Absalom For King!

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday November 20th, 2022

Text: II Samuel 15:1-11

### Intro

1. Lessons that can be learned from an election year is that division occurs among a nation.
   1. Our country is divided!
   2. Jesus once said, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12:25)
2. We have studied the effects of division in the church: the world asks, “Why are there so many churches?”
   1. Division should not exist! (I Corinthians 1:10)
   2. Jesus prayed for the church to be united as one as Jesus and the Father are One (John 17:20-22)
3. Often division occurs because of bitterness.
   1. Embittered souls are angry, frustrated, and selfish. They may see the truth but they harden their hearts.
   2. Unwilling to lay aside their selfish, stubborn pride, they attempt to disguise and hide their poisoned hearts filled with malice.
   3. **Hebrews 12:15:** See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.
   4. **Ephesians 4:31:** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.
   5. **I Peter 2:1:** Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander…
4. These passages remind me of Absalom, the son of King David and the crown prince of Israel.
5. Absalom:
   1. Absalom comes back to Jerusalem from several years in exile after having murdered his own step-brother *(II Samuel 13).*
   2. When he returns, he sets out to undermine the reign of his popular father. His plan unfolds in the opening verses of II Samuel 15, and by the time the chapter is over, King David is fleeing from his city and home.
6. We read in II Samuel 15:6: “… so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.”
7. How did Absalom succeed in becoming king and stealing the hearts of the men of Israel?

#### He expressed his sympathy for them (II Samuel 15:4)

* 1. Absalom was handsome and popular
     1. **II Sam. 14:25:** This was a man with **“Fabio’s hair!”** He was known for his beautiful hair. Most people get a haircut and then have the hair thrown away.
     2. **II Sam. 14:26:** But not Absalom! Can you imagine weighing your hair after your yearly haircut? This man was vain. The hair from his yearly haircut weighed in at about 5 pounds. That’s a lot of hair! He was so proud of his hair—he used it to gain popularity.
     3. **II Sam. 15:1:** Absalom hired 50 men as bodyguards, and these men would run around with him, making him look important. There are people today who hire an entourage to make themselves look important, to look special. Absalom did it first!
  2. II Sam. 15:2-4
     1. Absalom told the people that he felt sorry for them. “I feel for you!”
     2. We all like to be pitied. We like those who show concern for our needs. Absalom played on this.
     3. The handsome, popular crown prince not only paid attention to those who passed through but showed sympathy to their plight!
  3. Judas once demonstrated such hypocrisy:
     1. **John 12:4-6:** When Mary had anointed the feet of Jesus with a costly perfume and wiped his feet with her hair (12:1-3), Judas said it was a waste since it should have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor.
     2. But he didn’t say this from the compassion of his heart but out of selfish greed since he stole from the treasury box (which he kept).
  4. Hypocrisy was used to divide a nation and it is often employed to divide the Lord’s church (I Timothy 4:1-3).
  5. Saints are to put aside hypocrisy and demonstrate true sympathy for one another – Colossians 3:12-14

#### While lamenting their predicament, he told the people that he could not help them unless he was in charge (II Samuel 15:4)

* 1. II Samuel 15:4
     1. In effect, he said, “I really wish I could help you, but my hands are tied. Of course, if things were different, if I were king, if you were following me rather than my father, David, then I could help you. But as things stand now, there is nothing I can do.”
  2. Absalom was the crown prince, the heir to the throne of his father David!
     1. Here he is telling them, “I wish I could help you but I am not in the right position!” “I’m not king yet.”
     2. He is starting the seeds of rebellion (division), letting them know things could be better for them if he were king! *(Campaign promises)*
     3. His father is still alive *(it’s not an election year)*
     4. He tells them what they want to hear: “If I was in charge, I could help you!” “Anoint me king and I will make your wildest dreams come true!”
  3. Division occurs in the church when people listen to what they want to hear instead of the truth.
     1. Paul warned that men would leave the church (unity) to hear and teach things that they desired to hear (Selfishness would lead to factions)! (I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 4:3-4).
  4. Saints are to stay loyal to the Lord and His word and not seek teachers in accordance with our own desires – I Timothy 4:6!

#### He made the people believe he was seeking their best interest (II Samuel 15:4-5)

* 1. This made the people want to take up Absalom's cause.
     1. They had been snared by empty promises. There was no word from God. There was no divine authority for Absalom's actions. It was all done by playing on emotions with enticing words.
     2. Absalom was only interested in Absalom. He was not concerned about the plight of the people. He made them think he was in order to win their favor.
     3. This is the way “evil men and imposters” (II Timothy 3:13) work. They will make you believe they are helping you. In reality, they are merely using you to obtain their goals of self-promotion.
  2. Absalom was a cunning (“smarmy”) politician (as slick as they come).
     1. He did not say, “Hey, I’m getting ready to overthrow my popular father as king, so I need you to come join my side.” People would have never signed on for something like that!
     2. He said, “I only want what’s best for you!”
     3. **II Samuel 15:4-5:** He put himself in just the right spot at just the right time of day just as men were coming to the king to settle their disputes, “Oh, I wish I could be judge! I know what I would decide in your case!”
     4. Absalom would then end each meeting with a kiss. We talk about politicians kissing babies. Absalom would have loved that!
     5. **II Samuel 15:6:** “In this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.”
     6. **Rebellion would occur and the division of the nation of God’s people!**
  3. David wrote of such men…
     1. **Psalm 5:9:** There is nothing reliable in what they say; Their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; They flatter with their tongue.
  4. There are those who creep into the church with insidious motives and flattering speech!
     1. **Jude 1:4, 12-16:** Jude describes ungodly men who sneak in unnoticed whose motives are selfish, whose destination is judgment and darkness, but cause harm to the church.
     2. He says of them in **Jude 16:** These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.
     3. Deceivers with smooth speech!
     4. **II Peter 2:18-19:** Peter says these men who are reserved for judgment offer empty promises to entice saints back into the world: They promise freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption!
  5. Saints are to be known in the world for their godly sincerity! – II Corinthians 1:12

#### He made the people feel important (II Samuel 15:4, 11)

1. The handsome, popular crown prince of Israel paid attention to the people’s problems and then took their hand (instead of letting them bow to him) and then kissed them! He was showing them that he was like them, “I’m your servant!”
   * 1. Absalom, either at 40 years old, or at the end of a 4-year period after returning home *(It’s a difficult passage to translate),* used deceit to get King David to give him permission to go to Hebron (15:7-9).
     2. Hebron is significant in a few ways:
        1. It is there that David was anointed king over Judah – II Samuel 2:3-4
        2. It is also there that David was anointed king over all Israel – II Samuel 5:3
        3. Absalom was born there – II Samuel 2:2-3 (He was a prince of Geshur also, being born to the princess of Geshur, the daughter of King Talmai).
     3. Absalom “invited” them – II Samuel 15:10-11.
        1. Imagine the honor of being “invited” to Hebron by the king's son!
        2. He courted and wooed them with good words and fair speeches.
        3. 200 hundred men went to him from Jerusalem but they “went innocently, and they did not know anything,” meaning he was deceitful.
        4. The people chose Absalom, the slick, long-haired, promise-making, baby-kissing politician!
        5. He was anointed king at Hebron (15:12, 13; 19:10)
2. David wrote of such an enemy…
   * 1. **Psalm 55:21:** “His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords.”
3. Such men creep into the church for their own selfish motives!
   * 1. **Romans 16:17-18:** “Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.”
4. Saints are to genuinely esteem others as more important than ourselves and look out for them, not out of selfishness but out of humility – Philippians 2:3-4

## Conclusion

1. Absalom's innocent dupes were led as lambs to the slaughter.
   1. Chaos and corruption, rebellion and division resulted.
   2. They had been deceived by a clever, shrewd politician.
   3. Absalom’s problem was hypocrisy – He deceived the people into making him king!
   4. Absalom’s rebellion ultimately failed, and he died a humiliating death (II Sam. 18).
   5. Remember that long, flowing hair? His source of pride was his undoing and brought about his downfall! (II Samuel 18:9, 14: He died in disgrace!)
2. Such conniving men still work among churches today:
   1. **Jude 16:** “These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.”
   2. Beware of their snare!
3. Let us be genuine people of God who serve Him and one another in sincerity!
   1. **Philippians 1:9-11:** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
   2. **I Peter 1:22-23:** Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.
4. Let us be the people of God who strive for unity and not division!
   1. **I Corinthians 1:10:** Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.
5. **Don’t let anyone persuade or deceive you from serving Jesus, the rightful King and Lord!**
6. If not a Christian, you can be if you repent and be baptized! *(Acts 2:38)*
7. If you are a child of God with sin in your life, you can be forgiven if you repent! *(I John 1:9)*
8. Whatever your request, let it be known ***NOW*** while we stand and sing!