

Is the Young Man Absalom Safe?

2 Samuel 18:29 & 32

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Some of the hardest battles in life are those that take place within families. While we may wish that was not the case . . . regrettably it is!
- B. Such was true in Biblical times as well. This reality comes home to us in an ancient example wherein we see a longing and concerned father awaiting word about a battle in progress. On two occasions he asks the question “**Is the young man Absalom safe?**” 2 Samuel 18:29 & 32
1. This was a question of concern raised by a concerned father regarding the fate and welfare of his rebellious son.
 2. The answer would not be long in forthcoming.
- C. The rebellion that began in 2 Samuel 15 and continues through chapters 16 and 17, if finally put down in chapter 18.
1. Background:
 - a. After Amnon had committed incest with Tamar, her brother Absalom avenged the deed by killing his half-brother. 2 Samuel 13
 - b. Absalom fled to Geshur where he lived in exile for three years. 2 Samuel 13:38
 - c. David was talked into letting Absalom return from Geshur to Jerusalem. **2 Samuel 14:24** – And the king said, "Let him return to his own house, but do not let him see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king's face.
 - d. Upon his return to Jerusalem, these words are used to describe Absalom in **2 Samuel 14:25** – Now in all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.
 - e. Two years after his return to Jerusalem, and five years since he had seen his father, King David, Absalom pressured Joab to arrange for King David to see him. He applied pressure to the point of setting fire to Joab’s barley fields Joab got both the message and the appointment.
 - f. **2 Samuel 15:32-33** - And Absalom answered Joab, "Look, I sent to you, saying, 'Come here, so that I may send you to the king, to say, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still.'" Now therefore, let me see the king's face; but if there is iniquity in me, let him execute me."

So Joab went to the king and told him. And when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king. Then the king kissed Absalom.

2. The reunion opened the door for Absalom to move about freely and plan a revolt against his father.
 - a. The revolt was led from Hebron. Ironically, that is where David first became king as well.
 - b. David and his followers had to flee Jerusalem.
 1. **2 Samuel 15:14** – “So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, ‘Arise, and let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.’”
 2. **2 Samuel 15:17** – And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts.
 - c. Having chased his father out, Absalom moved into Jerusalem. **2 Samuel 16:15** – Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him.
 - d. After a while, Absalom pursued David and his followers. A battle ensued.
 - e. As his army was about to enter the battle, David gave some instructions to his military leaders concerning Absalom. **2 Samuel 18:5** – Now the king had commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains orders concerning Absalom.
 - f. The ensuing battle was widespread. **2 Samuel 18:8** – For the battle there was scattered over the face of the whole countryside, and the woods devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.
 - g. The death of Absalom.
 1. Head was caught in an oak tree. **2 Samuel 18:9**
 2. He was left hanging in mid air.
 3. Joab took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. I wonder if Joab was remembering his burned barley fields?
 4. Ten young men that bore Joab’s armor compassed about and smote Absalom. They threw the body into a great pit in the woods and laid a great heap of stones upon him. **2 Samuel 18:17**
- D. **2 Samuel 18:24-33** – Now David was sitting between the two gates. And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate, to the wall, lifted his eyes and looked, and there was a man, running alone.
- 25 Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And he came rapidly and drew near.
- 26 Then the watchman saw another man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "There is another man, running alone!" And the king said, "He also brings news."

27 So the watchman said, "I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said, "He is a good man, and comes with good news."

28 So Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "All is well!" Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the king, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king!"

29 The king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant and me your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what it was about."

30 And the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still.

31 Just then the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "There is good news, my lord the king! For the LORD has avenged you this day of all those who rose against you."

32 And the king said to the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" So the Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise against you to do harm, be like that young man!"

33 Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son Absalom -- my son, my son Absalom -- if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!"

- E. **“Is the young man Absalom safe?”** Obviously the answer to David’s twice asked but once answered question was “No.” The question for our study is this . . . What led to Absalom’s untimely death.

PART OF THE WRONG IS DAVID’S

A. David’s sin with Bathsheba is recorded in 2 Samuel 11.

B. There would be consequences. **2 Samuel 12:7-11** – Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.

8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!

9 Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.

10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

11 Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.

- C. God's judgment against David through Nathan the prophet set in motion the tragic events that led to the events we have noted.
- D. There is a beckoning lesson here . . . Parents, our children's lives are going to be helped or hurt by the things we do and the lives we live.
- E. Yes, part of the wrong is David's. He contributed to the untimely death of his son.

ABSALOM'S FRIENDS WERE AT FAULT

- A. Without followers, Absalom would not have been a leader.
 - 1. His friends and followers were a stumbling block to him.
 - 2. Without them he could not have done all that he did. They were there to urge him on.
- B. **1 Corinthians 15:33** – “Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits.”
- C. **ILLUSTRATION:** Bro. Leo Snow's dear friend that became an alcoholic. “We moved next door . . . We liked the people . . . And they taught me to drink.”
- D. Jesus said in **Matthew 18:6** – “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”
- E. Parents should be concerned as to the type of people their sons and daughters associate with.
 - 1. Influence is strong.
 - 2. Peer pressure is strong
 - 3. Your children may be in more danger than you think.
- F. Absalom's friends were at fault in Absalom's untimely death.

ABSALOM WAS AT FAULT

- A. It is always easy to blame others for our own failures . . . But not all the blame Can be laid on others. Absalom did not have to be the way he was . . . He was the way he was by his own choice.
- B. His attitude was, “I am going to live the way I want to.” He did . . . And that's the way he died.
- C. We can blame others for the way we are and the way in which we live . . . But we are the way we are because we have chosen to be . . . Or, because we did not try to choose another manner of life.
- D. Absalom, you chose to live that way and that is the way you died.

CONCLUSION:

A. From the events that transpired between David and Absalom, we can make the following observations:

1. Parents can contribute to both the **upbringing** and the **downfall** of their children.
 - a. To both their successes . . . Or their failures.
 - b. To their turning out right . . . Or to their turning out wrong.
 - c. To their living right . . . Or to their delinquency.
2. Just because once can persuade a large number of others to go along with them, does not make their cause right. **Might does not make right!**
3. Parents can be hurt and hurt deeply by the manner in which their children live.
4. In spite of failures and disappointments in their children . . . Parents are still parents, and parents can still love them.
5. Loving those who make themselves our enemies.
6. Forgiveness is possible and can and should be granted.
7. The young die too. Be prepared!
8. The principle of seedtime and harvest . . . Sowing and reaping.
 - a. **Galatians 6:7** – “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”
 - b. Absalom sowed rebellion . . . Reaped rebellion . . . And died in rebellion.
 - c. He died in rebellion to:
 - Himself . . . His own soul
 - Family . . . Without reconciliation
 - God . . . Without repentance
9. Children may turn out the very opposite of the way their parents brought them up.
10. You **may leave your parent’s house . . . But you will never leave their heart.**

B. **ILLUSTRATION:** During the horse and buggy days, there was a man who attended the services. After the services were over, he would stop by the tavern and get drunk. He went to the preacher and said, “I don’t want to do this. How can I stop?” The preacher asked where he hitched his horse. He replied, “to the hitching post on the other side of the tavern.” The preacher said, “Change your hitching post.” Many of us may need to change our hitching post.

C. **“Is the young man Absalom safe?”** He never is . . . Let’s help him.

D. Are you living in rebellion?

1. Are you living in rebellion to your **parents**? Reconcile with them!
2. Are you living in rebellion to **yourself**? You can change if you really want to.
3. Are you living in rebellion to your **community**? You can do better.

4. Are you living in rebellion to **God**? You can repent and obey the gospel.
 5. Are you living in rebellion to the **church and this congregation**? You can repent and come home.
- E. The question we began with was, “**Is the young man Absalom safe?**” But now, the question we want to close with is, “**Are YOU safe?**”
- F. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**