

## Sunday Night Message

June 21, 2020

### 2 Samuel 15 – The Rebellion of Absalom

Topics – David; Absalom; rebellion

Series – 2 Samuel

#### Introduction (v. 1)

We have been studying the life and reign of King David and have observed some of the problems that have taken place within his family. In chapter thirteen, we discovered that Amnon who was one of David's sons raped one of David's daughters, named Tamar. They were actually half-brother and sister, which does not make it any less vile. Tamar's full brother Amnon learns about how his sister was treated, and plots the murder of his older brother. After two years, Absalom finally goes through with his plan and kills Amnon for what he did to Tamar.

Amnon then fears punishment from his father David, and flees to Geshur, which is in Syria, and was also the place where his mother was from. She was the King of Geshur's daughter. He remains there for three years. In chapter fourteen, Joab intervenes on behalf of Absalom and secures permission from David to bring him back to Jerusalem, but doesn't see him for another two years.

When we left David and Absalom at the end of chapter fourteen there had been a full reconciliation between them. David agrees to see his son and it seems on the surface that all was well.

However, in chapter fifteen, we will learn that there was war in the heart of Absalom:

*"The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords." (Psalm 55:21)*

Absalom had a bitterness brewing inside of him that ultimately came to fruition with a full blown rebellion against his father complete with a nation-wide conspiracy and attempted coup.

Practical Point – We cannot see what is going on inside of people's hearts sometimes. It may seem that all is well, but inside there may be bitterness and animosity.

#### I. The Seduction of the Citizens by Absalom (vs. 1 - 13)

Verse 1 – preparing horses and chariots and men establishes that Absalom had full privileges; he had full access to the military, which means that he was not under suspicion. It also means that he was preparing to do something.

Verses 2 – 6 – He convinced the people that he would be a better king than his father; that he cared more about their needs. It may be that David was somewhat negligent in the personal care of his flock. The king would often be seated in the gate of the city where he could help his people with their problems, and settle their disputes. David was apparently not there, and neither did he have anybody "deputed" in his place to help the people. Absalom saw a weakness and he exploited it, and one by one, he seduced the hearts of the citizens of Israel away from David.

Practical Note – The Devil will often expose and exploit a real weakness. We need to make sure that we are on our guard. David was probably very diligent at one time in helping his people, but now he is perhaps a little negligent.

Husbands – don't be negligent in keeping the heart of your wife – an Absalom may be lurking about trying to steal it away.

Parents – don't be negligent in keeping the hearts of your children – there may be an Absalom out there who will be able to win them over.

Another thought – your enemies will be able to easily spot your flaws, and when they do, you need to acknowledge them and work on them.

Verse 7 – “after forty years” – the theologians will tell you that this is a copyist error, and should be four years, meaning that four years after the reconciliation Absalom moved on his plan to overthrow his dad. However, I am a King James Bible believer, and I don't believe there are any errors in the Bible. Having said that, I cannot explain the forty years. It cannot be Absalom's age as David had only reigned a total of forty years: seven in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:5). Absalom was born in Hebron (2 Samuel 3:2 – 3; 1 Chronicles 3:1 – 2). It is possible that it could have been forty years after David was anointed by Samuel, but I can't be sure.

Verses 8 – 13 – Absalom completely deceives David.

Note – we are often blind to the faults of our children. Also, I am sure somebody close to David may have had suspicions about what was going on; yet, it seems that nobody felt secure enough to go to David and tell him what they suspected.

These verses state “the conspiracy was strong.” There were many co-conspirators. There should have been plenty of evidence out there. Perhaps, God veiled the eyes of all that should have been watching because of what He prophesied through Nathan:

"Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." (2 Samuel 12:11-12)

## **II. The Surrender of the City by David (vs. 14 – 18)**

David surrenders Jerusalem because he does not want Absalom to attack him there. It would destroy the city, and bring harm to everybody in it. Instead, he chooses to go out to the wilderness of Gilead (Mahanaïm) and force Absalom to chase him there (See maps below).

Notice in verse 18, David has a lot of people following him out of the city, including many people who were not Israelites. David's leadership inspired loyalty.

## **III. The Selection of Sides by David's Former Friends (vs. 19 – 37)**

### **A. Ittai the Soldier (vs. 19 – 23)**

Ittai was from Gath, the city of Goliath. You will recall that David spent some time in exile in the land of the Philistines, including the City of Gath (1 Samuel 21 and 27). Apparently, David had made some friends while he was there. A friendship that was strong enough to cause Ittai and his men to die defending David.

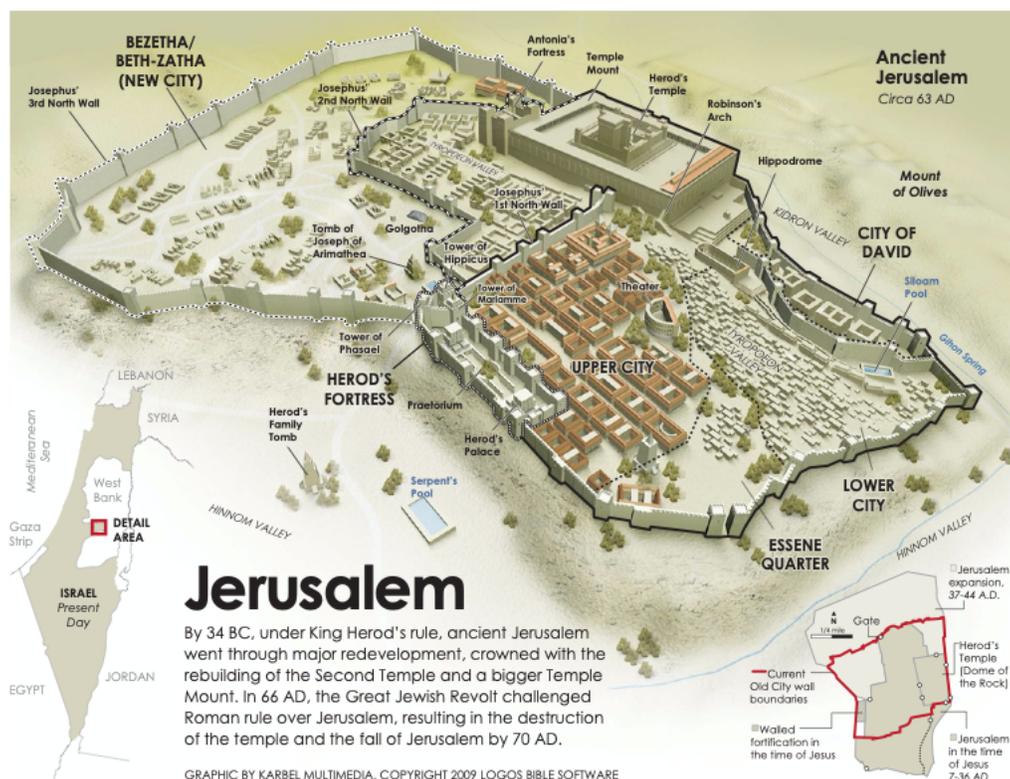
B. Zadok the Seer (vs. 24 – 30)

Zadok and Abiathar were the priests. Abiathar was the only one that escaped from King Saul's slaughter of the City of Nob. David took him in, and told him that he would be "in safeguard" as long as he was with David. He wanted to stay with David, but David asked him to stay in Jerusalem and be his eyes and ears. Abiathar would not be considered a threat as he was a priest.

C. Ahithophel the Snake (vs. 12 & 31)

Notice verse 31 – Not all of David's former friends were faithful. Ahithophel was a traitor.

D. Hushai the Spy (vs. 32 – 37)



## Absalom's Rebellion

- David's Flees to Mahanaim
- Absalom Anointed in Hebron
- Absalom's Route to Gilead

