

Portrait of a Sinner

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2 Samuel 15:1-6 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

- I. Absalom's dealing with David are a very good picture of how a sinner treats God.
 - A. First, he thought himself worthy to be a judge of others while he would not submit to justice himself.
 1. All sinners are like that – they condemn the just and justify the wicked, and they excuse their own wickedness first.
 2. While he was at the gate stealing the hearts of the people he pronounced all their cases as good and right while only hearing one side.
 3. His brothers were rulers over the people but he thought himself better qualified to judge and rule over people than any of them, while he had no qualification or experience at all in maintaining justice, but in defying it.
 - B. He created alliances with flattery and by portraying himself as their friend while insinuation that his father was unconcerned about them.
 1. All sinners do this – they think themselves more just than God in discerning what is right and wrong and think they care more than God does about the problems of other people.
 2. He paints himself as a good man in his ambition to be great.
 3. But in order to look good he has to paint his father as bad.
 4. He has plenty to disqualify him and nothing to recommend him but his good looks and his silver tongue, but that is enough for a wicked hearted sinner to prevail among simple-minded, selfish minions like himself.
 - C. He used his father's grace and forgiveness toward him as an opportunity to conspire against him.
 1. He used his father's love, patience, and hope for him as a license to sin against him.
 2. This is exactly what sinners are still doing in 2020, they think grace is a license to sin, and take advantage of God's love, mercy, and patience.
 - D. He took advantage of his father's love for him, and the ignorance of the masses, to maneuver himself into a position where he could do his father the most harm.
 - E. Absalom was the ultimate hypocrite and he used religion as a cover for his move to take over and make himself king.
 1. He took advantage of his father's hope for his redemption to secure his blessing on his trip to Hebron, where he intended to take the kingdom for himself.

2. This is why you will find some of the most evil people on this earth among those who are known as the people of God.
 3. There are no means easier to use and more effective than faking religion to gather followers and commit sin on a massive scale.
 4. He only went to the house of God when it served some purpose for exalting himself.
- F. Absalom make a big show and glorified himself by having horses and chariots go before him – while David rode a mule.
1. But being the imposter that he was and being big on theater like he was, he was riding a mule when he met the servants of David in battle.

2 Samuel 18:9 And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.

2. The effect of seeing him on a mule was supposed to weaken their resolve to deal with him as an enemy, since he appeared to be the image of his father.
 3. But he obviously was not used to riding a mule and his hypocrisy and guile was his destruction.
- G. Absalom was your typical sinner, who was completely unrepentant, full of pride, desirous of power over others, would not submit to any king, even if it was his own father, and would use anyone or anything in the pursuit of his own ambitions, lusts, and pride.
- II. David's dealings with Absalom are a very good picture of how God deals with a sinner.
- A. David did not try to stop Absalom in his sin and rebellion – even when he tried to take the throne and kill David himself.
 - B. David's concern was for the people that Absalom would hurt with his selfishness and sin, and that was the only matter where David intervened and acted against him.
 - C. David loved Absalom through it all, in spite of Absalom's hatred for him.
 - D. David did not wish Absalom to die even after all that he had done and he was beside himself with mourning when he did die.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

- E. David still held out hope that even after all this that Absalom would repent and be restored to him as his son.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

- F. As unworthy as Absalom was, David would have willingly died in his place to spare his life.

2 Samuel 18:33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

2 Samuel 19:4 But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!