

Let's Worship God

29th June - 4th July 2026

2 Samuel



II SAMUEL

Monday - 2 Samuel 14:1-3 - Pining After Absalom

Here in this chapter we have a touching story. We have emotional manipulation, and people who allow themselves to be manipulated. But the long term outcome of it all - as we'll see when we get to chapter 18 - is death. Death for Absalom and for many others. Because the wages of sin is always death, sooner or later. David's son Absalom pulls the heart strings of his father and wins the affection of the public, but soon after he's dead. And he and many others are dead, not because David loved him too much, but because David loved him too little.

The story starts with Joab - the commander of David's army. Joab knows that David is pining after Absalom. Joab is trying to persuade David to do something that deep down he wants to do - but knows is wrong. Why is it wrong? Because Absalom is an unrepentant, cold-blooded murderer. He's fled from the scene of the crime, and been on the run for 3 years. As soon as he re-enters Israelite territory he should be taken into custody. And Absalom seems to recognise down in v32 that the proper legal punishment for him should be death. When he says: 'if there is guilt in me, let him put me to death'. After all, that's God's requirement for murder. Genesis 9.6: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image'. But David's heart goes out to him. His natural affection overrides what should be done. With Bathsheba, David's sin was doing something that was wrong. Here, his sin is in not doing what was right. At the very least there should have been repentance before any sort of reconciliation.

Joab never strikes us as a man with a great deal of time for questions of right and wrong. So he comes up with a plan to get Absalom back - apparently just to stop David pining after him. It seems that Joab thought the whole thing was so much of a distraction for David that they needed to get it sorted so that David could focus. But whatever Joab's reasons, it backfired badly. Joab clearly isn't trying to start a rebellion. Joab's loyalties are to David. When Absalom does come back, Joab ignores him. And when Absalom eventually rebels, Joab sticks with David.

Question

1. What is Joab trying to persuade David to do?

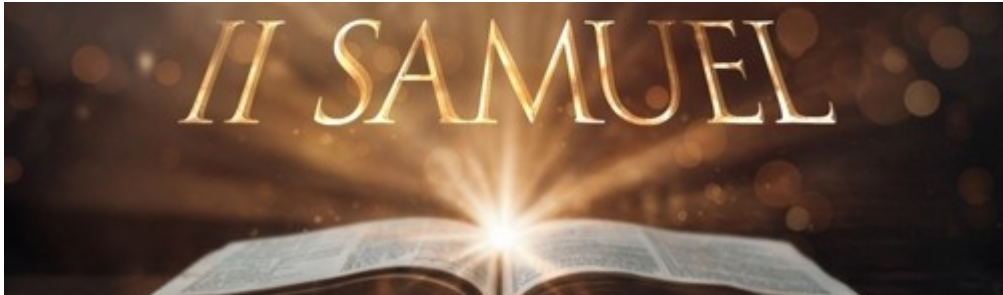
Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would have courage to do what is right.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 73A:1-5 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Tuesday - 2 Samuel 14:4-20 - Deceptive Hearts

The first lesson to take from all this is that David was predisposed to listening to whatever reason someone would bring for allowing Absalom to return home. And we can be like that as individuals. We can be looking for an excuse for whatever sin we find comfort in. Our hearts are so deceptive. Perhaps we convince ourselves that we only did it because this bad thing happened to us first. When really we were just looking for an excuse to do it. So even though David sees through the story, and realises who's behind it. Even though he could have picked holes in the analogy that's used. He allows himself to be convinced to do what he already wants to do anyway.

Perhaps we hear of someone who's given up on church. They talk about the bad experiences they've had. That's the reason they give for walking away. Yet someone else goes through the same experiences, maybe even worse experiences, and doesn't walk away. What's the difference? Often it's a heart that was already being pulled by the world. And the bad experience - which may well be genuinely bad - becomes the justification they need to follow their heart. And when I say the justification they need, I mean to justify it to themselves, rather than necessarily justify it to anyone else.

Think of the person who turns their back on Jesus. They just talk in terms of intellectual questions and rational arguments. But Biblically speaking, we know nothing is ever a purely intellectual issue. Jesus says: 'Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice'. Denial of the Christian faith might seem a brave step for someone to take. They might tell themselves that they have doubts that can no longer be ignored. Yet what's the result of it all? They end up being able to affirm whatever the world around says they should affirm. They no longer have to stand out as different. They no longer have to take up their cross and follow Jesus. I'm not saying that people consciously set out to deny the faith with that goal in mind. Though no doubt some do. All I'm saying is that our hearts are deceitful, and the reasons we tell ourselves that we're doing things, aren't always the real reasons.

Question

1. What is the danger of our deceptive hearts?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would measure everything by God's Word.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 73A:6-10 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

II SAMUEL

Wednesday - 2 Samuel 14:2-22 - Believing Made Up Stories Instead of Reality

David is already predisposed to listen to whatever arguments will be given for bringing Absalom home. Joab knows that about him. And so Joab sends for a wise woman to come to David with a sad, made-up story. When she's called a wise woman that doesn't mean wise in Biblical terms, but in terms of worldly wisdom. She dresses up like she's in mourning, and comes and tells David Joab's made-up story, in order to pull at his heartstrings. And it doesn't matter that the story isn't true. It doesn't matter that even if it was true, it wouldn't be a direct equivalent. Because two brothers quarrelling in a field and one being killed is manslaughter, whereas a cold-blooded murder that's two years in the planning is murder. But despite its flaws, the made-up story has its desired effect.

Our culture would rather believe made-up stories than real ones. And David is the same here. So he lets Absalom come back. Are there made-up stories that we've started to believe? That God is cruel? That his laws are restrictive? That sin isn't really a big deal? That we don't need to submit to spiritual authority?

Questions

1. What kind of wisdom does this woman have?
2. How does her story affect David?

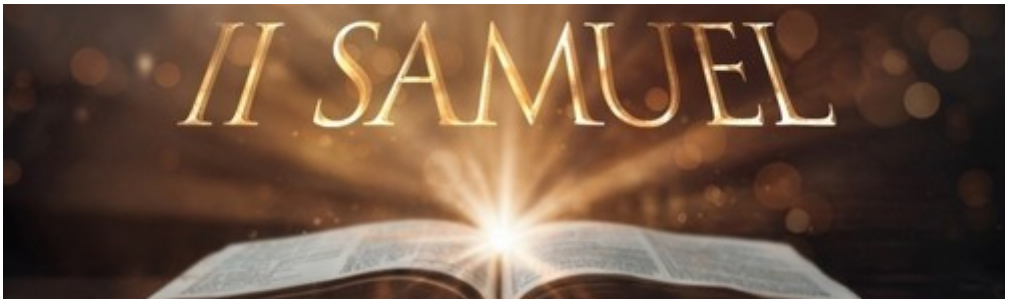
Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would believe the truth about God and not the lies the world puts before us.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 73A:11-15 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Thursday - 2 Samuel 14:21-27 - An Open Door?

David lets Absalom back. But he won't let him come into his presence. It's a compromise. But it doesn't last long. Once David has let Absalom back into the country, it seems inevitable that Absalom will end up back as if nothing had ever happened.

Often, whether in our personal lives, our family lives, our church lives, our national lives, there is something that we know would be wrong to do. So we don't do it. But we open a door to it, which will make it easier for us to do the thing itself in the future. Are there sins that we haven't yet committed - and yet we've opened a door which would make it easier to commit them in the future?

Once the door is opened, there's only ever going to be one outcome. Once Absalom is back in the country, it's not long before he's back in David's presence despite never having repented or faced any sort of punishment for the cold-blooded murder of his brother. But not to let him back, David has been told, would be an attack on God's people themselves. That's what the wise woman has said back up in v13. So David does the thing which he's been told is the compassionate, tolerant, humane thing to do. But in doing so he's letting a snake into his house. And very soon he'll experience the dreadful consequences.

Stories are powerful things. The Bible itself is a story - a true story. A story it's important to try and help people see. But Satan has his own story that he wants to tell. And often he uses stories to bypass peoples' critical faculties. To get them to agree to things without thinking of the consequences. But the Bible has a better story to tell. A story where wicked sinners like Absalom - and like us - aren't just let back into the fold unchanged. But a story where the great king himself gives up his life for his wayward children. And he dies for us, both to save us and to change us.

Questions

1. Had Absalom repented?
2. What is the problem with opening the door to sin?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would close the doors to sin that we open in our hearts and minds.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 17:1-4 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

II SAMUEL

Friday - 2 Samuel 14:25-33 - The Banished Ones

I want to finish with 3 verses from this chapter that illustrate the gospel. Not verses which we are all necessarily intended to apply the way I'm about to apply them, but which provide helpful ways to think about how God works in our own lives.

The first of the three verses is v30. When Joab stops taking Absalom's calls, Absalom responds by setting his field on fire. And it works! Spurgeon gets a whole gospel sermon out of this verse. How? Well he makes the point that this is what God sometimes does to get our attention. He sets our fields - which are really his fields anyway - on fire. In other words, he brings disasters into our lives to get our attention. For the non-Christian, to bring them to Christ. And for the Christian, to get them to rely more on him. If you want to have that theme fleshed out a bit, read Spurgeon's sermon 'The Barley-Field on Fire'.

The second verse I want to highlight is v14. Here I think that the wise woman speaks better than she knows when she says in the second half of verse 14. 'God devises means so that the banished one will not remain an outcast'. Now in terms of Absalom, God hadn't devised means where the banished one could be brought back without repentance. But though her application of it is wrong, the point itself is true enough. More than true enough in fact. Because what she says is actually a great summary of the gospel. Because what are men and women this side of Eden? We're the banished ones. We are those who have been cast out of God's presence. The message of the Bible is that that's what sin does to us. Adam and Eve were banished from the garden for their sin. The nation of Israel was banished from the Promised Land for their sin. Both times they're cast out of the one place on earth where God was particularly present. We are the banished ones. But as the wise woman put it, God has devised a means so that the banished one will not remain an outcast. What is that means? It's the cross of Christ. Absalom isn't the only one deserving death. Each of us deserves it too. The wages of sin is death. But none of us need remain outcasts. Not now - and not for eternity. Because a greater Son of David died the death we deserve. And as a result - heaven is opened to us.

Question

1. How does God provide a way to bring back banished ones?

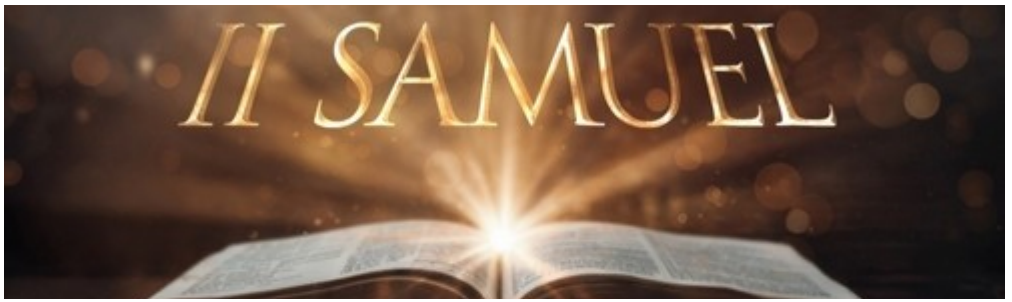
Prayer Points

1. Pray for the salvation of family and friends.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 17:5-8 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Saturday - 2 Samuel 13:34-39 - Where Was God?

The third and final verse I want to highlight is verse 32. What is Absalom's complaint there? It's that it would have been better for him still to be in exile than to return, but not be able to go into the king's presence. Or literally, as some versions have it, to see the king's face. Is that not how we feel about heaven? Some think that to be a Christian is about escaping Hell and getting to heaven, and that it wouldn't matter whether Jesus was in heaven or not. For them, heaven without Christ would still be Heaven. In fact, it might even be better. But for the true believer, surely the cry of our heart if we got to Christless Heaven would be: Why am I here if I can't see the king's face? Why am I redeemed if I may not see the face of my God?

And so, though a chapter like this does help us reflect on the emotional, heart-string pulling stories that our society tells in order to draw people away from their duty to God. Let's not forget that each and every one of us fell hook, line, and sinker for the first lies that were ever told: 'You shall not surely die'. 'You shall be like God'. But God in his grace hasn't left us to face the consequences of believing that lie. Instead, he has intervened in our lives. By setting our fields on fire if that's what he needed to do. By telling us of the means he has devised so that the banished one will not remain an outcast. In order that one day we might see the king's face.

Question

1. What should we want to have in Heaven?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Praise: Psalm 17:9-13- See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced
by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

If you have any queries please contact - rpchurchscotland@gmail.com