

# The CHRONICLES of the KINGS

## The Sword Will Never Depart

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 12:10

March 14, 2026

Since the story today is not found in Chronicles, we will focus our attention on 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 13-20

As we learned last week, there were some significant consequences attached to David's decisions regarding Bathsheba. The most far reaching of those consequences was Yahweh's declaration that the sword would never depart from David's house. That part of Israel's history begins today.

Both Amnon (Ahinoam) and Absalom (Maacah) had been born while David's capital was at Hebron. Tamar is included with the children born to David after the capital relocated to Jerusalem. Her mother was also Maacah.

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 13 tells us that sometime after the events surrounding David and Bathsheba, Amnon "fell in love" with the beautiful virgin, Tamar. As an unmarried virgin, Tamar lived under the protection of her father, David.

So "in love" was Amnon that he became frustrated to the point of illness because he couldn't have her.

Amnon's cousin, Jonadab, dispensed some pretty wicked advice, "pretend to be ill and ask that Tamar bring you some food." Amnon did just that.

When Tamar arrived at Amnon's house, he took hold of her and raped her ignoring her pleas... (see Ex. 22:16-17; Lev. 18:9, 11, 29 and Deut. 22:28-29; 27:22)

Interestingly, afterward he hated her with as much passion as he had loved her. Tamar was unceremoniously kicked to the curb, but she did not go quietly. She put ashes on her head, tore her robe and headed for home weeping as she went. No longer a virgin, she would be condemned to a lonely and childless life. Additionally, she lost her place in David's household, so she went to her brother, Absalom.

He told Tamar to keep quiet and Absalom never said a word to Amnon, but from that day forward he hated Amnon.

David was also angry, but did nothing to discipline Amnon – Reminds us of Jacob's response when Dinah was raped.

Ellen White {PP 729.2} - *With the memory ever before him of his own transgression of the law of God, David seemed morally paralyzed; he was weak and irresolute, when before his sin he had been courageous and decided. His influence with the people had been weakened. And all this favored the designs of his unnatural son.*

It would seem that Amnon had got away with his crime.

2 years went by... Absalom invited Amnon to join him for the sheep shearing festival. Amnon agreed.

Absalom told his servants that when Amnon was good and drunk, to kill him. After Amnon was killed, the rest of David's sons ran away. When it was reported to David that Absalom had killed all his sons, he tore his robe and fell on the ground. Later, Jonadab reported that only Amnon had been killed because of what he had done to Tamar.

Meanwhile, Absalom fled to his grandpa, Talmai, king of Geshur and remained there for 3 years.

David grieved more for Absalom than he did for his dead son, Amnon.

Joab knew that David pined for Absalom, so he hired an actress from Tekoa to tell David a fake story about having one son who killed her other son. David told Joab to bring Absalom home, but refused to see him.

**Here is how Scripture describes Absalom, "No one was more praised in Israel for his beauty than Absalom." He had thick hair and not a blemish to be found. He had 3 sons and a daughter he named Tamar.**

**2 more years went by** (5 years since Amnon was killed).....

**Absalom was getting tired of David's unwillingness to see him, so he sent for Joab. Joab refused to come. He sent for Joab again. Again, Joab refused to come, so Absalom instructed one of his servants to set fire to Joab's barley field.**

**As expected, Joab showed up on Absalom's doorstep, "Why have you set fire to my barley field?"**

*"You refused my request twice.... Seemed like a good way to get you here."*

**Joab went to the king on Absalom's behalf and David welcomed Absalom back. All's well that ends well, I guess.**

**However, "in the course of time," Absalom began to intentionally court the people of Israel – planting seeds of distrust against David's justice and authority – as a result he, "stole away the hearts of the men of Israel."**

**At the end of 4 years, Absalom asked David's permission to go to Hebron to fulfill a vow he had made to Yahweh – his true ambition, however, was the throne, so when he arrived at Hebron he had secret messages sent throughout the tribes, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shout: Absalom has become king at Hebron!" The conspiracy grew in strength as more and more people joined Absalom – including Ahithophel, one of David's counselors and, interestingly, Bathsheba's grandfather (11:3; 23:34).**

**When a messenger reported to David that "the hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom," he quickly assembled his household and left Jerusalem, "but he left 10 concubines behind to take care of the house."**

**Many people went with David, including the Kerethites, Pelethites (foreign mercenaries and royal body guards) and 600 Gittites (men from Gath who has sworn loyalty to David).**

*"And the whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by."*

**Zadok, the priest, brought the Ark along, but David told him to take the Ark back to Jerusalem. "If I have found favor with Yahweh, I will return. If not, let Him do with me as He pleases."**

**2 Samuel 15:30 - David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up.**

**David had been told that his counselor, Ahithophel had joined Absalom, so when his friend, Hushai, wanted to join the escape party, David asked him to return to Jerusalem instead and swear loyalty to Absalom, "then you can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice."**

**As David continued toward the Jordan River, who should meet him but, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth. Ziba proceeds to tell David that Mephibosheth remained in Jerusalem hoping to take the throne for the house of Saul. In response, David stripped Mephibosheth of all his lands and gave them to Ziba.**

**Things couldn't get any worse, but then Shimei, a member of Saul's clan, came out to meet David. He threw rocks and dirt clods, cursing David as he went. Abishai volunteered to kill Shimei, but David said, "No." (see Psalm 3)**

**Meanwhile, Absalom entered Jerusalem. He was surprised to see Hushai and questioned why he wasn't with David.**

**Hushai, basically said that it was clear that Yahweh and the people of Israel had chosen Absalom, so his loyalty would be with Absalom.**

**Unsure of what to do next, Absalom turned to Ahithophel, "what now?"**

**Ahithophel counseled, "Lie with your father's concubines whom he left to take care of the palace."**

**If Absalom followed Ahithophels' advice, he would be stating clearly his intent to take David's throne.... a tent was pitched on the palace roof where Absalom proceeded to have sex with his father's concubines, "in the sight of all Israel." Fulfilling one of the stated consequences of David's sin against Bathsheba and Uriah (see 2 Sam. 12:11).**

**2 Samuel 16:23** - *Now in those days the advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel's advice.*

**Ahithophel counseled Absalom to take the army and attack David immediately while he was weak and tired – Excellent strategic advice – however, Absalom also wanted Hushai's opinion. Hushai was quick to poo-poo Ahithophel's plan, reminding Absalom that his father was an experienced fighter as were the men with him, "and as fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs." He would likely be in hiding - waiting for Absalom in a cave somewhere. Hushai suggested that Absalom take a minute and gather all the fighting men of Israel – then lead the attack – David wouldn't stand a chance.**

**Absalom preferred Hushai's advice – meanwhile Hushai sent word to David:**

*"Cross the Jordan immediately, otherwise you and all the people with you will die."*

**After hiding in well, the messengers reached David and by daybreak he and his entourage were across the Jordan and on their way to Mahanaim.**

**Ahithophel, distraught that Absalom had not followed his counsel and convinced of David's ultimate victory, went home, put all his affairs in order and killed himself.**

**Absalom made Amasa general of his army and crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel.....**

**When given a moment to breathe, David discovered that he had thousands of soldiers at his command, so he divided them into 3 groups, with Joab, Abishai and Ittai commanding. Just before sending them to fight, he told them to deal gently with Absalom.**

**The battle took place in the forest of Ephraim (Gilead) and there David's army defeated the army of Israel.**

**Now Absalom was on the run! As his mule went under an oak tree, his head got stuck in the branches. The mule continued on its way, leaving Absalom to flail midair. A soldier reported this turn of events to Joab and when asked why he had not killed Absalom, the soldier replied, "Even if I received 1000 pieces of silver, I would not kill the king's son, because David requested that his son be dealt with gently."**

**Joab, tired of all the nonsense, took 3 darts and thrust them through Absalom's heart as he dangled in the tree.**

**Joab's men finished Absalom off, then he was thrown in a pit with stones piled on top.**

**When word of Absalom's death finally reached David, he was devastated. Desiring to be alone, he made his way to the chamber over the gate, weeping loudly, "My son, Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom. If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son."**

**And all the men who had fought for David quietly returned to the city – ashamed that they had won the battle.**

**When Joab was told that David was inconsolable over Absalom's death, he was livid.**

**Joab:** *What is wrong with you?! You have dishonored those who remained faithful to you and risked their own lives to save your life and the lives of your family. You love Absalom, who hated you, more than you love us and you have made it clear that our loyalty means nothing to you. I have a feeling that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead, you'd be okay with that. Go immediately and speak kindly to your servants, because if you don't - I swear by Yahweh - not a man will stand by you and this will be the worst disaster you have ever faced!*

**David got up and went to the gate of the city and after some back and forth between Israel and Judah, he made Amasa, Absalom's former general, general of his army, replacing Joab, then he began the journey back to Jerusalem.**

**A very nervous Shimei met David at the Jordan River and fell to the ground before him. *"Sorry king!! How about we completely forget about what happened when you left Jerusalem. True, I sinned against you, but I'm the first to meet you!"* Abishai suggested a quick head shot, but David declined to have Shimei killed and swore an oath, sparing him.**

**Mephibosheth, also met David along the road. He was a mess. He had not washed or changed his clothes since the day David left Jerusalem.**

**David wondered why he had stayed behind and Mephibosheth said that he was prepared to leave with David, but Ziba had betrayed him and then made false claims against him. Unsure of who was telling the truth, David ordered Saul's land be divided between Mephibosheth and Ziba, but Mephibosheth, said, *"let Ziba have it, now that you are returned safely."***

**Although Absalom's rebellion had ended in victory for David, the kingdom lost its sense of unity. Suspicions of favoritism and discrimination, led to the threat of another civil war as the men of Judah and Israel began to argue about who had more of a claim on him. As the argument intensified, a Benjamite named, Sheba, sounded the trumpet and cried, *We have no portion in David, no share in the son of Jesse! Everyone to your tents, O Israel!"***

**The people of Israel followed Sheba, but the people of Judah followed David back to Jerusalem.**

**David was afraid that Sheba would become more of a problem than Absalom had been, so, in order to prevent a potentially permanent division between Judah and Israel, he sent the army to chase Sheba down. Amasa was slow in gathering the army so, David hired Abishai. All David's mighty warriors, under the command of Abishai set out from Jerusalem in pursuit of Sheba. Amasa met David's army on the road and Joab killed him. Joab and Abishai chased Sheba all the way to Abel Beth-maacah and laid siege to the city.**

**A full-blown siege was avoided when a woman poked her head over the wall and promised to throw Sheba's head over the wall, if Joab promised to take the army and leave.**

**2 Samuel 20:22 - *And they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri, and threw it out to Joab. So, he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, and all went to their homes, while Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.***

**It appears that, despite David's best efforts, Joab was again in charge of the army and the chapter concludes by listing David's cabinet, confirming the fact that order had been restored.**

**Until Next Week.....**