

Absalom

Absalom was the third son of David, with a foreign mother, Maacah, daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur, [2 Samuel 3:3].

Absalom's handsome looks was shared with the good looks of his sister Tamar.

Tamar's good looks was the cause of her being assaulted by Amnon, David's firstborn son by another mother, [2 Samuel 13:1-18].

When Absalom learned of this incident, he avenged Tamar by killing his half-brother Amnon. This causes David to be very angry and Absalom fled to Geshur, [2 Samuel 13:19-38].

The words that God inspired the prophet Nathan to warn David after his sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, [2 Samuel 12:11-12] was beginning to happen to David and his family.

A father's mistakes are often reflected in the lives of his children.

In Absalom, David saw a bitter replay and eventually amplification of many of his own sins.

God forgave David, but He did not cancel the consequences of his sins.

David was horrified to see his son Absalom's strengths run wild without the controls that God had built into his own life by the influence of the Holy Spirit in his life.

Absalom would have made an excellent king, and people loved him.

But Absalom lacked the inner character and control needed in a good leader; his appearance, skill and position did not make up for his lack of personal integrity.

David's sins took him away from the Creator God, but true repentance brought him back into a close relationship with God, [Psalms 51:1-17].

In contrast, Absalom sinned and continued to sin without repentance.

If we are like Absalom, unable to say *"I was wrong, I need forgiveness,"* we are also on a *"fast track"* towards self-destruction.

God offers forgiveness, but we will not experience that forgiveness until we, like David, genuinely admit our sins and confess them to the Creator God.

After three years of exile and a further two years of banishment from court, David received his son Absalom back into favour, but Absalom repaid this love that David had for his son by a plot against his throne, [2 Samuel 15:1-15].

Another weakness that Absalom had was to listen to wrong advice. We have an example of this in the advice given by Anithopheli, [2 Samuel 16:20-23; 2 Samuel 17:1-14].

It is good to receive a lot of advice, [Proverbs 13:10; Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 15:22] but a wise person evaluates the advice they are receiving against what we find as wisdom in the Word of God, the Christian Bible.

The third part of Nathan's prophecy now came true, [2 Samuel 12:11].

It was the taking of wrong advice that led to the defeat of Absalom and his army by David.

2 Samuel 18:9-17 [New King James] *“Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth. And the mule which was under him went on. Now a certain man saw it and told Joab, and said, ‘I just saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth tree!’ So Joab said to the man who told him, ‘You just saw him! And why did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten shekels of silver and a belt.’ But the man said to Joab, ‘Though I were to receive a thousand shekels of silver in my hand, I would not raise my hand against the king’s son. For in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Beware lest anyone touch the young man Absalom!” Otherwise I would have dealt falsely against my own life. For there is nothing hidden from the king, and you yourself would have set yourself against me.’ Then Joab said, ‘I cannot linger with you.’ And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom’s heart, while he was still alive in the midst of the terebinth tree. And ten young men who bore Joab’s armour surrounded Absalom, and struck and killed him. So Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel. For Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom and cast him into a large pit in the woods, and laid a very large heap of stones over him. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his tent.”*

This describes the ignominious death of Absalom.

2 Samuel 18:33 [New King James] *“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!’”*

This shows the love that David had for Absalom, the love that Absalom had rejected. Also **Psalms 3:1-8** expresses David’s thoughts during this period when he fled from his rebellious son Absalom.

Absalom’s rebellion against God’s plan for his servant David shows that any such rebellion will fail sooner or later.