



Lesson 96

David's Immoderate Grief

Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8 • Setting: approx. 990 B.C. • Main Characters: God, David, Ahimaaz, Cush, and Joab • Plot: David's inordinate grief over the | <p>death of Absalom demoralizes his victorious soldiers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key word(s): "O! Absalom, my _____!" • Climax: "<i>And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe?</i>" (18:29) |
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Review (2 Sam. 17:1 -18:18)

1. David's army routed Absalom's and cut them down in the forest of Ephraim; Absalom's infamously thick hair was his undoing - having been snagged in the low-hanging branches of an oak, he was easily dispatched by _____ and his armor-bearers (contrary to the explicit command of King David.)

The Bearer of Bad News

2. (18:18-21) Ahimaaz, the son of the priest Zadok, zealously volunteered to be the messenger to bring news of the victory to the king who eagerly awaited at Mahanaim. Joab told Ahimaaz to stand down and to let another less-beloved footman bear the news. Why do you think Joab would not want Ahimaaz to bring the news to David?

3. (18:22-23) _____ (or more probably, "the Cushite") was sent instead. But after Ahimaaz pleaded, Joab relented, and Ahimaaz easily overtook Cush and was first to arrive at Mahanaim.

The Burden of a Broken Heart

4. (18:24-27) A watchman perched atop the city wall spied Ahimaaz running. David knew that a lone runner was a messenger because several runners together would probably be survivors _____ in defeat.
 - (a) (18:27) Ahimaaz must have been especially famous for his swiftness because his speed and running style made him recognizable to the watchman. David was sure that such a loyal friend would be the bearer of _____ news.

(b) (18:28-30) Though Ahimaaz told David of his army's victory, he did not tell David of Absalom's demise. Why do you think Ahimaaz side-stepped David's question?

5. (18:31-33) When Cushie the Egyptian informed David of Absalom's fate, David howled in grief, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

(a) (19:1-8) David's mourning for Absalom completely _____ his men.

(b) Joab, as commanding general, would not stand for his soldiers to be treated in such a way. The stern rebuke he gave David helped to snap the king out of his selfish condition and possibly saved him from another _____.

Application

6. David's grief over Absalom's death compared with his grief over the death of his infant son (Bathsheba's child – 2 Sam. 12:15-23) shows two very different reactions. What could explain the difference? _____

7. Absalom is an anti-type of Jesus:

(a) Absalom _____ against his father's throne and died for his own sin; Jesus died for the sins of others and sits on his throne at his Father's right hand.

(b) Absalom brought shame and _____ to his father; Jesus brought honor and glory to his. (cf. Prov. 17:25)

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): son • 1. Joab • 2. Perhaps Joab considered it inappropriate for such a beloved courtier as Ahimaaz to be the one to break David's heart, or perhaps he feared that David would kill the bearer of such tragic news • 3. Cushie • 4. retreating; a) good; b) It is possible that Ahimaaz wanted to prepare David for tragic news by slowly letting him in on the situation. This would explain Ahimaaz's persistence in being asked to give the message. • 5. a) demoralized; b) uprising • 6. Though both deaths were an indirect result of David's sin, Absalom's rebellion can be directly attributed to David's failure as a father. Additionally, David's infant child died in innocence while Absalom died an unrepentant rebel. Though not stated, David may have felt tremendous guilt and shame as he realized Absalom's dubious eternal state. 7. a) rebelled; b) reproach

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.