

2 Samuel 15:1-6
Richard Cimino
Monday at Metro
August 3, 2009

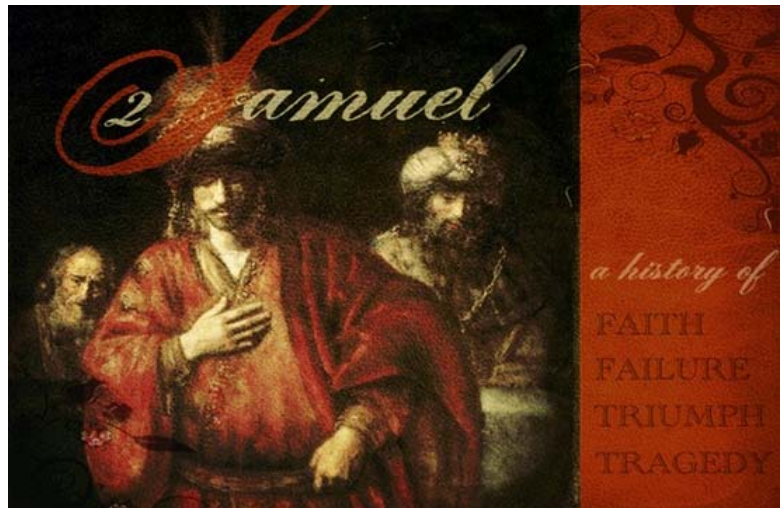
2 Samuel 15:1-6

Related Topics: David; Absalom; Pride;
Rebellion; Pride and Selfishness of Man

REVIEW

Chapter 14 dealt with Absalom returning to the palace of king David after murdering his half-brother Amnon and fleeing to Geshur for three years. Joab — the captain over David's troops — thought it was in the best interests of David and in the best interests of the nation of Israel to get

Absalom back to the palace by any means necessary. It made perfect sense in terms of political expediency. This is a perfect example of man's ways being different from God's ways.



Prov 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death

God does not see things merely in terms of political expedience. God is concerned with getting things right in a man's heart. Joab's appeal to David for "political" reconciliation was framed on mere emotional response to tragedy and injustice. David responded and rendered judgment on the basis of mere emotion.

NOTE:

David had legitimate cause to be EMOTIONAL in light of the moral mess in his household. A daughter raped — A son murdered — A murdering son in exile. He was a man primed to be moved by emotion. But we must always remember that we can not LIVE by emotions — nor base DECISIONS on what we feel. That part of our humanity is depraved.

Absalom was finally allowed to return to the palace — but David refused to see him for 2 years. The two years only served to harden Absalom's heart. The heat of trial or adversity will harden or soften. The outcome depends on the substance exposed to it.

ILLUSTRATION: WAX or CLAY in sun.

2 Samuel 14:33 ...So he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king,

DON'T MISS THIS — Absalom pretends submission to David's authority. But his heart was full of calculated designs to secure the throne for himself. We will see this in just a moment.

2 Samuel 14:33 ...and the king kissed Absalom.

KEY OBSERVATION:

David offered Absalom forgiveness without any repentance or resolution of the wrong. As we will see tonight

this only lead to a further outbreak of sin.

KEY POINT:

David was willing to have the kiss of PEACE without the TRUTH. He failed Absalom – and he failed Israel.

QUOTE: A.W. Pink –

only paved the way for Absalom's open rebellion.... Deal tenderly with evil, and it will, assuredly, rise to a head and crush you in the end.

CHAPTER 15

2 Samuel 15:1 After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

DON'T MISS THIS:

CHAPTER 14 ends with Absalom bowing before David in apparent humility. BUT – CHAPTER 15 begins with a display of SELF-EXALTATION. Absalom did not want the chariot for speed – He wanted to make a STATEMENT! This was all about projecting the IMAGE of being an extraordinary man – a man of power and influence. What a stark contrast between Absalom and his dad – who would be marked by God as the greatest king in Israel's history.

2 Samuel 7:18-19 Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? And yet this was a small thing..."

CRUCIAL LESSON:

The world values self-promotion. The world looks for such men or women to hire and to lead them. God values exactly the opposite – God places a premium on humility. All we need to do to prove this is to look at Jesus.

- Look at the divinely designed circumstances of His entrance into the world. No room for him in the Cataluma – born in a stable and laid in a stone trough used to feed animals.
- His upbringing - in the lowly town of Nazareth as the son of a carpenter.
- His entrance into public ministry – No big media blitz. No chariot with 50 men walking before Him. He stood in line with the rest of Israel to be baptized by his cousin John in the Judean wilderness – who happened to look like a wild man because he was living in the wilderness – wearing clothes made out of camel skin – and would lived on a diet of locusts and honey!!
- Look at His conduct as God among mere men -
Matthew 20:28 I did not come to BE served – but to SERVE and to give My life as a ransom.
- Washing the feet of His disciples the night before His death on the cross.
- Look at the circumstances of His death –
He didn't summon legions of angels to defend him in the Garden of Gethsemene. He didn't hire the dream team defense lawyers and make a public spectacle of the injustice being perpetrated against Him. He allowed men to spit in His face – even though He held together the very molecular structure of that spit. He allowed men to beat Him and drive nails through His hands and feet even though He held together the very molecular structure of those fists and those nails. He endured the most humiliating form of capital punishment known to man. And even in His death He was buried in a BORROWED tomb.

THIS is the CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE — The KING OF GLORY!

The apostle Paul summarized Jesus like this —

Philippians 2:3-9 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

4Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

SO — When God is looking for:

- A man or woman that He can use for HIS glory
- A leader who will exercise authority on some level in HIS Kingdom

He is looking for HUMILITY. We can MEASURE the degree to which the World has influenced the Church by looking at the degree to which the Church tolerates or even appreciates SELF-PROMOTION and SELF-EXALTATION.

We can MEASURE the degree to which the World has influenced us INDIVIDUALLY by looking at the degree to which we tolerate or even exercise SELF-PROMOTION and SELF-EXALTATION.

ONE LAST THOUGHT HERE —

There was no doubt there was a huge outlay of finances in Absalom's procession. The extravagance of Absalom was spent on the exaltation of self and accomplishing self-serving plans.

BY CONTRAST —

The only time David was extravagant was in regards to the WORSHIP of God! He spared no expense in furnishing any and all resources that translated into the exaltation of God!

2 Samuel 15:2-6 2And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," 3Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you." 4Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice." 5And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. 6Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

DON'T MISS THIS

CHAPTER 14 ends with Absalom bowing before David in apparent submission. BUT — CHAPTER 15 begins with

calculated acts of rebellion. There never was any genuine reconciliation between David and Absalom because there was never any genuine confession and repentance from Absalom.

LET'S WALK THROUGH THIS.

2 Samuel 15:2 And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate....

EARLY! – EVERY DAY!

People who are at the top - demonstrate that kind of dedication and commitment. But Absalom's commitment and dedication were being directed to taking the throne from his dad and making himself king.

QUOTE: Joseph Parker "Preaching through the Bible" Volume IV p. 178

2 Samuel 15:2 And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate.

THE GATE was a very important social and political place in that day and culture.

- It was the War Room where strategies of war were set.
Hence the words of Jesus – The gates of hell shall not prevail = the strategies of hell would not prevail....
- It was the Court House of a city – People came there to do legal business or to have legal cases tried.
REMEMBER – Book of Ruth - Boaz went to the city gate to settle the issue of redeeming the field of Elimelech. This gate in particular was the Supreme Court of the land.

LOOK AT HIS CALCULATED STRATEGY and LEARN!

At EVERY STEP Absalom plots a successful overthrow by appealing to the lowest in man!

FIRST – Absalom appealed to the PRIDE of the people. By way of the chariot and 50 men Absalom very deliberately – and very subtly said –

- I'm the kind of king you WANT
- I'm the kind of king you NEED!
- You are WORTHY of a king who LOOKS kingly.

Even in today's political world we hear the words - "Oh he LOOKS so presidential!" They saw this guy with his chariot and entourage and they're thinking – We don't want a humble king – we feel better about ourselves with a king who rides a chariot and has FIFTY men running before him.

FAST FORWARD to the Sunday before Passover 32 AD when the King of Glory entered Jerusalem. Zechariah predicted the scene hundreds of years earlier –

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Within a week – CRUCIFY HIM! The world that lives by the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life is not drawn to a humble, crucified King. THAT is why it is foolish to try SELL a crucified King to the world. THAT is why the work of evangelism is totally dependent upon the POWER of the Gospel and the Person and Power of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4:6 (KJV) For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our

*hearts, to
give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the
face of Jesus Christ.*

THAT is the only way a man or woman bows to the King on the Cross.

SECOND — Absalom appealed to the SELF-CENTEREDNESS and SELFISHNESS of man. THAT is why he made his way EVERY day and VERY EARLY to the courthouse. Because he knew that the man who had to go to court would be completely wrapped up in SELF-CONCERNS. That person is concerned with how much time it will cost him. It doesn't matter who else has a valid case to be heard.

What matters is that HIS case is heard FIRST — That HIS is the FIRST case on the docket.
What matters is that HIS case is heard and that without ANY DELAY — He doesn't want to be told that he is missing documents or that the other party has asked for the case to be delayed.

Absalom also understood that the person who has to go to court is concerned with how the outcome will EFFECT HIM — not the other guy. When you go to court the ONLY fair judgment is the one that rules in his own favor.

It was there at the Gate of the city that Absalom could present himself as the ONLY one who is interested in their case

It was there at the Gate of the city the Absalom could present himself as the ONLY one who could help them achieve their desired outcome.

2 samuel 15:4 ...Oh that I were judge in the land!

CRUCIAL:

His listeners knew exactly what those words meant.

They understood that Absalom was essentially saying — Oh that I were KING! BECAUSE in that culture the king was seen as the highest judge in the land. THIS WAS NOT ONLY a blatant expression of his ambition — It was an attack upon his father, the king.

Essentially saying — He would be a better king than his father

- Essentially saying — His father had failed them as king in regards to their court cases.
I can't believe that my dad doesn't care enough about you to come to the gate and isn't here to hear your case!! BUT if I were king.....
- The implication is that if he were king — he would personally hear ALL of their cases and would give just outcomes.
- He is essentially saying that if he were king EVERYONE wins — because everyone who has to go to court wants to win.

QUOTE: W.G. Blaikie The Second Book of Samuel p.219-220

CRUCIAL:

How do the patently hollow and self serving plans of the narcissist succeed?

They succeed because they are predicated upon the reality that — apart from the grace of God — all men are hollow and self serving.

2 Samuel 15:6So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

*REALITY SAYS – That only ONE party in a court case wins -
But that reality is lost on two hollow, self-serving
people.*

The ONLY thing they hear is that their personal ambitions and wants will be realized if they will make this man king – despite the reality someone is going to come up on the short end of the stick.

2 Samuel 15:6So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

QUOTE: W.G. Blaikie The Second Book of Samuel p. 220

CHECK THIS OUT –

Absalom was able to steal the hearts of the people away from David and divide David's kingdom without saying any specific thing that could condemn him. If someone objected Absalom could say – "Tell me one specific thing that I have said or done." Absalom actually did all of this in such a way that he could say – "I'm helping David to deal with all this discontent"

While the reality was that Absalom was actually promoting discontent.

I'M SURE THAT FOR MOST PEOPLE the pride and the ploys of Absalom immediately resonate in regards to politics whether in the government or in the workplace. But the great tragedy is that Absalom was doing this in Israel – Who time and again are referred to BY God as HIS PEOPLE. He especially told those ruling over Israel that they were ruling HIS PEOPLE.

The tragedy of Absalom continues even to this day because the PRIDE and PLOYS of Absalom are still alive and well in the Church. It is tragic and embarrassing because as bad as Absalom looks to us – that is how bad we look to the unbelieving world that watches and waits to find a reason to discount the claims of Jesus.

In churches there are people who, Like Absalom –

Present a carefully cultivated image – Of how spiritual they are – the special revelation they have from God – how early or how much they pray – their past missions or sacrifices in the service of God.

RESPONSE – "Wow – we need a guy like this – this is the kind of guy that makes us look good.

- Like Absalom – They are committed to their agenda and work hard at achieving their agenda.
- Like Absalom – They know where to position themselves in a congregation
- Like Absalom – They look for troubled people
People who have a case they want to state. People who feel that their gift and ministry is neglected in the church.
- Like Absalom – They reach out to troubled people.

REMEMBER – Absalom would call out to them. Once they identify them they make sure they have all the appropriate contact information (e-mail /cell phone / facebook / my space). They take a personal interest in the troubled person. Tell me your story (What city are you from?). Then they sympathize with the person.

Wow – Sounds like you're the real deal – the ministry sounds really legit (your case is good and right). They leave the troubled person more troubled.

Absalom – "There's no deputy of the king to hear you." In church-speak that translates as:

What are you gonna do?

The way things exist in this place there's just no structure in the church here to get behind you and your ministry . Without directly attacking the pastor or leadership they promise that they would do better.

Bro – if I had a say I'd get behind you and what you want

to do in a heartbeat.

Then they pretend humility and love.

QUOTE: Joseph Parker "Preaching through the Bible" Volume IV p. 180

CLOSING

So here is David —

- The greatest king in the history of Israel
- A soldier of incredible skill and courage
- A brilliant poet and musician
- A prophet as well as king
- And the deliverer of his country,

How is it that THIS MAN ends up driven from his throne by his own son and abandoned by the people he had delivered and defended?

- 1.) David's sins had diminished his standing in a very real way
- 2.) Because people are forgetful and fickle (Jesus "followers" went from Hosanna to Crucify Him)
- 3.) Because Absalom was a master of manipulation and was driven to employ his every skill to achieve his ends.

QUOTE: Adam Clarke — Absalom

*seemed to stand nearest to the throne; but his sin was,
that he sought it during his father's life, and
endeavoured to dethrone him in order to sit in his place.*

How different from his father, David — who was ANOINTED and CALLED by God to be king over Israel. Yet he never expended a moment of time or energy trying to depose the man who had long been rejected by God and sat on the throne as a usurper.

- 4.) Because David had to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, and be rejected like the Son of David would later be rejected.

THANK GOD FOR THE CROSS OF JESUS!

Copyrights:

- The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles,
a division of Good News Publishers
All rights reserved.

   Share

Edit this entry?