

The Tragic Story of Absalom

Imagine a young, handsome, energetic, ambitious, wealthy, powerful, and charismatic man. Would you want to be friends with someone like that? Would you want your daughter to marry someone like that?

Absalom had all of these qualities. But he was also deceiving, hot-tempered and disrespectful. He was someone who went about achieving his goals using corrupt and wicked methods. The story preserved of him by God is one of the most tragic in all of scripture.

Who was Absalom?

- He was one of the sons of King David (2 Samuel 3:3). Absalom was David's third oldest son. His mother was Maacah. She was the daughter of the king of Geshur.
- He was extremely handsome. There were no defects in him (2 Samuel 14:25). He also had extremely long hair (2 Samuel 14:26).
- He was very charming (2 Samuel 15:6).
- He was treacherous (2 Samuel 15:7ff).
- He was heartless. He killed his brother (2 Samuel 13:24ff).
- He was ambitious (2 Samuel 15:1-6). After reconciling with David, even though he was heir to the throne, he formed and executed a plot to remove David.

Absalom's tragic story

- It involves deception. He deceived the people into thinking he cared about them and would be a better king than his father (2 Samuel 15:1-4). He would manipulate and flatter people to get them on his side (2 Samuel 15:5-6).
- It involves betrayal. By working to usurp the throne, Absalom was stabbing his father in the back! He succeeded in gaining a strong enough support group (a faction) to remove David. He went to Hebron and had the people declare him the new king. He even stole away David's most trusted counselor (Ahithophel).
- It Involves heartbreak. David was extremely saddened by having to flee Jerusalem in fear of his life from his son. He wrote about this experience in Psalm 3. This is undoubtedly one of the saddest scenes in the Bible.

What can we learn?

- Righteous people can have wicked children. We see this with David and his sons Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. We see this with Eli and his sons (1 Samuel 2:12ff). We see this with Hezekiah and his wicked son Manasseh (2 Kings 18-21).
- Inner beauty is most important (1 Samuel 16:7). God wants us to have pure hearts.
- Wicked methods ultimately lead to failure! While Absalom used wicked ways to accomplish his goals, in the end, God made sure he paid for his deeds (2 Samuel 18:1-15). The same will happen to us if we are like him (Galatians 6:7-8).

Conclusion:

Absalom could have become the next king of Israel. Instead, he lost his life and soul.