

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic.,
3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS
LESSON 8B
SECOND SAMUEL
CHAPTER 14**

INTRODUCTION

David was in a serious dilemma. Absalom had murdered his half brother. There was no excuse for what he had done. It was premeditated murder. He had plotted and executed his plan.

The penalty according to God's law was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life. Absalom had to be killed for taking his half brother's life. It was true that Amnon had done wrong to rape his half sister. He was not duly punished so Absalom took matters into his own hands. But what was the penalty for rape in biblical times? What could David have done to avert the tragedy?

Can three wrongs make a right? David committed the greatest wrong for his failure to discipline both his children. His dilemma was whether to bring Absalom back or not? He wanted him back for he loved him and yet he could not for he had killed his half brother. What a spot David was in. He dug himself a hole when he failed to do what was right the moment the situation presented itself.

Life has its twist and turns. We may find ourselves in the shoes of Absalom, Amnon or David. The lessons can be extremely painful. Let

us pray that we do not make such mistakes.

COMMENTARY

Joab Gets Absalom Back—14:1-20

Joab could see that David longed for Absalom so he thought of a plan. He used almost the same method as Nathan.

Joab obtained the services of "a wise woman" from Tekoa (a town five miles from Bethlehem). Evidently, Joab knew about the little town and the woman. The woman was skilled in acting. Although Joab did coach her to some extent regarding the story, she needed all her wit and tact to reply appropriately to the king's response which could not be predicted.

The wise woman presented herself to the king as a widow in mourning. She said that she had two sons who fought with one another. In the ensuing struggle, one killed the other. Her family clan then demanded that the one who killed his brother be brought to justice and be made to pay the penalty of death. This demand would leave her without a son and with no one to carry on the name of her husband (v.7). On hearing this, David promised to help. The woman then put to the king that she would rather take the blame to save her son. The king immediately gave her an undertaking that it was not necessary for her to offer herself. No one would be allowed to touch her. Then the woman got the king to give the assurance before God that he would not allow anyone to take revenge and kill her son. David swore by the name of the LORD that "not one hair of thy son fall to the earth" (v.11).

The woman then asked to be permitted to say more. She brought up the point of her audience with the king. She asked the king why he had acted against the people of Israel by not fetching home the one who had been banished. She aptly argued that water spilt cannot be gathered. God is no respecter of persons yet He would devise a means that His banished would not be expelled from Him. Now the woman gave the reason why she came to the king. The people made her afraid and so she had to come to the king for a judgment. The king's word to her earlier was comforting. The king was like an angel of God who was able to discern good and bad. Then she pronounced that the LORD God be with the king (v.17).

At this juncture of her story, David instantly suspected that Joab was behind the scheme. The woman confirmed that it was Joab when David asked her. After praising the king, the woman took her leave.

Absalom was brought to Jerusalem--14:21-27

David then called Joab to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem. Joab praised and thanked the king for being gracious to him. Joab then proceeded to bring Absalom back from Geshur. But David instructed Joab that Absalom be banished from his presence and not be allowed to see his face.

David was once again tricked into passing a judgment that involved him. Nathan's story and the story of the woman of Tekoa seemed to be similar but there was a major difference. Nathan's story was to arouse the king's conscience against his feelings, whereas the woman's story was to arouse his feelings against his conscience. Joab would

like Absalom to be brought back to Jerusalem. It could be that he admired Absalom who was logically the next in line to the throne but it was also possible that Joab saw the need for a successor without which the country would not be politically stable. However, if these were Joab's concerns, he would be proved wrong later as events unveil. Just before David's death, it was significant to note that Joab sided Adonijah against Solomon who was God's appointed successor to king David. 1 Kings 1:7 revealed, "*And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped him.*"

The text gave some biographical details of Absalom. He was well liked and praised by the whole country. He was described as a handsome man -- "from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him" (14:25). He had long beautiful hair. At the end of each year when his hair was cut, it was prized because of its weight -- it weighed four and a half pounds. He had three sons and one daughter whom he named Tamar, after his sister. This showed that Absalom had a family, children and a good standing in the country. Nothing was said about his wisdom and godliness which meant that he would be a wrong choice as the next king. But man always sees the outward form rather than the inward faculties -- "style over substance, cosmetic over content, and manner over matter."

Absalom quickly settled back into the life of the son of the king. His years in exile did not dampen his life style and his popularity among the people of Israel. His good looks were

used to very good effect as revealed in subsequent chapters.

Absalom Gets David's Favour—

14:28-33

Absalom lived for two full years in his house in Jerusalem and in that time he did not have an audience with the king. Absalom sent for Joab to have him sent to the king. To be back in half measure was as good as not being back at all, as far as Absalom was concerned. He could not get an audience with the king and the king's public disapproval would surely hamper his chances of being the next king of Israel. The only person he could ask that was closest to the king was Joab, the king's right hand man.

But Joab ignored his call twice. Absalom then instructed his servants to burn Joab's barley field. That got Joab's immediate response. He came to Absalom and demanded an explanation. Absalom answered that he wished to ask the king for the purpose of fetching him back from Geshur. He would be better off in Geshur since he could not get an audience with the king. Absalom added that if there was any sin in him, he was willing to face death (v.32). With the bold reply, Joab had little choice but to help him get an audience with the king.

So Joab went to the king. The king called for Absalom. Absalom came and bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. The king kissed him which was a sign that he had been accepted. There appeared to be genuine forgiveness and reconciliation, at least on the part of David. But note that Absalom did not repent of his sin of murdering his brother. He only said that he was prepared to be punished by his father. Absalom later used his new

status to undermine his father, to rebel against him, and to try and wrest the throne away from him.

PRACTICAL VALUE

We do not see God's name mentioned in these chapters except for a couple of references to Him by the woman of Tekoa and by David when he took an oath. That did not mean that the LORD God was unaware of what was happening. In fact the chapter recorded what had been predicted in God's judgment on David. God's judgment cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to His Word. He will keep his promises. If He has judged, He will execute. Fear God, revere Him and obey Him. Sin not.

AMEN

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: 2 Samuel 14:1-20; Ezekiel 33:7-11.

Tuesday: 2 Samuel 14:21-33; 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

Wednesday: 2 Samuel 14:1-33.

Thursday: 2 Samuel 14:1-33.

Friday: 2 Samuel 14:1-33.

Analysis:

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 14:1-20	
2 Samuel 14:21-27	

2. What was the main thrust of the woman's parable that convicted and moved David?

3. Why did the people praise Absalom? Why do you think Absalom wished to be reconciled with his father? Was he sincere when he told Joab that he was willing even to face the death penalty?

4. Should the church look for a leader like Absalom? What were lacking in his character and conduct that should be emphasized in a leader?

Discussion Questions

1. How was God's judgment upon David fulfilled in chapter 13?

5. What can we learn from this chapter about making important decisions and choices in life?
