew

Where did Absalom flee?

2 Samuel 13:37-38 = To live with Talmi, king of Geshur

Who was Talmi?

2 Samuel 3:3b = Absalom's grandfather - David married Maacah for political alliance

Bible Stories for Adults

Absalom's Rebellion

Page 2

A Woman in Need (2 Samuel 14:1-17)

Did David remain bitter against Absalom?

2 Samuel 13:39 = He forgave out of love & longed to see his son

Who devised a scheme to convince David it was okay to let Absalom return?

2 Samuel 14:1-3 = Joab sent a woman with a fake story for David

What story did the woman give David?

2 Samuel 14:5-8, 11 (4-11) = One son killed another in a fight, wants son forgiven & protected

In what situation had a similar tactic been used with David?

2 Samuel 12:1-7a = God's judgment after David had Uriah killed to get Bathsheba

How did the woman use David's faith to convince him to bring Absalom back?

2 Samuel 14:13-14 (12-18) = God finds ways to bring banished people back to Him (atonement)

Was the woman correct in saying that God does not support capital punishment?

Genesis 9:6 = No, He instituted it; she was twisting words to make her point

Was the woman correct about God finding ways to reconcile the banished?

Romans 5:6-11 (Ephesians 2:13) = God reconciled us to Him through the death of His Son

Absalom Returns (2 Samuel 14:18-33)

How did David respond to this woman trying to manipulate his actions this way?

2 Samuel 14:19a (19-20) = Recognized Joab's involvement in trying to restore royal family

Did David accept the argument?

2 Samuel 14:21, 23-24 (21-24) = He brought Absalom back, but wouldn't see him

Did Absalom want to see his father?

2 Samuel 14:28-31 = Set Joab's fields on fire to get him to take him to see David

Why did Absalom want to see David so badly?

2 Samuel 14:32 = Wanted full acceptance, not exile in Jerusalem

Did Absalom receive the full forgiveness he wanted?

2 Samuel 14:33 = Yes, David accepted Absalom

King Absalom (2 Samuel 15:1-12)

As the oldest prince of Judah, could Absalom be sure he would become king?

1 Samuel 23:16-17 = David succeeded Saul, not Jonathan

How did Absalom make himself appear to the people as the heir apparent?

2 Samuel 15:1 = Rode a chariot with 50 men to run ahead (other kings did this, not David)

Did Absalom look like a king? = full hair was a sign of vigor

2 Samuel 14:25-26 = Very handsome, unblemished, long & thick hair

What did Absalom do to win the people's hearts? = Played the politician

2 Samuel 15:2-4 = Presented himself as a champion of the common people

2 Samuel 15:5-6 = Refused praise & greeted people as brothers

How long did Absalom prepare for his coup and where did he begin his reign?

2 Samuel 15:7, 10 (7-10) = 4 years, Went to Hebron, where David had started (2S 2:1-4; 5:1-5)

Were Absalom's supporters knowing accomplices to his coup? = See 2S 11:3 & 23:34 for Ah relation

2 Samuel 15:11-12 = They joined innocently, including Ahithophel (Bathsheba's grandpa)

Why was it important for Absalom to enlist Ahithophel?

2 Samuel 16:23 = God blessed Ahithophel with good advice

Bible Stories for Adults

Absalom's Rebellion

Page 3

David Flees (2 Samuel 15:13-37)

How did David react when he heard of Absalom's actions?

2 Samuel 15:13-14 (13-22) = Fled with officials to protect the city & to get outside to fight

How did the people react when they saw David and his entourage leaving?

2 Samuel 15:23, 30 = They grieved, David cried and walked barefoot (a sign of sorrow)

Why didn't David take the ark of the covenant with him?

2 Samuel 15:24-26 = He put himself in God's hands, rather than trying to take God with him

What lesson had David learned from the past? = Thought ark's presence would force God's support

1 Samuel 4:3, 10-11 = Philistines had captured the ark when Israel brought it to battle

Who's On My Side? (2 Samuel 16:1-14)

Was anyone happy to see David leave?

2 Samuel 16:5-8 = Shimei, from Saul's clan, cursed David claiming revenge for Saul

Was Shimei's cursing justified?

2 Samuel 9:3, 7 = David was kind to all of Saul's family, protected last member, Mephibosheth

Why didn't David let Abishai (Joab's brother) kill Shimei?

2 Samuel 16:9-12 (9-14) = Because Shimei may be acting from God's direction

How did Mephibosheth show his support for David during this time of crisis?

2 Samuel 16:1-4 = Decided to start his own coup, David gave M's property to servant Ziba

How did Mephibosheth later explain his actions to David?

2 Samuel 19:25-26 (24-28) = Said he was going to go with David, but Ziba betrayed him

How did David deal with these conflicting stories?

2 Samuel 19:29 = Couldn't determine who was telling the truth, told M & Z to split everything

Absalom's First Act as King (2 Samuel 16:15-23)

What was Absalom's first act to secure his kingship?

2 Samuel 16:15, 20-22 (15-22) = He lay in public with the 10 concubines David left

Who had been accused of claiming the kingdom by taking Saul's concubine?

2 Samuel 3:6-7 (6-11) = Ish-Bosheth charged Abner with this treason - Abner turned to David

How did this fulfill David's punishment for killing Uriah to get Bathsheba?

2 Samuel 12:11-12 = Nathan prophesied that this would happen

David's Spy Network (2 Samuel 17)

What kind of spy network did David set up in Jerusalem?

2 Samuel 15:27-28 = Sent Zadok & Abiathar back with ark, Used their sons as messengers

2 Samuel 15:31-37 = Hushai sent to misguide Absalom & inform Zadok & Abiathar

Was Hushai successful in frustrating Ahithophel's advice?

2 Samuel 17:6-7, 14 (1-14) = Absalom saw Hushai's advice better than Ahithophel's, God's plan

How did Ahithophel react when Absalom took Hushai's poor advice?

2 Samuel 17:23 = He hanged himself; he knew David would win, he would be punished

Did Hushai follow his role as spy for David?

2 Samuel 17:15-16 = Sent word to David through Jonathan & Ahimaaz

How were Jonathan & Ahimaaz nearly caught before getting word to David?

2 Samuel 17:17-20 = They hid from Absalom's men in a well

Where did David go after receiving Hushai's message? = Ish-Bosheth fled to Mahanaim when Saul died

2 Samuel 17:21-22, 24, 26 (21-29) = Across Jordan to Mahanaim just before Absalom crossed

Bible Stories for Adults

Absalom's Rebellion

Page 4

The Battle (2 Samuel 18:1-18)

Why didn't David march out with the troops to battle Absalom?

2 Samuel 18:2-4 (1-4) = David was the target, he must be protected

What command did David give to the troops before the battle?

2 Samuel 18:5 = Be careful with Absalom, bring him alive

How did God give victory to David? = Full of ravines, cliffs, marshes

2 Samuel 18:6-8 = 20,000 died, Forest killed more than the sword

What happened to Absalom?

2 Samuel 18:9 = Head & hair caught in tree, left hanging

Why didn't the soldier who saw this kill Absalom?

2 Samuel 18:10-13 = He had heard David's command to protect Absalom

Did Joab keep David's command and bring Absalom in safely?

2 Samuel 18:14-16 = Joab killed Absalom & sounded trumpet to end war

What monument did Joab erect for Absalom?

2 Samuel 18:17 = Piled stones over his body (mark of an evil person)

Was this the kind of monument Absalom would have wanted?

2 Samuel 18:18 = No, he had already built a pillar to himself

David's Reaction (2 Samuel 18:19-19:8)

What was David's first concern after being told of his victory?

2 Samuel 18:31-32 (19-32) = Is Absalom safe?

Did David celebrate his victory?

2 Samuel 18:33 = No, he mourned and cried for Absalom

How did this affect the people who had fought for David?

2 Samuel 19:2-3 (1-4) = Victory turned into mourning, army crept into city as losers

Why did this upset Joab so greatly?

2 Samuel 19:5-7 = It showed contempt for those who had risked their lives and fought for him

Did David understand Joab's concern?

2 Samuel 19:8 = Yes, he sat in the gateway to welcome the victors

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I wanted something so badly that I sinned to get it?
(2 Samuel 13:1-19; Matthew 5:27-30; Mark 9:43-48; James 1:14-15)
2. How have my actions reflected good within me? How have my actions reflected evil within me?
(2 Samuel 13:20-22, 23-29; Proverbs 20:11; Matthew 12:33-37; Galatians 5:16-6:10)
3. When have I shown acceptance for evil by not responding to it?
(2 Samuel 13:22; 37-39; 1 Kings 1:6; Proverbs 13:24; 1 Corinthians 5)
4. What have I done to purposely invoke praise from others?
(2 Samuel 15:1-6; Proverbs 25:27; Matthew 6:1-18; Luke 14:7-14; Romans 12:3)
5. Who do I look to for counsel and advice?
(2 Samuel 15:31; 16:20-23; 17:14; 1 Kings 12:24; 22:1-28; Psalm 73:24)