

## 20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning

### Week 24 (June 5-11, 2016)

David could not have imagined that his one-night stand with Bathsheba would have initiated such a string of tragedies. Think about his story before you willfully disobey the known will of God.

**Sunday**, June 5 (read 2 Samuel 15:1-6)

*Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (2 Samuel 15:6)*

Absalom must have written the playbook for today's political candidates, because his agenda is selfish from the start. He gets up early each morning and sits outside the city to greet those entering to speak to the king. He assures each one that his/her claims are valid, but he also states that the king's representatives are too busy to talk with them (v. 1-3). Then he plants the deceptive seed that if only **he** could be appointed judge, everyone would receive a fair hearing (v. 4). Because of his strikingly good looks (14:25-26), his smooth talk and his affectionate kisses, Absalom steals the hearts of the men of Israel (v. 5-7). Now he is ready for the second part of his devious plan, as we will see in tomorrow's devotion.

**Monday**, June 6 (read 2 Samuel 15:7-12)

*The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron. (2 Samuel 15:9)*

In his younger years, David did nothing before he spent time in prayer. At this age, however, he is vulnerable to the requests of his wicked son, Absalom, because he has not sought the Lord's wisdom and guidance (v. 7-9). The king's son sends word throughout Israel informing them that he is about to become their new king (v. 10). The two hundred men who accompany Absalom from Jerusalem are not aware of the young man's deceptive plan (v. 11). Perhaps the last straw for King David is the fact that his personal adviser, Ahithophel joins the conspiracy as well (v. 12). The stage is set for a showdown between father and son! We will see David's response when we read further tomorrow.

**Tuesday**, June 7 (read 2 Samuel 15:13-31)

*Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O Lord, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness." (2 Samuel 15:31)*

David hears that "the hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom," so he flees out of the city before his son arrives with his followers (v. 13-18). David tries to encourage a newcomer to go back home, but the loyal soldier opts to stay with David. Later, the king will appoint this man to a leadership position (18:2). The citizens of Jerusalem are brokenhearted over the exit of their beloved king (v. 23). The Levites bring the Ark of the Covenant to David, but the king sends it back to its dwelling place until God's will can be determined (v. 24-26). He sends Zadok the priest along with the ark and assigns him the task of informing the king of the whereabouts of Absalom (v. 27-29). Finally, the king turns to God in prayer, asking the Lord to turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness as he advises Absalom (v. 31). Is prayer your last resort or first line of defense? Learn a lesson from the weeping king as he flees from the post assigned to Him by God, Himself.

**Wednesday**, June 8 (2 Samuel 15:32-37)

*So David's friend Hushai arrived at Jerusalem as Absalom was entering the city. (2 Samuel 15:37)*

David's prayer gets immediate results, as God sends David's dear friend Hushai the Arkite to meet him. Can you remember a time of extreme stress in your life when God sent you a friend to share the burden? In today's text Hushai, along with all the people, is mourning the plight of his trusted friend

(v. 32). David devises a plan of his own as he sends Hushai back into the city to frustrate the advice Ahithophel gives Absalom (33-36). In 1 Chronicles 27:25-34, you will find a list of David's overseers, each with a specific duty. Hushai the Arkite is simply listed as **the king's friend** (v. 33). Read Proverbs 18:24 (referring to Jesus) and determine to be that kind of friend to someone who needs encouragement.

**Thursday**, June 9 (read 2 Samuel 16:1-4)

*Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." (2 Samuel 16:4a)*

David **is** a man of prayer, but like most of us, he sometimes makes major decisions in the flesh without talking to God. Today's text is such an occasion. As you may recall from earlier devotions, Ziba is the main servant of Mephibosheth, the crippled son of David's close friend, Jonathan, who is now deceased (see devotions for May 13 & 14). He brings lots of supplies to the fleeing king in order to win his favor (v. 1-2). Then Ziba tells David a lie about Mephibosheth, claiming that his master is undermining David's kingdom, in order to re-establish the kingdom of his grandfather Saul (v. 3). Immediately, without prayer, David makes an executive decision to give all of Mephibosheth's property to Ziba. I hope that you are learning some hard lessons from David and I also hope that you understand the **mercy** and **grace** of God who **still** calls the king "a man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22).

**Friday**, June 10 (read 2 Samuel 16:5-14)

*"If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, 'Curse David,' who can ask, 'Why do you do this?'" (2 Samuel 16:10b)*

As King David is fleeing from his own son, Shimei, a man related to Saul, starts cursing him and throwing stones and dirt upon him. The man concludes that God is punishing David for his treatment of King Saul's family (v. 5-8). Abishai, David's commander, requests permission to cut off Shimei's head, but the humble deposed king rebukes him (9-10a). David considers the fact that **God** may be dealing with him and allowing these things to teach him a lesson (10b). Nothing David encounters is more painful than the revolt led by his own son (v. 11). Wisely, the king acknowledges that the Lord is perfectly capable of bringing good out of an evil situation (v. 12; see also Romans 8:28), so he allows the abuse to continue along the road (v. 13). Have you learned to let God have His way, even when you are going through a difficult time?

**Saturday**, June 11 (2 Samuel 16:15-23)

*So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. (2 Samuel 16:22)*

The seer Nathan had prophesied that someone from David's household would lie with his wives in public on the same roof that the king had used to watch Bathsheba bathe (12:11). In today's text, you see the fulfillment of that prophecy (v. 22) as well as the effects of David leaving his trusted friend, Hushai, in Jerusalem to confuse Absalom (v. 15-19). If you read through chapter 17, you will see how God uses Hushai to frustrate the advice from Absalom's adviser, Ahithophel, in order to lead the rebellious young self-proclaimed king to his death. I want to close with two questions that continue to surface in David's story: Do you understand how much God hates sin, and do you understand the potential consequences coming to anyone who chooses to live apart from the will of the Lord? If so, God is waiting to bless you beyond measure when you turn from your known sin and follow Him completely!