

Lesson 21 II Samuel 12:25 - 24

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. As you read note the difference in the first hand accounts written soon after the event and the more edited, collected material. Can you find at least one obvious place where the two come together?
2. There are many strong characters in these chapters, David's children inherit some of his qualities; what are they, good and bad? What motivates Absalom? How did David's weaknesses contribute to the problems of the Kingdom?
3. Ahithophel may be Bathsheba's grandfather. Would this explain his loyalties? Why did he take his own life?
4. Who was lying, Mephibosheth or Ziba? Why did David allow Shimei to curse him, the Lord's anointed? Was this a strength in David or a weakness?
5. The prophet, Gad, offers David three possibilities of penance each stiffer than three Hail Maw's and one Our Father. What was the sin?

Psalm 18 and prayer

The many names in this lesson can be confusing. However, there are relationships among the persons which help to explain the story. First there are the sons of David; Amnon, Absalom, Chileab, Adonijah - the first four born in the years in Hebron. Normally among these four there would surely be an heir. The story tells us why there are no heirs in the list, no mention is made of the fourth, Abigail's son, Chileab - perhaps he died as a child. The order of birth and the mothers are given in I Sam 3.

Then there are the nephews of David, sons of his sister Zeruiah, who were introduced in the last lesson, Joab, Asahel, and Abishai. These men are a tough bunch, fiercely loyal to David. They are like having a faithful dog who is liable to bite even your friends, but whom you fear to leash up yourself. David is never able to control Joab. Asahel is already a memory - he tracked Abner and was killed for his rashness. Abishai, the one who was with David in his wilderness years, tried to get him to kill

the sleeping Saul. Not one of them had the fear of, nor held in honor, the Lord's anointed in the way David did. Another sister of David's, Nahash, has a grandchild, Amasa. This grand-nephew is Absalom's general when Absalom tries to wrest the kingdom from his father.

Ahithophel, the trusted advisor of David, mentioned at the end of the sixteenth chapter is the grandfather of Bathsheba. He must have held rancor toward David because of the treatment of his granddaughter who was seduced by David, who then had her husband murdered. Bathsheba's father, a son of Ahithophel, was one of the comrades of Uriah in the army. Ahithophel goes on Absalom's side in the revolt. David fears this alliance because of Ahithophel's great wisdom, and prays that God will confound his counsel to Absalom.

Hushai and Ittai are men loyal to David; neither of them are Hebrew, rather they are Philistine commanders of David's Philistine bodyguard, and very helpful to him. One will be a valuable spy for David, the other offers his crack Philistine troops to fight for David.

The two priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and their sons, also have roles in the drama. Abiathar, the priest who fled from Nob with an ephod, gave David assistance throughout his wilderness years. The priest Zadok doesn't come into the story until David defeats the city of Jerusalem. Back in the Abraham story, nine hundred years earlier there came a mysterious person, Melchizedek from Salem (earlier name of Jerusalem), Joshua fought a king of Jerusalem named Adonizedek (Lord Zedek). The end part of his name designates an ancient family name in Jerusalem, ZDK, probably a priestly family of the Jebusite religion. Melchizedek was a priest of God Most High (not Yahweh, but easily identified with Yahweh). This ZDK, Zadok, of that priestly family, and himself a priest, may have been a convert to Yahweh. Or did David just assume he could function as Yahwehistic priest? Perhaps this indicates that real Aaronic priesthood as it was known later in Israel, instituted by Ezra after the Exile, was simply not known in David's day. He is immediately on the same footing as Abiathar in honor and power. (Chronicles gives Zadok an Aaronic relationship?)

David has weaknesses of character. Lust is one of those weaknesses that is passed on to his sons. With a harem and several wives, he still takes a man's wife. Of course, it was unusual for any king of David's time to think it a sin to take another man's wife. Only in the God-oriented nation of Israel was David's behavior a matter of grave sin that required repentance.

Amnon lusts for his half sister. He seduces Tamar and then despises her. Her full brother, Absalom, plots to revenge this rape. His character is fully drawn out by his actions. He is a brooder, one who plans and waits. Two years go by before he organizes a party and invites his brothers. Does David suspect something? He might. He asks why Amnon is invited? But it looks as though the past is bygone, Absalom has forgotten or forgiven. Amnon, however, is killed, and Absalom goes into hiding.

Joab intervenes between David and Absalom. In an imaginative oriental way, he has a woman confront David through a long story, bringing him around to forgiving Absalom and inviting him to come home to live under a kind of house arrest. Joab arranges this because he knows David's sensitivity - he doesn't want him grieving for his children. Joab also knows Absalom's character, and stays away from him. He's no doubt scheming and Joab wants no part of it, especially if it would make him suspect with David. Absalom, has to set Joab's fields on fire in order to talk to him. Joab agrees to have him reprieved from house arrest. Absalom is free to begin the next stage of his plan to take over his father's kingdom. He goes down to the city gate. This is the nerve center of the city where all the legal problems are handled and where governmental grievances are adjusted. He tells the complainants who are endlessly waiting there - like our own government offices - that the suits would be more quickly and fairly handled if he were doing it. Eventually he goes to Hebron on the pretext of offering sacrifice there, but he has other plans. He declares himself king.

Hebron is home territory to Absalom. He was born and spent his young years there. It was the place that David was anointed king over

Judah; Absalom is identifying his kingship with that of his father. There are resentments in Hebron among the elders at the way David moved his royal court out of Hebron to Jerusalem. There are hard feelings that he moved from the people who first recognized him, becoming such a big person without giving them more than a nod. Besides, Judah (south) had many prejudices against Israel (north) and now David seems more like one of them. Absalom profits by these disgruntled feelings.

The north and south were never restfully one. There was a tendency for the line to crack along the center. We see in these chapters constant jealousies between north and south. Absalom capitalizes on that natural tendency. Starting like David, he first wins Judah to his side. Some speculate that the problem of south and north had roots in a strange fact. Israel is a name that came from Jacob renamed Israel after one of his theophanies. The tribes were named for each of his twelve sons (plus Joseph's two sons). Therefore the people who came out of Egypt were called "Israel" ever after. Judah on the other hand was the name of the fourth son of Jacob who was appointed by him at his death as head of the tribes. Is it possible that Judah and his children, or perhaps some of them, never left the grazing lands of the south to sojourn in Egypt? When the returning descendants took the land under Joshua we know they did meet some branches of their family tree around Shechem, Hebrew people who had never been in Egypt, who joined in the conquest. Perhaps there was a long line of 'old-timers' called "Judah" in the south who never felt a part of the history of Israel and never wholeheartedly felt one with it. Joshua gave the southern grazing lands to Judah by lot at the time of the allotment of lands at the conquest. Perhaps this action of God coincided with the presence of these "un-Egyptianized" Hebrews who were also predecessors of the tribe of Judah. This is only speculation on the part of some students of the Bible.

David controls the war. When David hears of Absalom's attempt to get the throne, he leaves Jerusalem. He is an old, wise, successful military man. There will be a fight, and he sees no advantage in letting Absalom choose the battlefield. To fight in the city of Jerusalem would be disastrous; not only would innocent people be killed and homes destroyed, but the inhabitants might be swung around to support the

revolt. He would have less of a chance of surviving a coup. The battlefield he chooses is across the Jordan in Gilead. His forces know it like the back of their hand; Joab and the army have been fighting in Ammon. For those who did not know it, it was a treacherous land with thick forests like jungles. David, general that he is, has a distinct advantage when he forces Absalom to follow him into this area. He leaves the concubines to take care of his property and moves out. On the way he meets a number of people: Ittai, the Philistine, goes with him along with his fighting men, Hushai is sent back to feign allegiance to Absalom, Shimei, a relative of Saul's, hates David, and takes this opportunity to scorn and throw dirt at him. Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, crippled son of Jonathan, hints that his master is a traitor. David gives him all of Mephibosheth's property on the spot.

David's strength is that his first response is to turn to God. He is dependent on the Lord, not as an afterthought but as his natural response. With Shimei, he is not sure how things will turn out - whether, indeed, Shimei is cursing him at God's command. Therefore he accepts this abuse as penance because for all he knows he deserves it. Later, however, when the victory proves that God does not favor Absalom over him, David reconsiders Shimei's actions. Shimei will ask David's forgiveness which he will seem to give - at least his personal forgiveness. But this man has insulted the Lord's anointed, his personal forgiveness cannot cover that. In I Kings 2, on his deathbed, he tells Solomon he must give retributive justice to Shimei for his disrespect to the Lord's anointed. He must not die peacefully of old age.

Ahithophel gives Absalom excellent advice. David feared he would. After gaining Jerusalem without a fight, he tells Absalom to consolidate his rule in the eyes of the people by publicly taking David's concubines as his own. Whoever controlled the harem had a sign, and important one, of ruling status. Nathan had prophesied this would happen when he told David God would punish him for adultery and murder. Then Ahithophel counsels Absalom to go after David immediately. David will be tired and disorganized. Take men and go! If this advice had been followed, no doubt Absalom would have beaten David. Hushai is able to

give other advice to thwart this superior plan. In order to turn his head he appeals to the young man's vanity and imagination. "Call forth an army from Dan to Beersheba, and lead it yourself! You'll be able to defeat him, even if you have to drag cities by ropes." This is a magnificent image of power and destruction as well as the appeal of heading an army gathered from the whole country. Absalom pictures himself as a great leader of men. He falls for the strong appeal to pride of the second plan. Hushai has saved David; he will be safe. He will meet an inexperienced army of new recruits under an inexperienced commander while he commands a seasoned, tough army on ground well known to them. Besides, David now has time to organize and provide for this army. When the decision is made Ahithophel realizes Absalom cannot win. He himself has been a traitor to David and has no reason to continue living. He goes home and hangs himself.

Absalom is killed by Joab. Absalom, handsome with a wonderful head of hair which when cut weighs five pounds, is caught up by this hair in the branches of a thicket. David has told his commanders to be good to Absalom. Joab overrules him. When he hears that Absalom is dead, David is downcast. People who want to celebrate have to act as if a tragedy has happened. Joab takes him to task. "It looks as if you'd be happier if all these loyal folks who risked their lives for you had died, and Absalom had lived. Now shape up!"

David takes his time going back to Jerusalem. Let those who supported Absalom, or those who thought about going over to his side, quake in their boots for a while. When he does go back he meets some of the same folks. He judges between Mephibosheth's story and Ziba's. Who was the liar? Did Ziba resent being put back into servitude to Saul's family? It looks as though he took the opportunity to discredit his disabled master. Mephibosheth appears looking hungry and disheveled. He was even willing to let Ziba have the property. David divides it two ways not knowing who is telling the truth.

David reestablishes his kingship. He temporarily forgives Shimei, thanks Barzillai and offers him lifelong tenure at the court (politely refused by a man who says he is too old to enjoy the pleasures of court life). In order to reunite the country, David elevates Amasa, Absalom's

cousin and general, to head the army. He is punishing Joab for his role in Absalom's death. Joab doesn't take this lying down. He thinks Amasa delays in raising a army to fight the separatist, Sheba. Joab no doubt thinks he still has traitorous tendencies betrayed by slowness and sloppiness about his duties. He kills him and resumes command. Joab then goes after Sheba who is leading an Israelite revolt against David motivated by the same old jealous feelings over their king. A woman in Abel makes short work of that, having the rebel thrown out to Joab.

There follow a couple of appendices to the story. We have the account of famine which is finally traced to another sin of Saul. Seven more of Saul's house must die to balance the evil done. Rizpah, the faithful concubine of Saul watches over the dead bodies. Her devotion stirs David to gather all the bones of the house of Saul, even those from Jabesh-gilead, back to honorable burial in their home territory.

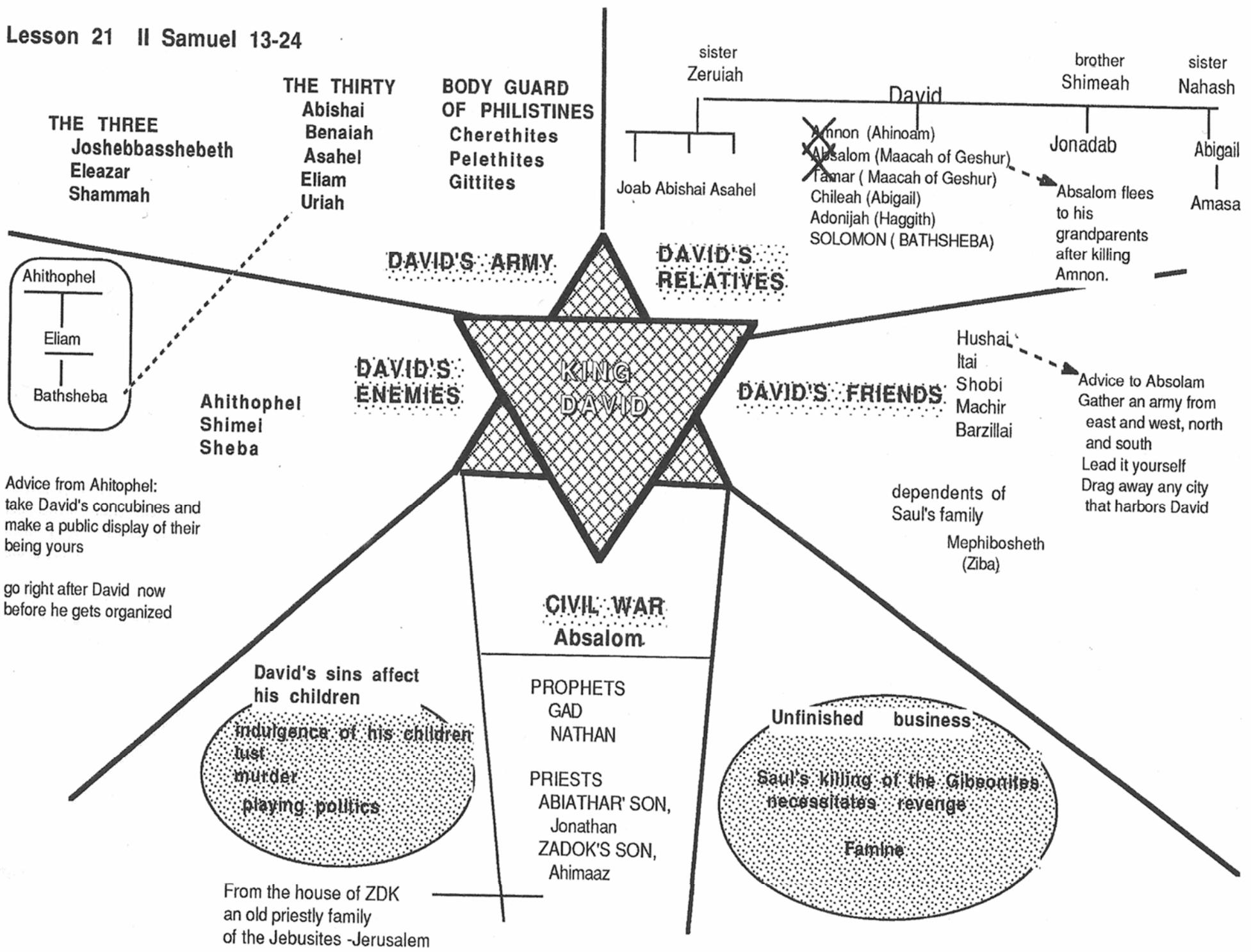
David's mighty men and their exploits are listed. The thirty Olympic-like champions are the best of the troops who take part in the contests of war, a way ancient armies had of settling some disputes without involving whole armies. Such an encounter was the battle at the pool at Gibeon.

The long psalm of David, identical to the 18th, with which we started this lesson, the oracle of David, his last words which reiterate the great prophecy said over him by Nathan, these bring assurance of the promises with which despite all, his house is ordained.

In the book of Chronicles which parallels these stories, the sin of numbering the people is credited to Satan. In Samuel it is credited to God, an example of the development of theology. A new level of causality has come to consciousness. David is punished for taking the prerogative from God. These are God's people, not David's. They are His numbers, not David's. David must rely on God, not the confidence of numbers. When people are numbered there is the subtle idea that someone controls them, or calls them "mine." Weighing one's wealth would be similar - "now I know how much I have." God punishes this

presumption through a pestilence. When it ends, David buys the threshing floor from Araunah - the threshing floor where the angel of the Lord stayed his hand. This floor will become the site of the temple that Solomon will build. Chronicles has it purchased for a dearer price because of the importance of the building that will rise there. The book of Samuel has it bought by David more reasonably.

Lesson 21 II Samuel 13-24



Lesson 21 II Samuel 12:25 - 24 Synopsis

- 12:26 Ammon is subdued by Joab who doesn't want any glory sends for David to take the crown he enslaves the Ammonites
13. Amnon burns for half-sister, Tamar he is encouraged by his cousin Jonadab to feign sickness Tamar bringing food, is raped Amnon then rejects and hates her he could have married her Tamar is comforted by her brother Absalom bides time for revenge two years later he has a party inviting Amnon, he has him killed Absalom flees to grandparents in Geshur (his mothers family)
14. Joab fetches a wise woman with a story that challenges David he reprieves Absalom he comes home under detention Absalom is handsome with a heavy head of hair Joab won't speak with Absalom out of loyalty to David Absalom sets Joab's fields on fire in order to talk to him he asks to be allowed into the presence of the king Joab intercedes with his father David and Absalom are reconciled
15. Absalom makes political moves he plays on the tribal feelings of the north and south after four years he goes to Hebron and has himself crowned king
- with a large number of supporters David flees Jerusalem sends priests and the ark back they'll inform him from Jerusalem of all that goes on there Ittai, the Gittite, flees with him Hushai, his friend, will spy for him
16. Mephibosheth accused of treason David makes a hasty decision and gives Ziba all his property Saul's kin, Shimei curses David he thinks it may be God's words Absalom takes over Jerusalem Hushai feigns loyalty to him Ahithophel counsels Absalom to take his father's concubines in the sight of everyone this proclaims Absalom's power
17. Ahithophel's military plan to take 12,000 men, pursue David Hushai's counterplan is to gather a huge army - Dan to Beersheba you will lead them, dragging cities Hushai's grand plan appeals Absalom will command this army Hushai sends information to David the spies escape narrowly David crosses the Jordan Ahithophel at home, hangs himself people supply David's troops
18. David musters his troops his commanders are ordered to deal gently with Absalom battles rage, Joab kills Absalom Absalom erected an honoring pillar David's troops are restrained others flee to their homes runners carry message to David
- David weeps "Would that I had died, O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom."
19. the king weeps and mourns Joab accuses him of ingratitude David hasn't thanked his friends for all they have risked for him David gives Amasa (Ab.'s general) Joab's command over both armies David comes back to Jerusalem reprieves Shimei, Ziba honors him Mephibosheth explains his role and accuses Ziba of deception David has them split the property Barzillai is offered rewards describes the hindrance of old age men of both sides reinstate David jealousy of both over his favors
20. Israel revolts under Sheba David's concubines made widows Amasa goes to muster troops to put down rebellion of Sheba Joab is sent when he's gone long he kills Amasa on the way the woman of Abel delivers Sheba over to Joab, the rebellion's ended the government under David there is a famine of three years Saul's sin must be expiated when he killed the Gibeonites (the Nob priests?) Saul's son and grandsons killed Rizpah (Saul's concubine) keeps vigil over their bodies David buries all of Saul's house the wrong righted, the famine ends earlier story about Philistine wars another tradition about Goliath
22. David's song of deliverance and praise (Psalm 18)
23. the oracle of David the mighty men of David three who risked themselves to bring him water thirty-seven other warriors listed the numbering of Israel and Judah Joab tells David not to do it presumption against God's people this sin brings plague as penance Gad sends David to Araunah to build altar on the threshing floor David buys it for the future Temple he makes sacrifice there the plague is averted from Israel

Lesson 21 II Samuel 12:25 - 24 Outline

I. A cast of thousands supports the David story

- A. David's family figures in the events
1. his sister, Zeruah, has three sons
 - a. Joab is commander of David's army
 - b. Abishai is chief of the thirty champions
 - c. Asahel is one of the thirty and is killed by Abner
 2. his sister, Nahash's grandson, Amasa, is commander for Absalom
 3. his brother, Shimeah's son, Jonadab, an instigator of wrong-doing
 - a. he encourages Amnon's rape of Tamar
 - b. he is a schemer, and treacherous 13:32
 4. his sons figure importantly in his troubles
 - a. Amnon is his first born, of Ahinoam
 - 1) he is a lustful man, impatient, and self-centered
 - 2) he rapes his half sister and then rejects her
 - b. Absalom is his second son of Maacah (her father is King of Geshur)
 - 1) he is moody, brooding, scheming
 - a) he takes two years to even the score against Amnon 13:23
 - b) he waits 2 yrs in Jerusalem under house arrest 14:2
 - c) for four years he plots to be king 15:7
 - 2) he is considered very handsome with heavy hair
 - 3) he had three sons, and a daughter named Tamar
 - c. a third son, Chileab is of Abigail, former wife of Nebel
 - d. Adonijah is the fourth son, of Haggith
 - e. called Jedidiah, "beloved of the Lord," Solomon's mother is Bathsheba
 5. Tamar is the sister of Absalom by Maacah
- B. David's priests become his spies
1. Abiathar, the last of the Aaronic priests escaped from massacre at Nob
 - b. he brought David an ephod with Urim and Thummim
 - c. he was with him throughout the years of flight from Saul
 - d. his son, Jonathan, aids in carrying messages to David
 2. Zadok is of the new line of priests
 - a. he is of the ZDK priestly family of Jerusalem, see outline 20
 - b. his son, Ahimaaz, is part of the spy learn
- C. David's bodyguard and mighty men are essential to his victory
1. Philistine troops, Cherethites, Pelethites, Gittites, are bodyguards
 2. hal, the Gittite, is loyal to David

3. the Three are the Olympic champs: Joshebbasshebeth, Eleazar, Shammah
 4. the Thirty are the next rank of champions
 - a. Abishai, chief of the thirty, David's nephew b, Benaiah, head over David's bodyguard
 - c. Asahel, another nephew
 - d. Eliam, the son of Ahithaphel, is Bathsheba's father
 - e. Uriah, the Hittite is a husband of Bathsheba
 - f. others given in 23:24 ff
- E. David's friends stand by him
1. Hushai, feigned friendship with Absalom to spy for David
 2. Shobi the Ammonite, is an ally
 3. Machir of Lodebar, is an ally
 4. Barzillai of Gilead is an aged, wealthy patron of David
1. David's enemies plot with Absalom
1. Ahithophel is David's counselor is very wise
 - a. he is a former counselor of David who sided with Absalom
 - 1) his counsel would have ended the war quickly
 - 2) but it was not as flamboyant as Hushai's
 - b. he is grandfather of Bathsheba
 - c. his son, Bathsheba's father, is a friend of Uriah
 - d. he resented David for his sin against them
 - e. he knew Hushai's advice killed Absalom's chances
 - f. he went home and hung himself
 2. Shimei was Saul's relative
 - a. he cursed David and threw stones
 - b. later he was forgiven by David provisionally
 - c. later still, this insult was to be avenged by Solomon
 3. Shema was an Israelite upstart
 - a. he led a revolt of the north against David 20:1
 - b. he was killed by Joab and the wise woman of Abel
- 20:21 G. David's decisions were usually honorable
1. he provided for Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth
 - a. David promised Jonathan to look after his family
 - b. he restores him as part of his court
 - d. after David's victory, he defends himself of charges of turncoat
 2. Ziba, a servant in the household of Saul
 - a. his family since Saul's death had been on their own
 - b. David puts them in servitude to Mephibosheth

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- c. Ziba accuses his master of being a traitor
- d. David gives him M.'s property
- e. later when M. explains, he gives half of it back

II. David has Troubles and Plenty of Them

- A. Nathan prophesied his house to be torn by his adultery and murder 12:10-11
- B. His own characteristics are problems
 - 1. the lust of Amnon for his half-sister is not unknown in David
 - a. parallels David's own headstrong lust for Bathsheba
 - b. Amnon rapes Tamar and is murdered by his brother 13
 - 1) he could have married her by law Is 18:9 , but impatient lust
 - 2) then he hated her and shunned her (guilt and shame)
 - 2. David's politics are paralleled in Absalom's political manipulating
 - a. Absalom gets a chariot, horses, and men in display of power 15
 - b. he cleverly plays on tribal feelings
 - c. takes advantage of the slowness of governmental wheels 15:6
 - 3. David's procrastination in some civil affairs gives Absalom a platform
 - 4. David's indecisiveness in appointing an heir stirred their intrigue
- C. David's relationship with his children was part of the problem
 - 1. he had concern and love for them
 - a. when Amnon pretended to be ill, he visited and granted his request
 - b. devastated by the death of his sons 13:31
 - c. he wept bitterly for Amnon's death 13:36
 - d. even Absalom's revolt did not quench his devoted father's love
 - 2. he didn't discipline them
 - a. he was angry when Amnon forced Tamar, but did not act 13:21
 - b. he longed for Absalom when he went into exile 13:39
 - 1) he was easily led to forgive him 14
 - 2) go and bring home the young man Absalom
 - a) he may dwell in his own house
 - b) but he may not to come into the King's presence
 - 3) Absalom sent for Joab who would not come
 - a) knew his scheming disposition
 - b) Joab was totally loyal to David
 - c) he burned Joab's field to get his attention
 - d) he wants a reprieve
 - 4) the reprieve granted, they were reconciled
 - 3. Absalom then challenges his father's kingship

- a. he goes to Hebron to be crowned King
 - 1) playing on Judah's feeling of neglect'
 - 2) he was born in Hebron, and knows people there
 - 3) he is copying his father's pattern of politics
- b. he gets cooperation of David's men especially Ahithophel -
- c. David must flee Jerusalem
- 4. David still wants gentle dealing with Absalom 18:5

III. The Civil War Disrupts David's Reign

- A. David leaves Jerusalem
 - 1. he takes a bodyguard of Philistine troops and ascends the Mt of Olive
 - 2. he leaves to save the city and to gain a better fighting advantage
 - 3. he left ten concubines to tend the house
 - 4. Abiathar and Zadok come along with the ark; David sends it back
 - a. God's will about the ark isn't certain
 - b. he needs the priests and their sons as go-between informers
 - 5. David prays Ahithophel's counsel of Absalom is confounded
 - 6. Hushai becomes another spy who feigns support of Absalom
 - 7. Ziba comes with asses to ride and food
 - a. claims his master has turned traitor
 - b. David gives him all Mephibosheth's belongings
 - 8. Shimel of Saul's house curses David
 - a. accepts it because he doesn't know if God is for him or against him
 - b. Abishai wants to kill Shimei, David won't allow it
- B. He arrives at the Jordan and rests
- C. Absalom comes into Jerusalem
 - 1. Hushai promises to serve Absalom
 - 2. Ahithophel gives his counsel
 - a. take your father's concubines
 - 1) all Israel will know who is boss
 - 2) Absalom takes them on the roof of his father's house, and a prophecy is fulfilled of Nathan II Sam 12:11
 - b. give me 12,000 men and I will pursue David tonight
 - 1) I will strike down the king
 - 2) I will bring all the people back to you
 - 3. Hushai gives his counter proposal
 - a. David and his men are like enraged bears
 - b. David is an expert in war and will not be with the others

- c. Israel will hear of the defeat at the first attack and will be afraid
- d. Instead, he should gather all Israel from Dan to Beersheba
 - 1) he will command the troops in person
 - 2) we kill everybody with him
- e. Hushai describes the violence, and appeals to pride
- D. Absalom takes Hushai's advice
 - 1. Hushai sends word to David through the priests -a first hand account of their near discovery 17:18
 - 2. Ahithophel commits suicide 17:23 he knows David will win
- E. David reaches Mahanaim
 - 1. Absalom crosses the Jordan with his newly mustered army
 - a. he is not experienced - his general is Amasa
 - b. they do not know the territory which is treacherous
 - 2. David's armies know the territories well
 - a. they have just concluded a war with Ammon successfully
 - b. they know the territory and are seasoned fighters
 - c. they have friends who supply them
 - d. he musters three branches of the army under Joab, Abishai, Ittai
 - e. David takes advice and stays at Mahanaim
 - f. he orders his generals to be gentle with Absalom
- F. The armies fight in the forest of Ephraim which is dense 18:8
- G. Absalom is caught by the hair in a tree
 - a. a soldier refuses to kill him
 - b. Joab kills him with three darts in the heart
- H. The bad news is sent to David
 - 1. Joab doesn't want Ahimaaz to take the news (how will David take it?)
 - 2. he sends a Cushite (a black?)
 - 3. Ahimaaz runs too and arrives first
 - a. David believes he carries good news
 - b. he is suddenly afraid to tell the whole truth about Absalom
 - 4. the Cushite tells David Absalom is dead
 - 5. David is subdued in great grief. 18:33
- I. Joab snaps David out of mourning "you love those who hate you, and hate those who love you."
- J. Civil war extends through Israel
 - 1. David is invited back halfheartedly by Israel
 - 2. later confusion reigns in Israel with anger against Judah
 - 3. Sheba a Benjaminite starts another civil war

- K. Judah is slow to reaccept - David shames them
 - 1. he woos Amasa to his side, promises Joab's job.
 - 2. elders of Judah meet David at the fords of the Jordan
 - 3. Shimei comes to make amends- David saves him for now
 - 4. the Mephibosheth and Ziba argument is settled

IV. David resumes rule in Jerusalem

- A. He removes his concubines into widowhood
- B. He sends Amasa to gather leaders of Judah
- C. Amasa is slow about it so Joab kills him
- D. David sends Abishai to quell Sheba
 - 1. after killing Amasa, Joab pursues Sheba
 - 2. he goes to Beth-maacah - south of Dan
 - 3. a woman saves the city; throws down Sheba's head from the walls
- E. A three year famine afflicts the land
 - 1. an oracle says it is because of blood guilt of Saul against Gibeon
 - 2. Gibeon asks for seven of Saul's sons to assuage the guilt
 - a. David spares Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth
 - b. the seven were hanged to satisfy blood revenge
 - 3. the bodies are exposed, and Rizpah vigils over their bodies
 - 4. David has the bodies buried along with bones from Jabesh
 - 5. the famine ends
- E. David's psalm 22 and his last words 23
- F. David numbers the people 24:1
 - 1. Joab warns against this
 - 2. but David's wish is obeyed and a census is taken
 - 3. David repents of this sin
 - 4. Gad (prophet) gives him God's choices of penance, he chases the
 - a. three years of famine
 - b. he may flee, pursued for three months
 - c. a three days' pestilence when 70,000 die
 - 5. God calls off the angel of death at the threshing floor of Araunah

V. Military Victories

- A. Amman's insult 10:1 ff avenged: Joab careful to give David the credit
- B. Wars with Philistines 21:15-21
 - 1. David is older and tired
 - 2. he is kept from the field- "lest you quench the lamp of Israel."