

# 2 Samuel 14 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

2 Samuel 14:1  
2 Samuel 14:2  
2 Samuel 14:3  
2 Samuel 14:4  
2 Samuel 14:5  
2 Samuel 14:6  
2 Samuel 14:7  
2 Samuel 14:8  
2 Samuel 14:9  
2 Samuel 14:10  
2 Samuel 14:11  
2 Samuel 14:12  
2 Samuel 14:13  
2 Samuel 14:14  
2 Samuel 14:15  
2 Samuel 14:16  
2 Samuel 14:17  
2 Samuel 14:18  
2 Samuel 14:19  
2 Samuel 14:20  
2 Samuel 14:21  
2 Samuel 14:22  
2 Samuel 14:23  
2 Samuel 14:24  
2 Samuel 14:25  
2 Samuel 14:26  
2 Samuel 14:27  
2 Samuel 14:28  
2 Samuel 14:29  
2 Samuel 14:30  
2 Samuel 14:31  
2 Samuel 14:32  
2 Samuel 14:33

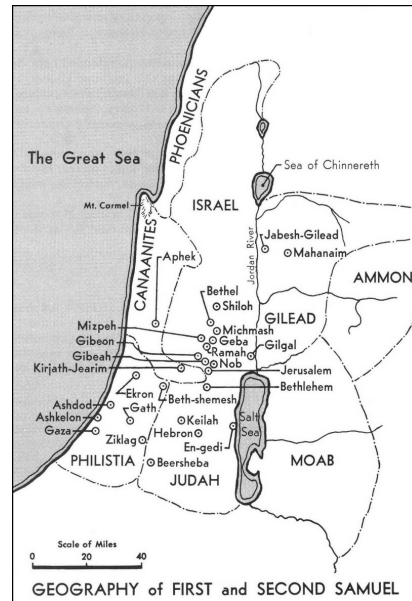
Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[2 Samuel Chart](#), from Charles Swindoll

## TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES

1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	

1Chr 10		1 Chr 11-19	1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36
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**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.



Map of David's Kingdom-[ESV Global](#)

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel

Source: [Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#)

**2 Samuel 14:1 Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was inclined toward Absalom.**

- **Joab:** 2Sa 2:18 1Ch 2:16
- **toward Absalom:** 2Sa 13:39 18:33 19:2,4 Pr 29:26

#### Related Passage:

Proverbs 23:13 Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.

### JOAB'S PERCEPTION OF DAVID'S MISSING ABSALOM

**Wiersbe** gives the context for Joab's unusual actions in this chapter - As head of the army, Joab was concerned that Israel have a crown prince ready to reign just in case something happened to David, who was now close to sixty. But Absalom couldn't come home unless David gave permission, and the king wouldn't give permission until he was convinced it was the right thing to do. It was the king's duty to uphold the law, and Absalom was guilty of plotting the murder of his half brother Amnon. (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

[Brian Bell](#) has an interesting outline for this chapter - Baiting The Trap; Setting The Trap; Springing The Trap.

[Don Anderson](#) - David watched his family fall apart and seemed to be totally incapable of doing anything about it. He was reaping what he had sown. There is one more thing about Absalom that we need to take into consideration at this point: In murdering Amnon, Absalom had also laid what he thought was the foundation for succeeding his father to the throne, although Abigail's son Kileab, or Daniel as he is mentioned in the Chronicles records, never became a viable force to be reckoned with. Absalom cleared the way by the death of Amnon for the throne, since he would be the oldest son and primary heir to take David's place.

**Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart ([leb](#); Lxx - [kardia](#)) was inclined toward Absalom** - The old saying is [absence makes the heart grow fonder](#) and it has now been 3 years (in Geshur 2Sa 13:38+) since David had seen Absalom.

The preceding chapter ended with these words "The heart of King David longed to go out to Absalom; for he was comforted concerning Amnon, since he was dead." (2Sa 13:39+).

**MacArthur** suggests "the fear of public opinion made him hesitant to pardon his son. Joab, perceiving this struggle between parental affection and royal duty, devised a plan involving a wise country woman and a story told to the king. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

Writers like Keil & Delitzsch are of the view that this verse has a negative sense rather than a positive sense translating it "And Joab the son of Zeruiah knew that he king's heart was *against* Absalom". Virtually all of the modern translations however see the verse in a positive sense indicating that David longed to see Absalom, not that he was *against* him. The description in 2Sa 14:24 does however lend some support to the negative rendering.

**2 Samuel 14:2 So Joab sent to Tekoa and brought a wise woman from there and said to her, "Please pretend to be a mourner, and put on mourning garments now, and do not anoint yourself with oil, but be like a woman who has been mourning for the dead many days;**

- **Tekoa:** 2Ch 11:6 20:20 Ne 3:5,27 Jer 6:1 Am 1:1,
- **mourning:** 2Sa 11:26 Ru 3:3 Ps 104:15 Ec 9:8 Mt 6:17

## **JOAB RECRUITS WOMAN FROM TEKOA**

**So** - For this reason. Therefore. Because David's heart longed to see Absalom

**Joab sent to Tekoa** Joab sends someone from his staff 10 miles south of Jerusalem to the city of Tekoa was a city of Judah, hometown of Amos (Amos 1:1) and on the borders of the great wilderness southeast of Jerusalem. Tekoa was about five miles to the south of Bethlehem, Joab's birthplace, so he may have heard about this **wise woman**.

**And brought a wise** ([chakam](#); Lxx - [sophos](#)) **woman from there** - Joab recruits a **wise woman**, using the same word ([chakam](#); Lxx - [sophos](#)) that described Jonadab in 2Sa 13:3+, but in the present context conveys a positive sense (not a negative *shrewd* sense as with Jonadab). This would be Joab's ruse for softening David's heart toward Absalom so that he would seek to bring him from Geshur ([see map below](#)).

**and said to her, "Please pretend to be a mourner, and put on mourning garments now, and do not anoint yourself with oil, but be like a woman who has been mourning for the dead many days** - Joab orchestrates the action of this fictitious parable. He would need a wise woman who was a skilled actress in expressing her tragic tale with believable emotion. David would quickly see through bad acting. Only good acting would be effective in moving his heart toward Absalom. Joab was going to do what Nathan the prophet had done in 2Sa 12:1-7, using a fabricated account of a widow's family tragedy.

**Related Resource:**

- [SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE](#)
- [SPECIAL TOPIC: GRIEVING RITES](#)

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**Other Passages Describing Women God has Used:**

- 2 Samuel 20: 14-22
- Judges 4:9,17-21
- Judges 5 :6-7
- Judges 9:52-54
- 1 Samuel 25:14-35

**2 Samuel 14:3 then go to the king and speak to him in this manner." So Joab put the words in her mouth.**

- **put the words:** 2Sa 14:19 Ex 4:15 Nu 23:5 De 18:18 Isa 51:16 59:21 Jer 1:9

## JOAB GIVES SCRIPT FOR FICTITIOUS PARABLE

**Then** - [Expression of time, then](#) marks progression in the narrative.

**go to the king and speak to him in this manner."** - The king was the ultimate judge in Israel (cf. 2Sa 14:5,17,21).

**So Joab put the words in her mouth**- Joab told her exactly what to say in his attempt to get to David's heart to turn toward Absalom (cf 1Sa 14:19) and desire to bring him back to Jerusalem. He will use a sad story of a wise widow actress who is in danger of losing her only surviving son to an avenger of blood. Joab is setting up a situation similar to what David experienced with Nathan the prophet when he was confronted with the parable that Nathan told which in the end condemned David

**2 Samuel 14:4 Now when the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and prostrated herself and said, "Help, O king."**

- **fell on her:** 2Sa 1:2 1Sa 20:41 25:23
- **Help:** Heb. Save, 2Ki 6:26-28 Job 29:12-14 Lu 18:3-5

### Related Passages:

2 Kings 6:26-28 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" 27 He said, "If the LORD does not help you, from where shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the wine press?" 28 And the king said to her, "What is the matter with you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'

Wise Woman of Tekoa

## WOMAN BOWS & SEEKS DAVID'S HELP

**Now when the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell** (bowed down) **on her face to the ground and prostrated herself** (in deference to him) **and said, "Help** ([yasha'](#); [sozo](#)), **O king."** - In ancient Israel cases could be appealed to the king who was Jehovah's judicial representative. She humbles herself in David's presence.

**Help** (save, deliver, help) ([03467](#)) [yasha'](#) (See also [yeshua](#) from which we get our word "Jesus") is an important Hebrew verb which means to help, to save, to deliver. The root in Arabic is "make wide" which underscores the main thought of yasha' as to bring to a place of safety or broad pasture in contrast to a narrow strait which symbolizes distress or danger.

**2 Samuel 14:5 The king said to her, "What is your trouble?" And she answered, "Truly I am a widow, for my husband is dead.**

- **I am:** 2Sa 12:1-3 Jdg 9:8-15

## DAVID HEARS THE WOMAN'S STORY

**The king said to her, "What is your trouble?"** - Clearly David makes himself accessible to the needy in Israel.

**And she answered, "Truly I am a widow, for my husband is dead** - She doubles down with her description of as a widow, which by definition usually signifies the husband is dead, which she reiterates.

**TSK Note** - It is very possible that the principal incidents mentioned here were real; and that Joab found out a person whose circumstances bore a near resemblance to that which he wished to represent. She did not make the similitude too plain and visible,

lest the king should see her intention before she had obtained a grant of pardon; and thus her circumstances, her mournful tale, her widow's dress, her aged person, (for Josephus says she was advanced in years,) and her impressive manner, all combined to make one united irresistible impression on the heart of the aged monarch.

**2 Samuel 14:6 "Your maidservant had two sons, but the two of them struggled together in the field, and there was no one to separate them, so one struck the other and killed him.**

- **two:** Ge 4:8 Ex 2:13 De 22:26,27

## **SONS STRUGGLED AND ONE KILLED OTHER**

**Your maidservant had two sons, but the two of them struggled together in the field, and there was no one to separate them, so one struck the other and killed him** - This was murder but not premeditated (presumably), like Cain's murder of Abel.

**2 Samuel 14:7 "Now **behold**, the whole family has risen against your maidservant, and they say, 'Hand over the one who struck his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed, and destroy the heir also.' Thus they will extinguish my coal which is left, so as to leave my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth."**

- **the whole:** Ge 4:14 Nu 35:19 De 19:12
- **they:** Ge 27:45 De 25:6
- **they will extinguish:** 2Sa 12:17

### **Related Passages:**

Numbers 35:19 'The blood avenger himself shall put the murderer to death; he shall put him to death when he meets him.

Deuteronomy 19:12 then the elders of his city shall send and take him from there and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.

Exodus 21:12 "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 24:17 'If a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death.

## **FAMILY SEEKS TO SLAY SON EXTINGUISHING HER COAL**

**Now **behold**, the whole family has risen against your maidservant, and they say, 'Hand over the one who struck his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed, and destroy the heir also.'** - The family is seeking to avenge the blood of the lost son.

**Thus they will extinguish my coal which is left, so as to leave my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth** - People in Israel would start their home fires in the morning, usually using a coal or ember from the previous night's fire. Her point is that if her last remaining son is killed, she would have no hope, no remnant, no way to pass on her family's name. And in ancient Israel the extinction of one's family line because there was no heir was regarded as a terrible tragedy.

**MacArthur** - The story the woman told involved one brother killing another (v. 6). If the death penalty for murder was invoked (cf. Ex 21:12; Lv 24:17), there would be no living heir in the family, leaving that family with no future, a situation the law sought to avoid (Dt 25:5-10). This would extinguish the last "coal" of hope for a future for her line. Cf. 21:17; Ps 132:17, where the lamp refers to posterity.

**2 Samuel 14:8 Then the king said to the woman, '**Go** to your house, and I will give orders concerning you.'**

- **I will give:** 2Sa 12:5,6 16:4 Job 29:16 Pr 18:13 Isa 11:3,4

## KING RESPONDS BUT IMPLIES DELAY

**Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you** - David has immediately gotten involved in the situation and commands the woman to go back to Tekoa and he will issue an order on her behalf that will protect her only remaining son. The persistent woman expressed her willingness to bear any guilt in place of the king. In other words she would take any blame that might arise from sparing her son from the death penalty.

**2 Samuel 14:9 The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "O my lord, the king, the iniquity is on me and my father's house, but the king and his throne are guiltless."**

NET 2 Samuel 14:9 The Tekoa woman said to the king, "My lord the king, let any blame fall on me and on the house of my father. But let the king and his throne be innocent!"

CSB 2 Samuel 14:9 Then the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "My lord the king, may any blame be on me and my father's house, and may the king and his throne be innocent."

ESV 2 Samuel 14:9 And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be guiltless."

NIV 2 Samuel 14:9 But the woman from Tekoa said to him, "My lord the king, let the blame rest on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt."

NLT 2 Samuel 14:9 "Oh, thank you, my lord the king," the woman from Tekoa replied. "If you are criticized for helping me, let the blame fall on me and on my father's house, and let the king and his throne be innocent."

- **iniquity:** Ge 27:13 1Sa 25:24 Mt 27:25
- **the king:** 2Sa 3:28,29 Nu 35:33 De 21:1-9 1Ki 2:33

## WOMAN WILLING TO ACCEPT GUILT

**The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "O my lord, the king, the iniquity is on me and my father's house, but the king and his throne are guiltless** - NLT = "If you are criticized for helping me, let the blame fall on me and on my father's house, and let the king and his throne be innocent." Her words suggested she had put David in a difficult position to let a murderer go free. Therefore she asked that blame rest on her and her house.

**Delitzsch** points out, "The meaning of the words is this, if there should be anything wrong in the fact that

**Pulpit Commentary** - The king had given a general promise to help the widow, but she wants to lead him on to a definite assurance that her son shall be pardoned. Less than this would not help Absalom's case. Instead, therefore, of withdrawing, she represents herself as dissatisfied, and pleads for full forgiveness; and as this would be a violation of the letter of the Levitical Law, in order to remove David's supposed scruples, she takes upon herself the penalty.

**2 Samuel 14:10 So the king said, "Whoever speaks to you, bring him to me, and he will not touch you anymore."**

## DAVID RESPONDS TO WOMAN'S PLEA

**So** - For this reason. Because of the wise woman's ploy and pleas of willingness to accept guilt, the king responds now, not later.

**the king said, "Whoever speaks to you, bring him to me, and he will not touch you anymore**- David promised to protect the woman, telling her to bring her persecutors before him for judgment. David says, "If you are any accusations of injustice that are made or any things that are perpetrated against you by anyone, bring that person to me and he will not bother you again."

**2 Samuel 14:11** Then she said, "Please let the king remember the LORD your God, so that the avenger of blood will not continue to destroy, otherwise they will destroy my son." And he said, "As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground."

- **let the king:** Ge 14:22 24:2,3 31:50 1Sa 20:42
- avenger of blood Num. 35:11-12.
- the revengers: Nu 35:19,27 De 19:4-10 Jos 20:3-6
- As the Lord: 1Sa 14:45 28:10 Jer 4:2
- not one hair: 1Ki 1:52 Mt 10:30 Ac 27:34

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 35:11-12 then you shall select for yourselves cities to be your cities of refuge, that the manslayer who has killed any person unintentionally may flee there. 12 'The cities shall be to you as a refuge from the avenger (**AVENGER OF BLOOD**), so that the manslayer will not die until he stands before the congregation for trial.

### SHE ASKS FOR OATH FROM DAVID

Then she said, "Please let the king remember the LORD your God, so that the [avenger of blood](#) will not continue to destroy, otherwise they will destroy my son." - NET - "let the king invoke the name of the LORD your God" CSB = "Please, may the king invoke the LORD your God" NLT - "Please swear to me by the LORD your God that you won't let anyone take vengeance against my son. I want no more bloodshed." She now makes a plea that the king invoke the Lord his God to prevent the [avenger of blood](#) from adding to the destruction so that her son will be protected and not destroyed The wise woman wanted an oath to seal the deal. The avenger of blood was the nearest relative of the deceased son who would seek to put to death the living son. She is pleading for her living son to be spared from the blood avenger and in essence is asking David to invoke God's Name in an oath, which would bind David to what he had said.

**And he said, "As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground-** David has gotten deeply and emotionally involved in this situation and now makes a commitment by an oath to the woman. In short, David capitulates, responding to her request. No harm would come to her son. These were the words the woman wanted to hear. The king had believed her story of personal tragedy and potential loss of her remaining son at the hands of the blood avenger. Thus David binds himself with an oath that the woman's son will not be harmed by the avenger of blood.

**Alan Redpath** - He guaranteed safety at the expense of justice, and immediately the farsighted woman captured him in her trap."

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**Avenger of blood** - (Heb. [goel](#), from verb *gaal*, "to be near of kin," "to redeem"), the nearest relative of a murdered person. It was his right and duty to slay the murderer (2 Sam. 14:7, 11) if he found him outside of a city of refuge. In order that this law might be guarded against abuse, Moses appointed six cities of refuge (Ex. 21:13; Num. 35:13; Deut. 19:1,9). These were in different parts of the country, and every facility was afforded the manslayer that he might flee to the city that lay nearest him for safety. Into the city of refuge the avenger durst not follow him. This arrangement applied only to cases where the death was not premeditated. The case had to be investigated by the authorities of the city, and the wilful murderer was on no account to be spared. He was regarded as an impure and polluted person, and was delivered up to the *goel* (Deut. 19:11-13). If the offence was merely manslaughter, then the fugitive must remain within the city till the death of the high priest (Num. 35:25). See [Jesus Christ-Our Blood Avenger](#).

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[Guzik](#) has a nice summary of factors which made this woman's appeal successful.

- She was a widow, which would invite sympathy.
- She lived at some distance from Jerusalem, which made it difficult to easily know or inquire of the facts of her case.
- She was old, which gave more dignity to her story.
- She wore the clothes of mourning to heighten the effect.
- She brought a case of family estrangement to David.
- She brought a case that was not too similar, lest it arouse David's suspicions.

2 Samuel 14:12 Then the woman said, "Please let your maidservant speak a word to my lord the king." And he said, "Speak."

- **Let:** 1Sa 25:24
- **speak a word:** Ge 18:27,32 44:18 Jer 12:1
- **speak:** Ac 26:1

### THE WOMAN'S REQUEST TO SPEAK A WORD

**Then the woman said, "Please let your maidservant speak a word to my lord the king." NET** -"Please permit your servant to speak to my lord the king about another matter." The woman's (Joab's) trap having trapped it's victim, King David, she will now speak words that bring out the hidden meaning of the fictitious parable, much like Nathan did when he said "You are the man!" (2Sa 12:7+) just after King David had invoked the Name of the LORD ("as the LORD lives") as he had just done in the present parable (2Sa 12:5-6+). It is interesting that the woman's words echo those of Abigail (1Sa 25:24).

**And he said, "Speak."** - The king grants permission commanding her to speak. Now the woman begins to reveal to David the real purpose in coming into his presence.

2 Samuel 14:13 The woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in speaking this word the king is as one who is guilty, in that the king does not bring back his banished one.

BGT 2 Samuel 14:13 κα ε πεν γυν να τ λογ σω τοιο το π λα ν θεο κ στ ματος το βασιλ ως λ γος ο τος ς πλημμ λεια το μ πιστρ ψαι τ ν βασιλ α τ ν ξωσμ νον α το

LXE 2 Samuel 14:13 And the woman said, Why hast thou devised this thing against the people of God? or is this word out of the king's mouth as a transgression, so that the king should not bring back his banished?

KJV 2 Samuel 14:13 And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.

NET 2 Samuel 14:13 The woman said, "Why have you devised something like this against God's people? When the king speaks in this fashion, he makes himself guilty, for the king has not brought back the one he has banished.

CSB 2 Samuel 14:13 The woman asked, "Why have you devised something similar against the people of God? When the king spoke as he did about this matter, he has pronounced his own guilt. The king has not brought back his own banished one.

ESV 2 Samuel 14:13 And the woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again.

NIV 2 Samuel 14:13 The woman said, "Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son?"

NLT 2 Samuel 14:13 She replied, "Why don't you do as much for the people of God as you have promised to do for me? **You have convicted yourself in making this decision, because you have refused to bring home your own banished son.**

NRS 2 Samuel 14:13 The woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again.

NJB 2 Samuel 14:13 The woman said, 'Why then has the king, who by giving this verdict has condemned himself, conceived the idea, against God's people's interests, of not bringing home the son whom he has banished?



- **Why then:** 2Sa 12:7 1Ki 20:40-42 Lu 7:42-44
- **people:** 2Sa 7:8 Jdg 20:2
- **in that the king:** 2Sa 13:37,38

## SHE PRESSES HOME THE APPLICATION TO ABSALOM

The woman said, "Why then have you planned (devised) such a thing (something similar or like this) against the people of God? For in speaking this word the king is as one who is guilty, in that the king does not bring back his banished one. NLT - "Why don't you do as much for the people of God as you have promised to do for me? You have convicted yourself in making this decision, because you have refused to bring home your own banished son." (2Sa 14:13NLT) The woman applied the principle of David's judgment in her case to his own situation with Absalom. Just as her fictitious son had murdered her other son and was guilty, so too was David's son Absalom guilty of murdering his other son Amnon. To make such an accusation, even though true, would have taken courage, because kings in the ancient near east could call for a person's head for the smallest of offenses. She had to wonder, would David be offended by this confrontative query?

[Anderson](#) paraphrases it - David, why is it that you've worked out this situation against the people of God for the protection of my son, and do you not convict yourself, for you have not made arrangements to bring back your own banished son? I am sure that David now recalls the encounter with Nathan when, after telling the parable, he makes it personal by saying to David, "You are the man."

**2 Samuel 14:14 "For we will surely die and are like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away life, but plans ways so that the banished one will not be cast out from him.**

- **we will surely die** 2Sa 11:25 Job 30:23 34:15 Ps 90:3,10 Ec 3:19,20 9:5 Heb 9:27
- **water:** Job 14:7-12,14 Ps 22:14 79:3
- **Yet God does not take away life.** God. De 10:17 Job 34:19 Mt 22:16 Ac 10:34 Ro 2:11 1Pe 1:17
- **plans ways:** Ex 21:13 Lev 26:40 Nu 35:15,25,28 Isa 50:1,2

## BREVITY OF LIFE CALLS FOR DAVID'S MERCY ON ABSALOM

**For** - Term of explanation. The wise woman adds substance to her question by giving a general explanation about all of our lives.

**We will surely die and are like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again-** NLT = "All of us must die eventually. Our lives are like water spilled out on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." She is speaking metaphorically of death. One implication of this true statement is that life is short, for when you die it is over. So don't waste the precious moments you have in your life.

**THOUGHT** - This is a good thought for all of us to ponder. Redeem the time, for the days are evil (Eph 5:16+). **Adoniram Judson** once wrote "A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity... If it has been a useless life, it can never be improved. Such will stand forever and ever. The same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever... **Each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny** (Note: Not in loss of salvation but of rewards - cp 1Co 3:11-15+, Jn 15:5, 2Co 5:10+, cf 1Ti 4:7, 8+). No day will lose its share of influence in determining where shall be our seat in heaven. How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness! It will then be too late to mend its appearance. It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly marked." (See page 33-34 of [A memoir of the life and labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson](#))

**Yet God does not take away life** - NLT = "God does not just sweep life away". She alludes to God's great mercy in not killing all of us, for we all sin and all deserve death, not life. David of all people would fully grasp this attribute of God, for he had personally experienced His great mercy in that Nathan (speaking for God) told him he would not die (2Sa 12:13+).

**THOUGHT** - Make things right before it's too late. We are all going to die, and then it will be too late to be

reconciled to people. Don't let your pride stand in the way of making things right. Her point is basically that David ought to show his own son the same compassion that he has shown towards this woman's son (if she has one). ([Rich Cathers](#))

**But** - Another glorious term of contrast, this one reversing direction for death to life!

**Plans ways so that the banished one will not be cast out from him**(NET - to be restored, CSB - so that the banished one from Him does not remain banished, ESV - so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.) - **NLT** = "Instead, he devises ways to bring us back when we have been separated from him." Sin separates, but God in His grace has a way of restoring us. He punishes sin, to be sure, but He also seeks for ways to reconcile sinners with Himself. Is this a veiled allusion to the complete and final atonement of the Cross of Christ? Even if that is not what she was alluding to, it is what we in retrospect know as the only way sinful men can be restored to fellowship with our King, the Holy God. Of course, her desire (via Joab) is that Absalom would be restored to relationship with King David. The king cannot restore Amnon to life, and neither must he kill the guilty Absalom, but must recall his banished son.

[Don Anderson](#) - In order to persuade the king to forgive, the crafty woman reminds him of the brevity of human life and of the mercy of God. We must all die, and when dead our life irrevocably gone. God does not act like this. He does not deprive the sinner of life but is merciful and does not cast off forever. How powerful is this message as David realizes that on the human plane he certainly is not acting like God has acted toward him on the vertical plane and forgiving he and Bathsheba and restoring them to fellowship with himself as soon as David expresses repentance.

[Believer's Study Bible](#) - This crafty woman recruited by Joab provided a superb analysis of the brevity of life and the finality of death, representing life as water poured out on the ground. She also reminded David of God's mercies, which caused God to develop means for the restoration of errant and wayward men. The idea is that the brevity of life makes it important for David to exercise mercy.

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#### **F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 2 Samuel 14:14 Yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him.**

The means that David devised were really inadequate. He allowed his heart to dictate to his royal sense of justice and rectitude, and permitted Absalom to return to his country and home without one word of confession, one symptom of penitence. The king was overmastered by the father; and the result was disastrous. It shook the respect of his people, undermined the foundations of just government, slackened the bands of every family in the land, and confirmed Absalom in his willful and obstinate career. "What!" said he to himself, "does my father bid me come back without conditions? Does he demand no confession or reparation? Then he condones my sin."

Let parents be warned. If your children disobey, and violate the rules of your home, you have no right to treat them as you did before, until they have owned their sin. You must insist on penitence, confession, and reparation, though it take hours or days or even weeks of suffering and pleading to bring it about.

Into what relief does David's mistake throw God's way of forgiveness and salvation! Had he acted as David, and as so many wish us to believe, He would have reinstated the human family in the Paradise of His love without waiting for the work of the Mediator; or the confession of the prodigal. By the arbitrary exercise of His sovereign will He might have wiped out the record of our sins without our concurrence. But it would have been to the irreparable undoing of man. Hence it behoved Christ to suffer, by His blood making an atonement for our sins, and by His Spirit bringing us to penitence and confession.

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#### **G Campbell Morgan - Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#)**

God . . . deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from Him.—2 Sa 14.14

This was the supreme argument employed by the wise woman of Tekoah, as, at the instigation of Joab, she sought to persuade David to recall Absalom. The story in itself is a somewhat perplexing one. Opinions widely differ as to why Joab thus set himself to bring back Absalom. These, however, need not concern us now. It is of great interest to observe that this woman knew God, and here uttered one of the most beautiful things, and the most true, ever said about Him. This is the whole of redemption revealed in a sentence. Man is banished from God by his own sin, and that most righteously; and, in the interest of the perfect order of all things, is necessarily banished. Nevertheless he, the banished one, is not abandoned by God. His love is unchanged toward the sinning man, even though His wrath is kindled against his sin. This is the love that will not let us go. But how can the banished one be saved from being an out-cast? The answer is that "God . . . deviseth means." In all the fulness of human history we learn how much that statement is worth. Literally the statement is that God "thinketh thoughts." These must be thoughts of holiness; and they are thoughts of love. Then they are thoughts in which both these combine, and discover a way of rescue, of recall, of restoration for banished souls. The thoughts of God then become thoughts of self-emptying, of sacrifice, and of taking all the responsibility for the

wrong of the banished one. Thus guilt is cancelled, and the way of return is made possible. It is a glorious word, this; and introduces us to the unfathomable mystery of the love of God, which in its working can never be interpreted; but in which the soul finds its healing and its perfect rest.

**2 Samuel 14:15 "Now the reason I have come to speak this word to my lord the king is that the people have made me afraid; so your maidservant said, 'Let me now speak to the king, perhaps the king will perform the request of his maidservant."**

## **SHE IS STILL CONTINUING HER PARABLE**

**Now the reason I have come to speak this word to my lord the king is that the people have made me afraid- NLT** - "because people have threatened me." Here the woman of Tekoa now returns to her own situation and plight.

**So your maidservant said, 'Let me now speak to the king, perhaps the king will perform the request of his maidservant- NLT** - "I said to myself, 'Perhaps the king will listen to me."

**2 Samuel 14:16 'For the king will hear and deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man who would destroy both me and my son from the inheritance of God.'**

**For the king will hear and deliver (rescue) his maidservant from the hand of the man who would destroy both me and my son (cut us off) from the inheritance of God.' - NET** - "Yes! The king may listen and deliver his female servant from the hand of the man who seeks to remove both me and my son from the inheritance God has given us!"

**MacArthur** - Those who were seeking to kill the son of the woman were like the people David feared who resented what Absalom had done and would have stood against a pardon for him.

**2 Samuel 14:17 "Then your maidservant said, 'Please let the word of my lord the king be comforting, for as the angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and evil. And may the LORD your God be with you.'"**

- **as an angel:** " 2Sa 14:20 19:27 1Sa 29:9 Pr 27:21 29:5
- **to discern:** Heb. to hear, 1Ki 3:9,28 Job 6:30 1Co 2:14,15 Heb 5:14

## **SHE FLATTERS THE KING**

**Then your maidservant said, 'Please let the word of my lord the king be comforting- NLT** - "May the word of my lord the king be my security."

**For as the angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and evil-** She uses a bit of hyperbole comparing David to **the angel of God**, perhaps to curry favor. The New Jerusalem Bible capitalizes "angel" so that they interpret this phrase as equivalent to [Angel of the LORD](#). Allusion to [Angel of the LORD](#) is unlikely. More to the point the king did serve in effect as God's messenger. So she is implying David's discernment does have some degree divine discernment. Perhaps she is flattering him (as a subtle means of manipulation), or perhaps she believes this is true. Either way, her "divine declaration" seems to have an effect on David for he becomes more clearly engaged in the next verse.

**Pulpit Commentary** - David's mission is too high for him to be influenced either by good words or by evil, but having patiently heard both sides, and calmly thought over the reasons for and against, he will decide righteously.

**And may the LORD your God be with you-** She blesses the king.

**Pulpit Commentary** - By such words she hoped to propitiate the king, who now could not fail to see that the errand of the woman was personal to himself.

**Wiersbe** summarizes the story - The woman now had David in a corner (2Sa 14:12-17). If he had agreed to protect a guilty son whom he did not know, how much more was he obligated to protect his own son whom he loved! She had come to him with a matter involving the future of one small family, but the matter concerning Absalom concerned the future of an entire nation. The king didn't want to see her only son and heir destroyed, but he was willing for the crown prince to be left in exile. He forgave the murderer of her son, so could he not forgive the man who plotted the murder of Amnon? How much longer will the king wait before he sends for his son? After all, life is brief, and when life ends, it's like water spilled into the earth and can't be recovered. Slaying the murderer can't bring back the victim, so why not give him another chance? (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

**2 Samuel 14:18 Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide anything from me that I am about to ask you." And the woman said, "Let my lord the king please speak."**

- **Please do not hide** 1Sa 3:17,18 Jer 38:14,25

## DAVID CALLS FOR COMPLETE DISCLOSURE

Full disclosure describes the need in transactions to tell the "whole truth" about the matter that the other party should know how to respond.

**Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide anything from me that I am about to ask you."**- David proved he was discerning for he senses there is [more than meets the eye](#) (ear) in the woman's story.

**And the woman said, "Let my lord the king please speak** - The wise woman wisely acquiesces to David's request. After all he is the king!

**2 Samuel 14:19 So the king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?" And the woman replied, "As your soul lives, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken. Indeed, it was your servant Joab who commanded me, and it was he who put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant;**

NLT - "Did Joab send you here?" And the woman replied, "My lord the king, how can I deny it? Nobody can hide anything from you. Yes, Joab sent me and told me what to say.

- **of Joab:** 2Sa 3:27,29,34 11:14,15 1Ki 2:5,6
- **As your soul:** 2Sa 11:11 1Sa 1:26 17:55 20:3 25:26 2Ki 2:2
- **turn:** Nu 20:17 De 5:32 28:14 Jos 1:7 Pr 4:27
- **put:** 2Sa 14:3 Ex 4:15 Lu 21:15

## DAVID CUTS TO THE CHASE

[Cut to the chase](#) is an idiom that means to reach the most important point quickly. Get to the point.

**So the king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?"** - David shows he does have keen discernment (like the angel of God) in finally recognizing this wise woman is a front for Joab. Presumably Joab had provided this woman entree to the king's presence and many have remained in the room while she told her tale. And this is why David would quickly suspect Joab was the brains behind the operation.

[Anderson](#) - The woman immediately responds with transparent truthfulness, commending the king for his wisdom and insight in asking the question, and then acknowledges the fact that Joab is the one who had instructed her to do it and who actually put all the words that she has spoken in her mouth.

**And the woman replied, "As your soul lives, my lord the king-** She essentially gives an oath, saying in effect "I solemnly swear on your life!" She is adding this as a touch of flattery to the king.

**no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken-** In other words David words have gone straight to the mark, turning neither to the right or the left. She is saying in essence that she cannot deny what the king has

insinuated and that he is absolutely correct

**Indeed, it was your servant Joab who commanded me, and it was he who put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant** - Now she confesses to her role as an actress playing out the script Joab had written for her. Notice she says Joab **commanded** her, which relieves her somewhat from the responsibility for telling the king a fictitious (untrue) story. She is saying in essence that she was only Joab's mouthpiece speaking Joab's words.

**2 Samuel 14:20 in order to change the appearance of things your servant Joab has done this thing. But my lord is wise, like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that is in the earth."**

- **in order to change the appearance:** 2Sa 5:23
- **But my lord is wise:** 2Sa 14:17 19:27 Job 32:21,22 Pr 26:28 29:5
- **to know:** Ge 3:5 Job 38:16-41 1Co 8:1,2

### WISE WOMAN EXPLAINS THE PARABLE'S PURPOSE

**in order to** - Term of purpose. Here giving the purpose for Joab using this indirect method to approach the king.

**Change the appearance of things your servant Joab has done this thing.** - **ESV** = "In order to change the course of things your servant Joab did this." **CSB** = "Joab your servant has done this to address the issue indirectly" **NLT** = "He did it to place the matter before you in a different light." **NAB** = "Your servant Joab did this to come at the issue in a roundabout way." Note she wisely calls Joab "your servant," explaining that he orchestrated this parable so that he might portray the matter (of Absalom's absence) in a different light.

**But my lord is wise, like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that is in the earth** - The wise woman goes a bit [over the top](#) in her praise of David declaring that he knows *everything* on earth, and comparing his wisdom to supernatural wisdom, as she had just done regarding his ability to discern good and evil (2Sa 14:17).

[Anderson](#) - Once again she refers to him as "an angel of God" and reveals Joab's whole purpose in the thing was to change the present situation.

**Henry Morris** - This testimony of the "wise woman of Tekoah" (2 Samuel 14:2), while exaggerating David's wisdom, does indicate that the highest degree of wisdom to which human wisdom can be compared is that of "the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth." Angels are said also to "excel in strength" (Psalm 103:20). Thus angels evidently understand natural processes and can manipulate and control them to some considerable degree.

**2 Samuel 14:21 Then the king said to Joab, 'Behold now, I will surely do this thing; go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom.'**

- I have done: 2Sa 14:11 1Sa 14:39 Mk 6:26

### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! DAVID ACQUIESCES

**Then** - Marks progress in the narrative, in this case the turn of events Joab had hoped the wise woman might accomplish. In short David dismisses the woman and gets Joab on the phone (so to speak).

**The king said to Joab** - Apparently the wise woman has left the stage and Joab has stepped on stage, front and center.

**"Behold** ([hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)) **now, I will surely do this thing** - In other words it is as good as done! **NET** - ""All right! I will do this thing!" **NJB** = ""Very well, the suit is granted." These were the words Joab had sought to hear from the king.

**Go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom** - One wishes David had said "bring back my son," as "young man" seems slightly distant from an emotional standpoint.

[Anderson](#) - After the lady from Tekoa leaves, David summons Joab and says to him, "Very well, I'll do it." He has been convinced by

the woman's story and the decision he made in her case as being what he needs to do in this situation. And he tells Joab he'll do it. He commands Joab to go 35 miles to the north and bring back the young man Absalom.

**2 Samuel 14:22 Joab fell on his face to the ground, prostrated himself and blessed the king; then Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, O my lord, the king, in that the king has performed the request of his servant."**

- **blessed**, 2Sa 19:39 Ne 11:2 Job 29:11 31:20 Pr 31:28
- **I have found**: Ge 6:8 Ex 33:16,17 Ru 2:2 1Sa 20:3

**Joab fell on his face to the ground, prostrated himself and blessed the king** - In response to David's command Joab demonstrates his reverence in his posturing and his gratitude in his blessing.

**MacArthur** feels "Joab's motives were selfish, in that he sought to ingratiate himself further with David for greater influence and power."

**Then Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, O my lord, the king, in that the king has performed the request of his servant - NLT** = ""At last I know that I have gained your approval, for you have granted me this request!" With this statement one can almost hear Joab breathe a sigh of relief, for David's acceptance of the his request in parabolic form. David does not accuse him of trickery or deception, but has received Joab's parable without reservation or hesitation. David discerned this was the right, godly thing to do. Notice the statement "**the request of his servant**" which would suggest that Joab had requested Absalom's return in the past.

**Anderson** - Joab is excited about David's cooperation with the plan to bring back Absalom and points up the fact that he is grateful for the favor he has found in the eyes of David on this occasion by the granting of the request.

**2 Samuel 14:23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.**

- **Geshur**: 2Sa 3:3 2Sa 13:37

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 3:2-3+ **Sons were born to David at Hebron**: his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; 3 and his second, Chileab (HE APPARENTLY DIED YOUNG), by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, **Absalom** the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmi, king of **Geshur**.



■ = A rough approximate map of the lands inhabited by Israelites or under *direct* central royal administration during the United Monarchy (according to the Bible). This is basically what is referred to by the recurring Biblical phrase "from Dan to Beersheba". ■ = The central core of ancient Judea. This area was part of a Jewish kingdom, or a Jewish province within a larger empire, almost continuously from the days of King David down to 135 CE.

## JOAB OBEYS KING COMPLETING MISSION

**So** - For this reason. Therefore. In conclusion Joab responds to David's command.

**Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem** - See location of **Geshur** in the NE section of the map above, just north and east of the Sea of Galilee in the southern portion of the Golan Heights in Bashan. Joab wasted no time and "**high-tailed**" it the 80 miles from Jerusalem to Geshur. Joab completes "mission impossible" in retrieving Absalom back to the city of David, this roundtrip taking about 8-10 days.

**2 Samuel 14:24** However the king said, "Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face." So Absalom turned to his own house and did not see the king's face.

- **Let him turn to his own house** 2Sa 14:28 3:13 Ge 43:3 Ex 10:28 Rev 22:4

## DAVID'S INCOMPLETE FORGIVENESS SOWS SEEDS OF BITTERNESS

You would think that if David were responding to this situation in a godly fashion, he would have been watching from the roof of the palace for Absalom and Joab to appear on the horizon and would have run to get his arms around the boy to bring about reconciliation and a restoration of the relationship like the [Prodigal Son](#). What's the difference with the prodigal? The prodigal returned humbly, in repentance (See [Prodigal Son](#)), but that was not the case with Absalom!

**However the king said, "Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face."** - This is a sad verse. One who has been reading to this point in the narrative would have thought David would have been like the father receiving home his [Prodigal Son](#) who when he "saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him." (Lk 15:20+). However as noted above, this story of a son returning has some major differences. Sadly the story does not continue in a godly direction. David responded to Joab's parable, but seems not able to grant full forgiveness to his son.

[Don Anderson](#) - David only half-heartedly forgives his son, and this just sows the seeds of a worse rebellion. It is also interesting to note that there is no evidence of any penitence or sorrow on the part of Absalom, either. David's forgiveness of Absalom was completely inadequate, leading only to a further outbreak of sin. God's forgiveness, on the other hand, is completely adequate and is a great deterrent to continued sin. David didn't forgive his son, like God had forgiven David. It is hard for us to understand because David knew the forgiveness of God and he still was a man after the heart of God, even while he was going through this period of his life after God's forgiveness. God did not forgive David half-heartedly. God did not say, "Well, I forgive you but we'll not have fellowship anymore. I will not restore you to the joy of your salvation." When God forgives, he forgives completely.

Of what would David have to forgive Absalom? Murder of David's first born son! But of what had God the Father forgiven David? Murder of Uriah! To be sure David confessed, while there is no evidence Absalom ever confessed.

**Laney** adds that "The recall of Absalom from Geshur was immediately arranged, and the king's son was escorted by Joab back to Jerusalem. However, although Absalom was back in Jerusalem, he was refused an audience with the king. That evidenced David's unwillingness to completely forgive and bore bitter fruit in the heart of Absalom. (Borrow [First and Second Samuel](#) )

**So Absalom turned to his own house and did not see the king's face** - David a man after God's own heart, once again shows us he is still a man with a fallen man's heart of sinful flesh, and he fails to fully forgive which was the final act in Joab's parable. David's failure to fully forgive and restore Absalom to his court was like sowing seeds in the heart of Absalom, seeds which would reap the fruit of bitterness and associated acts by Absalom.

**THOUGHT** - Forgiveness! Oh the beauty of this word, the center word of which is "give." The beauty is to give expecting nothing in return. To give unconditionally. To give and forgive like God forgives us - completely and without reservation or hesitation when we confess our sins. Is there someone you once were close to that you would say "I have forgiven them," but you know in your heart of hearts that you have not completely, totally forgive them. Then read and heed, empowered by the Spirit of the forgiving God, the liberating words of Paul in Eph 4:32+ "**Be** ([present imperative](#) and the ONLY WAY you can obey is by [depending on the Holy Spirit's enabling power to obey](#)) kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving ([charizomai](#) in present tense = continually! Note root of this verb is [charis](#) = grace - fully forgiving is like showing God's grace to a fellow human being) each other, **JUST AS** God in Christ also has forgiven you." O beloved, don't hold back. Don't

cling to some of rights you think you have. Instead cling to the almighty Cross, for His amazing, enabling grace flows down from that old rugged cross. Forgive completely and experience complete liberation in your spirit. In light of the vital importance of the truth about forgiveness, if you are still wrestling with whether you should follow through and fully forgive, you might want to ponder the thoughts in the resources below. Jesus Himself said "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free and if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!" (John 8:32, 36)

#### Related Resources:

- [List of links related to forgiveness/unforgiveness](#)
- [Multiple illustrations and quotes related to forgiveness/unforgiveness](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Ephesians 4:32](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Colossians 3:13](#)
- [Exposition of "Forgiveness" in Matthew 6:12 and Matthew 6:14-15](#)
- [Is Total Forgiveness Realistic?](#)

**Excellent 5 Part Sermon Series on Forgiveness by Dr Ray Pritchard:** following messages are also in his book -**The Healing Power of Forgiveness** ([see reviews by readers](#))

- [1\) Forgiveness Healing the Hurt We Never Deserved](#)
- [2\) Forgiveness and the Lord's Prayer](#)
- [3\) Judge Not!](#)
- [4\) Is Total Forgiveness Realistic](#)
- [5\) The Final Step-Blessing Your Enemies](#)

#### Other Resources on Forgiveness

- [Father, Forgive Them by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiving the Unforgivable by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [How Can I Learn to Forgive? by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Unless You Forgive by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiving the Unforgivable article by Dr. Ray Pritchard](#)
- [Forgiveness of Injuries \(Mt 18:21-22\) by John Angell James](#)
- [Forgiveness of Sins by Henry Law - 17 Chapter Treatise!](#)

**2 Samuel 14:25** Now in all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom, so highly praised; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no defect in him.

- **in all Israel:** 1Sa 9:2 16:7 Pr 31:30 Mt 23:27
- **from the sole:** De 28:35 Job 2:7 Isa 1:6 Eph 5:27

### **ABSALOM'S ADONIS-LIKE APPEARANCE**

**Now - Now** is used to draw attention to a particular statement or point in a narrative.

**in all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom, so highly praised**- Literal Hebrew says "And as Absalom there was not a beautiful man in all Israel to praise greatly." Recall that David was also known for his handsome appearance, but he is now pushing 60 so had lost some of that youthful luster (at age 76 I speak from experience).

**from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no defect(blemish) in him** - NLT - "He was flawless from head to foot." As the crown prince, the next in succession, the writer emphasizes that Absalom looked like a king in waiting (and he would not have to wait long! - See 2Sa 15:1-37).

**HCSB Study Bible** adds "The description of Absalom's physical appearance makes him sound like a leader, and it prepares the reader for Absalom's coup attempt in chapter 15."

**J D Greear** - subtitles 2 Samuel 14:25–33 "From Family Destruction to National Unraveling" Unfortunately, David remains stuck in



passivity. Perhaps he was nursing old wounds, wallowing in self-pity. Perhaps he was busying himself with other kingly duties. Either way, his failure to act would result in further destruction. Now, instead of just watching his own family unravel, his apathy would lead to the unraveling of a nation. Absalom is a ticking time bomb, and the question is not if but only when and how he will explode ([Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**2 Samuel 14:26** When he cut the hair of his head (and it was at the end of every year that he cut it, for it was heavy on him so he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head at 200 shekels by the king's weight.

- **When he cut the hair:** 2Sa 18:9 Isa 3:24 1Co 11:14
- **two hundred shekels:** Ge 23:16 Lev 19:36 Eze 45:9-14

### **ABSALOM'S "[BIG HAIR](#)" MANIFESTING BIG "[MACHISMO](#)!"**

**When he cut the hair of his head (and it was at the end of every year that he cut it, for it was heavy on him so he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head at 200 shekels by the king's weight** - NLT - "When he weighed it out, it came to **five pounds!**" Another source says 200 shekels is the modern equivalent of about **three pounds**. But the real question to ask is who weighs their **hair**? And notice the text says that **h e** (Absalom) **weighed** it! This man is arrogant and is manifesting [machismo](#) (aggressive masculine pride) "on steroids!"

The only thing weighty about Absalom was his hair!

[Believer's Study Bible](#) - Absalom was the most handsome of all men in Israel (v. 25). One of his remarkable physical attributes was his prolific growth of hair. In fact, Absalom cut it annually because of its density and weight. The actual weight of the royal shekel is not known. Two hundred sacred shekels would register about five pounds. Since this seems unlikely, either the royal shekel was considerably less, or the amount is being expressed in value rather than in quantity.

**TSK Note** - If the shekel be allowed to mean the common shekel, the amount will be utterly incredible; for Josephus says that "two hundred shekels make five {mine:}" and the {mina,} he says, "weighs two pounds and a half;" which calculation makes Absalom's hair weigh twelve pounds and a half! But it is probable that the king's shekel was that which Epiphanius and Hesychius say was the fourth part of an ounce, half a {stater,} or two drachms: the whole amount, therefore, of the 200 shekels is about 50 ounces, which make 4 lb. 2 oz. troy weight, or 3 lb. 2 oz. avoirdupois. This need not be accounted incredible, especially as abundance of oil and ointment was used by the ancients in dressing their heads. Josephus informs us, that the Jews also put gold dust in their hair.

**Wiersbe** - The parallels between Absalom and Samson are interesting. Both were distinguished by their hair, for Samson was a Nazirite (Judg. 13:1–5), and both set fields on fire (Jdg. 15:4–5). The loss of his hair caused Samson's defeat (Judg. 16:17ff), and it's probable that Absalom's thick hair helped to trap his head in the tree branches, where Joab found him and killed him (2 Sam. 18:9–17). (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

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#### **QUESTION - [What was the sanctuary shekel?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Exodus 30:13 speaks of a [shekel](#) of the sanctuary, stating, "Each one who crosses over to those already counted [in the census] is to give a half shekel, according to the sanctuary shekel, which weighs twenty gerahs. This half shekel is an offering to the LORD."

Scholars are uncertain what exactly a shekel was, but here is one calculation of its value: the sanctuary shekel was defined as 20 gerahs. A gerah has been traditionally measured as 1/50 of an ounce, or 0.6 gram. The sanctuary shekel would then equal 0.4 of an ounce of gold (20 times 1/50 of an ounce), or 12 grams. Based on a price of 46.43 USD per gram, the approximate value of a sanctuary shekel would be \$557.16, in today's market.

An important distinction is that the standard shekel and the sanctuary shekel were two different weights. This is the reason the shekel in Exodus 30:13 is defined as a particular kind of shekel called "the shekel of the sanctuary." This shekel was defined by weights kept in the tabernacle as the standard.

A standard shekel weighed 11.5 grams. Later, a "shekel" would also refer to a coin. In Amos 8:5, God condemns the use of a false shekel: "Making the ephah small and the shekel large, falsifying the scales by deceit" (NKJV).

Throughout the Old Testament, the shekel was used to weigh gold (Genesis 24:22), cinnamon (Exodus 30:23), hair (2 Samuel

14:26), iron (2 Samuel 17:7), myrrh (Exodus 30:23), and food rations (Ezekiel 4:10).

Outside of the Books of Moses, only one passage mentions the sanctuary shekel. Ezekiel 45:12 says, "The shekel is to consist of twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels equal one mina." Though not mentioned explicitly as the sanctuary shekel, the same amount is referenced. Interestingly, this is the same section of Scripture in which [Ezekiel](#) prophesies regarding the future Jewish temple (often referred to as the Millennial Temple).

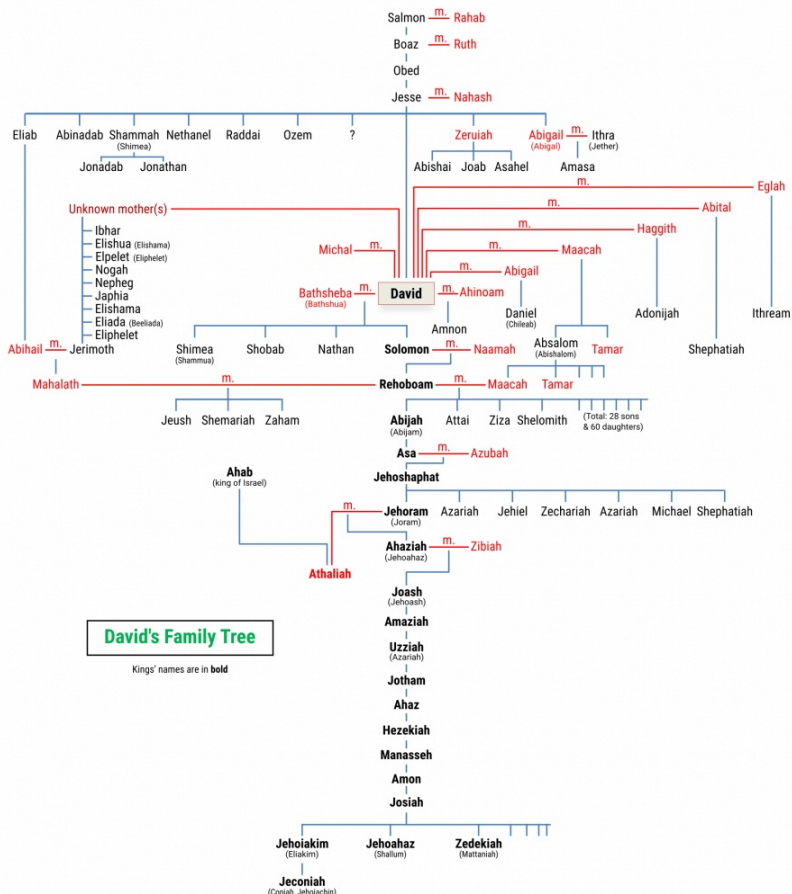
The sanctuary shekel differed from both the shekel and the common weight. Approximations can be made to give an idea of the value of a sanctuary shekel, but uncertainty remains regarding the exact weight. The important thing is that there was a standard system of weights and measures, and God's people paid a tax during the census under Moses. This tax was used to provide for the needs of the [tabernacle](#) and its leaders. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 14:27 To Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a woman of beautiful appearance.**

- **born:** 2Sa 18:18 Job 18:16-19 Isa 14:22 Jer 22:30
- **Tamar:** 2Sa 13:1

**Related Passages:**

2 Samuel 18:18+ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to preserve my name." So he named the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.



Click to Enlarge David's Family Tree  
Source: [Bibletales.online](#)

## ABSALOM'S FAMILY

**To Absalom there were born three sons,** In 2Sa 18:18+ Absalom justifies why he erects a monument to himself saying "I have no son to preserve my name." Evidently all three of Absalom's sons had died while still young (note the three sons are depicted on the

Family Tree above with 3 lines but without names.)

**and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a woman of beautiful appearance**- She was beautiful, just like her namesake, Absalom's violated sister, who Absalom sought to honor. This is a good trait of Absalom.

It is interesting that the **Septuagint** adds this note "and she becomes the wife of Roboam son of Solomon, and she bears to him Abia" but none of the other English translations add this note. According to 1Ki 15:2, Maachah the daughter of Solomon married Rehoboam (as shown in the Family Tree above).

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### **Walter Kaiser - 2Sa 14:27; 18:18 Did Absalom Have Three Sons or None?**

Some scholars find an irresolvable conflict between 14:27 and 18:18, usually taking the latter to be the authentic, original and earlier text. Is this resolution of the problem the correct one? The most reasonable supposition is that the three sons are left unnamed, while contrary to usual convention their sister Tamar's name is given, because the three boys died in childhood. There is nothing in the text or from external records that would support this thesis at this time, but this is the only explanation that will satisfy all the evidence. It may have been this sorrowful event that later motivated Absalom to build a monument for himself, so that his own name would be remembered. Absalom observed that he had no sons, therefore the need for the monument. (See page 196 in [Hard Sayings](#))

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### **2 Samuel 14:28 Now Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, and did not see the king's face.**

- **and did not see:** 2Sa 14:24

## **TWO YEARS OF TOTAL ESTRANGEMENT**

**Family estrangement** is the loss of a previously existing relationship between family members, through physical and/or emotional distancing,

**Now Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, and did not see the king's face**- First notice that the writer repeats the phrase **DID NOT SEE THE KING'S FACE** (v24, 28)! This has to be one of the sadder verses in the chronicles of a man after God's own heart. Surely every day you could "feel" the tension mounting between David and Absalom in the holy city! The populace would have been aware of this rift between the king and the king in waiting! That would not have been a good national vibration!

**THOUGHT**- How we praise our Father, that when we sin against Him (all sin is against Him) and we confess and repent, He forgives us as far as the east is from the west. And we have full access to His face in a spiritual sense ("fellowship with the Father" - 1Jn 1:3+)! 1 John 1:6-7+ is clear that "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but **IF** we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses (present tense - continually) us from all sin."

**Guzik** - This was an awkward and dangerous half-reconciliation between father and son that went on for two years.

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**QUESTION:** [What does the Bible say about being passive-aggressive?](#) -

**ANSWER:** A passive-aggressive person is one who appears to comply with a request but actually resists in subtle ways. The resistance can range from pouting to delayed vindictiveness. We all exhibit passive-aggressive behaviors at some point, usually as children when it was not safe to openly rebel. However, as we mature, we should be learning healthier behaviors such as setting boundaries and expressing disagreements more openly. The Bible does not use the term *passive-aggression*, but it does give us character sketches of people who exhibited passive-aggressive traits and the results of that behavior.

King David's son [Absalom](#) is an example of a passive-aggressive person (2 Samuel 14:28–33). After Absalom had murdered his brother Amnon (2 Samuel 13:20), David banished him from the kingdom. Even when he was allowed to return, David refused to have anything to do with him. But Absalom was full of pride and hated his father. He summoned Joab, the commander of David's armies, to send a message to David. When Joab twice refused the summons, Absalom set fire to his crops in the field. He then began plotting to take the kingdom from his father, but he did so by feigning compassion and concern for the citizenry. He hinted that his father was not attending to the needs of the people, and that, if crowned king, he, Absalom, would see that their needs were met. Absalom's plan was working,

**and “he stole the hearts of the people of Israel” (2 Samuel 15:6). Passive-aggressive people are possibly more dangerous than openly aggressive ones because we don’t see the attack coming.**

[King Ahab](#) of Israel demonstrated passive-aggressive behavior when he coveted the vineyard of a neighbor and was denied its purchase (1 Kings 21:1–4). His response to being denied what he wanted was to sulk and pout and refuse to eat. His passive-aggressive actions prompted his wicked wife Jezebel to concoct a scheme to kill Naboth, the vineyard owner, and give her husband the land. She lied, forged her husband’s signature, and slandered the innocent Naboth, leading to his public execution. The Lord immediately sent [Elijah the prophet](#) to proclaim to Ahab that God had seen all that happened and that Ahab’s death would soon follow Naboth’s (1 Kings 21:17–22). It was Ahab’s passive-aggressive behavior that had begun the disastrous chain of events.

Passive-aggressive speech and behavior are cowardly ways of avoiding conflict. By pretending to be pleasant while inwardly seething with resentment, we fool ourselves into thinking we are peacemakers practicing self-control. In truth, we are communicating contempt and disapproval without having the courage to openly say so. An ancient Chinese proverb defines passive-aggression like this: “Behind the smile, a hidden knife!”

Social media has turned passive-aggression into an art form. We all know what it means when we are “unfriended,” “unfollowed,” or blocked. Some find it easier to vent their frustrations on social media than have a private conversation with someone who has offended them. However, what begins as passive-aggression can quickly mushroom into online bullying. The internet and the proliferation of smartphones have created dozens of ways for passive-aggressive people to exact revenge from behind the relative safety of a screen. Whether spoken, acted, or typed, passive-aggressive responses are harmful and dishonest. We are pretending to be unoffended while secretly planning ways to get even.

Leviticus 19:17 says, “Do not harbor hatred against your brother. Rebuke your neighbor directly, and you will not incur guilt because of him.” The Bible instructs us to confront sin in a loving and humble way, taking someone with us if the offender will not listen (Matthew 18:15–17). We are to be ready to forgive and restore when someone repents (Luke 17:3). Passive-aggression bypasses those critical steps in a relationship and goes directly to judgment (John 7:24). Rather than openly confront the wrong and offer an opportunity to clear the air, passive-aggressive people slide silently into the judge’s seat and devise subtle ways to get even.

**Passive-aggressive traits are often so well-concealed that we are not even aware of them. We can identify behaviors that may suggest we are being passive-aggressive by asking ourselves a few questions:**

1. Do I imply guilt when someone has something I can’t have? Example: “I love your dress. I wish I could afford something like that, but I have to take care of my mother.”
2. Do I give backhanded compliments to mask my jealousy? Example: “Oh, your new house is cute—for a starter home.”
3. Do I make a point to ignore or behave coldly toward someone with whom I’ve disagreed? Example: The person strikes up a conversation, but I keep checking my phone or glancing over the person’s shoulder.
4. Do I gossip about someone rather than address that person directly? Example: James was confused when he did not get the promotion he was promised. But rather than confronting the boss about it, he started rumors that the boss was dishonest.
5. Do I try to sabotage someone else’s success when he or she has offended me? Example: “Oh, I know you’re on a diet, but I couldn’t resist blowing my paycheck on this cake for you.”
6. Do I keep score and make certain that slights and snubs are kept even? Example: Sue did not invite me to her last dinner, so I send my party invitations to everyone in the office but her.
7. Do I hide behind vague comments on social media, geared toward embarrassing, shaming, or exposing someone whom I have not addressed face to face? Example: John posts on Facebook, “Some people need to learn that friendship is more than asking for bail money.”

Keeping Jesus’ [Golden Rule](#) would obliterate passive-aggression (Matthew 7:12). We are to treat others the way we want them to treat us, not the way they have already treated us. Regardless of how someone else acts, we are to respond with kindness, patience, and forgiveness (Ephesians 4:31–32). When we stand before God one day, He will not ask us how we were treated, but how we treated others (Romans 14:12). With His help, we can recognize our own passive-aggressive tendencies and replace them with the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–25). [Gotquestions.org](#) (Bolding added)

**2 Samuel 14:29 Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but he would not come to him. So he sent again a second time, but he would not come.**

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, but Joab refused to come. Absalom sent for him a second time, but again Joab refused to come.

- **but he would:** 2Sa 14:30,31 Es 1:12 Mt 22:3

## ABSALOM DOUBLE DISS BY JOAB

**Then** - Marks progression in the storyline. This is 3 years after Absalom's return from exile.

**Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king** - NLT - Then Absalom sent for Joab to ask him to intercede for him

**But he would not come to him. So he sent again a second time, but he would not come** - Joab's double "[diss](#)." This is odd because David is 3 years older and Absalom is 3 years closer to becoming the next king of Israel. And Joab is the one who had orchestrated the old wise widow's tale to coerce the king to bring Absalom from exile in Geshur!

**2 Samuel 14:30 Therefore he said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire.**

- **go and set:** 2Sa 13:28,29 Jdg 15:4,5
- **Absalom's:** 1Ki 21:9-14 2Ki 9:33 10:6,7

Setting a Fire Under Joab (So to Speak)!

## ABSALOM'S REVENGE WHEN JOAB DISSES HIM!

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Joab's double "[diss](#)" of Absalom would reap a destructive deed by Absalom.

**he said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire** - This is one way to force a face to face conversation -- create a confrontation! Absalom's command carries significant weight, even when it potentially could cause trouble to the servants for committing this evil deed. Setting a person's field ablaze is certainly one way to get person's attention! But it is not the best way! Absalom shows here his lack of wisdom (wise living)!

Sometimes God gets *our* attention by setting our "barley field" on fire!

-- David Guzik

**2 Samuel 14:31 Then Joab arose, came to Absalom at his house and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"**

Related Passage:

Exodus 22:6 "If a fire breaks out and spreads to thorn bushes, so that stacked grain or the standing grain or the field itself is consumed, he who started the fire shall surely make restitution.

## ABSALOM LIGHTS A FIRE UNDER JOAB!

[To light a fire under someone](#) means to stimulate them to work or act more quickly or enthusiastically! Referring to a time when, if [chimney sweeps](#) were afraid to ascend a chimney, the fire would be lit under them in order to motivate them to climb to the top.

**J D Greear** - David may not have much cared to reconcile with his son, but at this point Joab has been given renewed motivation. Joab becomes, once again, the primary agent attempting to get David and Absalom to settle their feud. Joab is able to get Absalom

back into King David's presence, but all is not well in Jerusalem. Like most dysfunctional families these two never address the five years of silence or the heinous acts that precipitated them. They gloss over the deeper issues—a tactic that never ends well. David, for his part, should have known better. His failure to address Tamar's rape enraged Absalom to begin with. Now he is confronted with the same hotheaded son, a son who is still seething and liable to do tremendous violence. But David's response is the same. Sadly so is Absalom's. ([Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**Then** - This marks progress (is this really "progress"?) in the narrative, from a fiery field to a "fiery" confrontation.

**Joab arose, came to Absalom at his house and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire-** Joab's question is reasonable but he is astute and surely has some clue that his double "[diss](#)" was the culprit. Joab knew that according to Ex 22:6 Absalom must make restitution.

**2 Samuel 14:32 Absalom answered Joab, 'Behold, I sent for you, saying, 'Come here, that I may send you to the king, to say, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me still to be there." ' Now therefore, let me see the king's face, and if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death.'**

**NLT** - And Absalom replied, "Because I wanted you to ask the king why he brought me back from Geshur if he didn't intend to see me. I might as well have stayed there. Let me see the king; if he finds me guilty of anything, then let him execute me."

- it had been: Ex 14:12 16:3 17:3
- if there: Ge 3:12 1Sa 15:13 Ps 36:2 Pr 28:13 Jer 2:22,23 8:12 Mt 25:44 Ro 3:19

### **ABSALOM'S REPLY TO JOAB**

**Absalom answered Joab, "Behold, I sent for you, saying, 'Come here, that I may send you to the king, to say, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me still to be there."** Absalom's logic is not wrong. Joab was in the wrong. But Joab's two wrongs (double "[diss](#)") did not make Absalom's action right!

**Now therefore, let me see the king's face, and if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death."**- In his bravado, he is willing to risk his life to see the king. He surely knows the king would not truly put him to death. He knows that his father is soft on sin in his own children, as evidenced by his failure to punish Amnon appropriately. Absalom knows the law that in fact his iniquity (murder of Amnon) did warrant a death sentence from king David, something he is sure David would never command. In any event, he wants to bring the matter of Amnon's death to a head by meeting with David.

[Guzik](#) on **if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death**- This statement reflects Absalom's sense that he was fully justified in what he did.

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#### **Devotional on [BURNING BARLEY FIELDS](#) by David Guzik -**

Here are two points of application from this Old Testament passage.

First, in many ways Absalom is a good picture of our modern age. Absalom was amoral – he simply didn't care about morality. Absalom was a great pragmatist – someone who believes that if something *works*, it is right. For the pragmatist, right and wrong are that easy – if burning Joab's field gets Joab's attention, then do it. It is good because it works.

It seems that in many ways modern culture (and the modern church) has warmly embraced pragmatism. We simply look to what works – especially, what works for us – and we call that *good*. (**ED COMMENT** - SOUNDS LIKE Jdg 21:25+! OR "[THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS](#)") Success is the ultimate good, and everything serves success. If you have to lie or cheat to succeed, then go ahead and do it. From the political lie to corrupt corporate accounting, pragmatism seems to rule.

Yet we know that God cares about more than immediate success. God cares about the heart, and can use even – perhaps *especially* use – our weakness and failure. Think about the difference in heart between Absalom and the Prodigal Son of Jesus' parable (Luke 15:11-32+) . [The Prodigal Son](#) came back humble and repentant. Absalom came back burning Joab's fields. *How* we do things matters to God, not only the end results.

Second, we can see another angle of application in this picture. We know that sometimes God gets *our* attention by setting our

“barley field” on fire. We can picture God trying to get our attention just as Absalom tried to get Joab’s attention. Joab kept putting Absalom off – until the barley field was burned. *Then* Absalom had Joab’s full attention. Yet we should not think that God is amoral in this – there are many differences between the two situations. Most notably, Joab’s barley field belonged to Joab and *not* to Absalom. Yet God has a claim to everything we are and everything we have. If He “burns our barley field” He has a right to – since it ultimately belongs to Him anyway.

If your barley field is smoldering, maybe a loving God is requesting your full attention. The sooner you give it to Him, the better it will be for everyone.

**2 Samuel 14:33 So when Joab came to the king and told him, he called for Absalom. Thus he came to the king and prostrated himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.**

- **kissed Absalom:** Ge 27:26 33:4 45:15 Lu 15:20

#### **Related Passage:**

Luke 15:20+ “So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Joab brings Absalom to David

## **DAVID CALLS FOR AND KISSES ABSALOM**

It would be very difficult to imagine the emotional upheaval in Absalom’s heart to know that he’s been brought back to the city of Jerusalem and to his house, and yet he has not been restored and welcomed by his father. He still has to live day after day with the reality of rejection on the part of his father the king.

Things will never really be right between Absalom and his father. And when they finally do come together here in this last verse, it’s sort of a nice ritual but there is not a forgiving spirit.

**So when Joab came to the king and told him, he called for Absalom-** After 3 years of estrangement, at the initiation of Absalom, not David, David called for his son. Note the difference between David’s actions that of the prodigal’s father in Lk 15:20+.

**Thus he came to the king and prostrated himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom-** Absalom is bowing on the outside but is not bowing where it is really important, on the inside! It took five years (3 in Geshur and 2 in Jerusalem) for David to restore Absalom to court privileges. David’s kiss however seems almost [perfunctory](#) (superficial), but it was a way to signify David’s judicial forgiveness of Absalom. However, one kingly kiss would not heal wounds that had been festering from 5 years of broken relationship! As the story unfolds, a lot of festering had occurred in the heart of Absalom for those 5 years and the corrupt fruit of those emotions would not prove to be pretty! While both men had faults, David as the king who should have been the initiator of reconciliation, was in effect sowing seeds to the flesh and from his flesh would reap corruption!

**THOUGHT** - What kind of seeds are you sowing in your relationships (spouse, children, family, co-workers)? Paul’s principle of sowing and reaping is applicable to all of us (Galatians 6:7-8+). Ask God to search your heart and see if you have any hurtful ways and ask Him to show you and remove them (Ps 139:23-24+). Life is too short to hold grudges that fracture relationships between those who once you were close to!

**Guzik** - Absalom outwardly submits to David, but David’s two-year refusal to reconcile left a legacy of bitterness in Absalom that turned out badly for David, for Absalom, and for Israel....David offered Absalom forgiveness without any repentance or resolution of the wrong. In personal relationships, it is often a sign of love and graciousness to overlook a wrong. Proverbs 10:12 says, *Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.* But as king of Israel, this was more than a personal matter with David. He was the “chief judge” of Israel and David excused and overlooked Absalom’s obvious crimes.

**Anderson** - We see Absalom as he lies down on the ground before the king and the king kisses him. Maybe this impresses you but it sure doesn’t do much for me in the light of a reunion of father and son. The king leaned over and kissed him, and that was it. It’s a formal nicety but there was not forgiveness and Absalom knew it. Partial forgiveness leads only to BONDAGE AND BITTERNESS !

**Laney** adds that “after living in Jerusalem two full years, he was restored to favor with David, but the seed of bitterness had been sown; and for two years Absalom had nourished it in the anger of his heart. The seed would soon bear the fruit of conspiracy and

rebellion against his father David. Being shunned by David for two full years in Jerusalem caused Absalom to grow bitter. That bitter resentment eventuated in rebellion against his father the king.”(Borrow [First and Second Samuel](#) )

**J. Vernon McGee** points out, “God had not forgiven David halfheartedly. God did not say, ‘Well, I forgive you, but we will not have fellowship anymore. I will not restore completely. You and I are admonished, ‘And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven you.’ How are we to forgive other? The same way as God does. David should have forgiven Absalom. He is setting the stage for rebellion. David made a blunder in not forgiving his son as God had forgiven David. He will live to regret it.”

**Redpath** - David’s forgiveness of Absalom was completely inadequate, leading to a further outbreak of sin. God’s forgiveness of a man’s soul is completely adequate, and a great deterrent to continued sin. (PDF - [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Redpath** adds “What kind of forgiveness is that? I’ll tell you - - it is the kind we want from God but we never get. O God, forgive us, but please let us go on doing what we are doing. Don’t demand of us repentance. Don’t demand a broken heart. Don’t demand from us a turning away from sin. Lord, please forgive us, for we need to be forgiven, but don’t, please don’t expect any change. God refuses those terms altogether. He will never forgive at the expense of justice. In this instance, David proved the utter futility of any attempt to do so....May God write it on your soul: if the pardon you want is that God should wink at your sin, He will not do it.” (PDF - [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Vos** points out, “Joab lost no time in bringing Absalom back to Jerusalem but David tragically did not forgive his son completely. Absalom was confined to his own house for two years without seeing the king. Thus he had plenty of time to nurse his disaffection for the king, and the gulf between them widened.”

**Ackroyd** points out, “Again we observe the irony of the narrative. This turnabout in the affair will bring back Absalom but not to succession and well-being for the kingdom. David’s security will be radically threatened. Absalom will die. The refusal of David to see Absalom represents the vacillation between favor and disfavor. It is as if the king cannot make up his mind to a full reconciliation.”

**Pulpit Commentary** - whatever may have been his professions, Absalom’s subsequent conduct is proof that he still regarded Amnon’s death as a just retribution for his conduct to Tamar, and secretly cherished a sullen anger against his father for not having punished the wrong doer himself. It was the contrast between his own five years of punishment and the mere verbal reproof which was all that Amnon had to suffer for his shameless conduct, which rankled in Absalom’s mind, and gave him an excuse for finally plotting his father’s ruin.

**Ron Lee Davis** in his book [A forgiving God in an unforgiving world \(BORROW THIS BOOK\)](#) says, “The forgiveness we must build into our lives and which we seek to model to our children must be free. It must be immediate; it must be final and continuous. We must forgive and forget. That is what the forgiveness of Christ is like. So must our forgiveness be. Over the years I have heard a lot of teaching and preaching on the subject of Colossians 3:20 – ‘Children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord.’ Yet I’ve heard almost no teaching at all on the very next verse. Indeed, I believe Colossians 3:21 to be one of the most ignored verse in all the New Testament’s teaching on the Christian home. In the New International Version that verse reads: ‘Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.’ The New American Standard Bible says, ‘Fathers, do not exasperate your children that they may not lose heart.’ (Forgiveness & restored relationships are the key to God’s mighty working in our midst!) In the original Greek that word ‘fathers’ literally means ‘parents’, Moms and Dads. What does the apostle Paul mean when he warns Moms and Dads “Don’t embitter your children. Don’t exasperate your children or they’ll become discouraged and lose heart.”

**Rich Cathers** - What went wrong? It’s hard to know just what went wrong with Absalom. It could be that David made a mistake in restoring Absalom. Some have suggested that David should have fully restored him sooner. Bringing him back but not talking with him is a lot like holding a grudge against a person. **Illustration of Holding A Grudge** = One day a visitor leaned on the old fence around a farm, while he watched an old farmer plowing with a mule. After a while, the visitor said, “I don’t like to tell you how to run your business, but you would not have to work so hard if you would just say, “gee” and “haw” to that mule instead of just tugging on those lines. The old farmer stopped and pulled a big handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his face. Then he said, “Reckon you’re right, but this animal kicked me five years ago and I ain’t spoke to him since.” Holding grudges can cause us trouble.