

JUNE 1

2 Samuel 18:1-19:10

2 Samuel 18

Vs. 1-5 David was impossible to beat in the open field, and with God against Absalom, Absalom was toast. He just didn't know it yet.

V. 3 Notice that they didn't let David go out to fight since he alone was the target. Absalom wasn't so smart.

V. 5 Perhaps because of his sense of guilt (that all of this was a part of what he had done to Uriah) or because of some misplaced hope that Absalom would be his successor, or both, David gave this order to spare Absalom. Everyone heard it and this would become a test of hearts in the coming verses.

Vs. 6-18 Imagine, they lost 20,000 men in a single day. We, thankfully, cannot even conceive of that. And to think, this all goes back to David and an afternoon of sexual restlessness. (Again, I think there was a longer process leading up to that event.)

V. 9 Remember Absalom's pride in his hair. Pride cometh before getting hung in an oak tree.

V. 12 This guy was right, I wouldn't have trusted Joab either. It is interesting that his own men knew this about Joab.

V. 14 Disobeying a command of the king, and murdering Absalom like this, should have cost Joab his life. Joab could get away with "practical measures" like this because David had no power over him. If David had dealt with Joab earlier, God would have raised up someone to take his place. In fact, as we'll see later, Joab's replacement was already there. What a mistake to have kept Joab on the team.

V. 18 Earlier it was said that Absalom had sons, but apparently they had died. This would make the monument a bit more understandable since it had to do with the pain he suffered when the boys died. The fact that Absalom built this just before going into battle suggest that he knew he might die.

Vs. 19-33 I have never really understood why this "race" happened, other than that I think insincerity and being political was commonplace in David's court. This situation, like others we have seen and will see, reflects David's lost sense of justice and fairness. You've noticed that Ahimaaz lied.

So, what was this tragic weeping about? David had other sons; in fact, Solomon was going to be king. God had told David that as the result of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba, his sin and the sword would not depart from his house. I have to believe that David knew he was responsible for all of this.

2 Samuel 19:1-10

Vs. 1-8 Joab wasn't a spiritual genius, but he was thinking straighter than David. If David hadn't gone among the people, things would have ended worse than they were still going to get. As it is, the drama still isn't over. A civil war will meet David when the dust settles. God's judgment of David was like a French meal, and we haven't gotten to the final course yet.

Vs. 9-10 The key word for tomorrow is in v. 9. They were arguing.

As a disciple, is this instilling in you a healthy sense of respect for the danger of sin? God is not mocked, even by those He loves. David was a "superhero" of the faith and is honored by God even now, but his sin sure damaged his life on earth and hurt a lot of people in the process. This battle was linked to David's sin and in it 20,000 men died.

John 20

Vs. 1-10 So we have another foot race here. Isn't it cute that John never refers to himself other than *the other disciple*? So John beats Peter to the tomb, but Peter goes in head first. John believed when he saw the empty tomb, but Peter, with his sense of failure and betrayal, was left wondering. FYI, before the guys meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus, Jesus will already have had a personal meeting with Peter (Luke 24:34). Jesus made sure that Peter didn't sink into his own failure.

V. 10 They all went home. There was no glue because they didn't yet understand His death, His resurrection, or His mission.

Vs. 11-18 There are a couple of interesting things here. Apparently Mary Magdalene just couldn't leave. She was stuck. No number of angel appearances was going to convince her to leave without Jesus. This is kind of like seeking. And she found. But this is the first place that Jesus appears incognito and it won't be the last. It is interesting to think of why He did this.

V. 17 In the KJV it says, *Touch me not*. My first thought was, "What, wasn't He 'set' yet?" Mary seems very emotional and probably had His legs in some ninja hold. Jesus had stuff to do and He had a mission for her.

Vs. 19-23 In Luke's version of this meeting, they thought Jesus was a ghost (again) and He ate with them. Where it says here that they received the Holy Spirit, this was a temporary provision to get them to Pentecost. Just as Jesus had talked to them to encourage them before the crucifixion, now that they had made it this far, He was giving them a supernatural allowance of the Spirit to strengthen them. Also, in v. 23, He let them know the mission and authority that would go with His resurrection. When we see Peter in the first chapter of Acts, we'll be able to tell that the Spirit was giving Peter some direction and maturity.

Vs. 24-29 These were smart Jewish boys and not given to jumping onto bandwagons. So enter Thomas. I can see them telling Thomas about the meeting they had with Jesus. I can see them, with their new understanding, trying to convince him. I can also see Thomas noticing that their heads looked larger, but saying, "No way, Joses." Eight days later Jesus showed up again, looking intently at Thomas. I'll bet Thomas had seen that look before and thought, "Oh, oh." And, we got a great verse out of it.

Vs. 30-31 This is the point of this Gospel. You also appreciate the fact that John and all the Gospel writers could have included a lot more material.

Psalm 119:153-176

Vs. 153-160 It strikes me as I read David crying out to God, that these were purer days for David. Adversity sent him to the Word and to the Lord.

Vs. 161-168 As you can see, this letter of the Hebrew alphabet actually does double duty depending on where the dot is. It is either an "s" or an "sh."

I love the expression of v. 161; high-ranking people persecuted David, but he focused on God's words. That reminds me of what Paul said in Philippians 4:8, *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

Vs. 169-176 Look at the themes in this last section - crying out, pleading for deliverance, vowing to praise God and testify of Him, and asking God to save and to seek him. But in all of this turmoil, at this point in his life, David was firmly set on the Word of God.

So, wrapping up Psalm 119, what do you think the point is? Did you realize that there was so much crying out for help in this psalm? Apparently, that crying out is to be seen as normal. Apparently, hiding in God's love and His Word is also to be seen as normal. Not to be in the

place where we're crying out or hiding in His Word and love, means we might be in the wrong place or not really following Christ in the harvest. In the harvest we experience pruning. What is the response of a disciple during this pruning? Well, I guess that's what this psalm is all about.

Proverbs 16:14-15

Again, since we're not "kings," just think of this as a spiritual person. In v. 14 the *king* is the powerful guy and the *wise man* is the wise guy, but in v. 15 the king can be a spiritual and godly man.