

Commentary on 2 Samuel chapter 18, by Chuck Smith 4.6.22

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April memory verse John 17:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

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So David numbered the people that were with him, and he set the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds. And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, a third part under the hand of Abishai who was the brother of Joab, and a third part under Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also ([2Sa 18:1-2](#)).

So now David is preparing to defend himself, and he divides the people that were with him, the men of war, into three companies, and David volunteers to go with them.

And they said, "No, you shouldn't go into battle with us. You stay back here because really you're the one they want. If we should fall in battle it doesn't make any difference, they're really not after us; they're only after you. And if you go out there you're just gonna put yourself in jeopardy because you're the one they're after. And so we'll go out and we will fight for you.

And so the king called Joab [David called Joab] and Abishai and Ittai, and he said, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom ([2Sa 18:5](#)).

So he orders them, "Now look, you know, deal gently with him." Even though Absalom had rebelled against his father, yet he was still his son, and David still had a great love for his son Absalom.

And so the people went out into the field against Israel: and they met them in the woods of Ephraim; and the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter of twenty thousand men. For the battle was scattered over the face of all the country: and the woods devoured more people that day than the sword. And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under a thick bough of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away ([2Sa 18:6-9](#)).

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Now you remember that Absalom grew hair profusely. In fact, when they would shave his head every year, there were three to four pounds of hair. They would shave his head, and pull it and all, each year, he had three to four pounds of hair. So hair can be an attractive thing, but it can also be a disastrous thing. For Absalom it was a disaster as he was riding on his donkey, riding under this branch of an oak tree, his hair got caught in the oak and the donkey kept going and he was there swinging by his hair from that oak branch.

And a certain man saw him, and he told Joab, and he said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging on an oak. And Joab said to the man that told him, You saw him, why didn't you smite him? and I would've rewarded you ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. And the man said to Joab, If you'd give me a thousand shekels of silver in my hand, I wouldn't put forth my hand to touch him, because I heard what David told you that you shouldn't touch his son Absalom. I would've wrought falsehood against my own life: for there is no matter that is hid from the king, and thou thyself would've set yourself against me ([2Sa 18:10-13](#)).

So the guy says, "Hey, think I'm crazy? I know David, nothing's hidden from him. He doesn't want his son Absalom touched. You yourself would witness against me."

So Joab said, I shouldn't wait with you. And he took three darts in his hand, and he thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive there in the midst of the oak. And the ten young men that bore Joab's armour circled about and smote Absalom, and they killed him. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after the Israelites: for Joab restrained the people. And they took Absalom and they cast him into a great pit, and they threw [a lot of] a great heap of stones upon him ([2Sa 18:14-17](#)):

During Absalom's lifetime we read that he had made a sort of a tower, a monument after and named it after his own name. This pillar he called "Absalom's place."

Now there is in Jerusalem today, in the valley of the Kidron down beneath what they call the pinnacle of the temple which is the corner of the mount that Herod built for the temple in his day, there was down there at the bottom of the Kidron, a sort of a burial place, a pillar, a monument, that is called "Absalom's Tower." However, most of the noted archeologists say that it dates to some period after Absalom and is not in reality the tower that is mentioned here in the Bible. However, by making of a biblical thing, more people go down to look at it.

But Absalom had a pillar that he had erected, a monument, and it's set up in a valley. For he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance." Now this is interesting because the scripture said that he had two sons. So either his sons, both of them, died young or he built the pillar before his sons were born. One of the two, we don't know which it might be.

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So Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said [to Joab], Let me run, and tell David the news. And Joab said to Ahimaaz, Nah, you'll run some other day: and he called Cushai, and he said, Go and tell the king what you have seen. And so Cushai bowed himself and began to run. And Ahimaaz came back again, and he said, I want to run, please let me run, I want to tell the king. And finally Joab said, Okay run. [And Ahimaaz was a faster runner, and so before long he overtook old Cushai as he was puffing along, and left him in the dust.] And David was sitting in the gate of the city: and the guy upon the tower called down, and he said, There is a runner coming, he's by himself. And David said, If he's by himself, then he bears news. Pretty soon he calls and says there's a second runner coming by himself, the first runner looks like the running of Ahimaaz. And David said, If it's Ahimaaz it's good news. And so Ahimaaz came puffing in, and Ahimaaz was called by David over to him, and he said to David, Every thing is well. And he fell down on his face before the king and he said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which has delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king ([2Sa 18:19-28](#)).

"It's all well. God has taken care of those men that have lifted up against you."

David said, How is Absalom? And he said, Well I saw a great tumult of people ([2Sa 18:29](#))

"Well, how's Absalom?" "Well I really don't know, I just saw a crowd." He said, "Stand back", because old Cushai came in about this time.

Now here is an interesting thing to me. Ahimaaz could run well. He was a good runner, he was faster than Cushai, but his problem, he didn't have any message. Now it doesn't really matter how well you can run, you need to have a message when you get there. I think that some of us many times make the same mistake.

We say, "I want to run. I want to serve the Lord. Oh, I want to go out and serve the Lord. I've been saved for two weeks now." We go out prematurely before we really have something to share. But so anxious we are to run that we get involved in areas where we are not really qualified. I see it over and over again, people coming and saying, "Let me run. I want to go. I want to go out and preach. I want to go out and share." It doesn't matter how well you might run, it's important that you have a message when you get there, that you have something worthwhile to share. That is why so often we say, "No, just sit and learn. Sit and prepare yourself, sit and grow in your knowledge, so that when you go out, you'll have a message to share."

So Cushai then told David that his son Absalom was slain in the battle. And David was very moved, he went up to his chamber over the gate, and as he went up he was crying: saying, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom. would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ([2Sa 18:31-33](#)).