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YouTube Prayer Link

God's Judgment and Mercy

Absalom's many sins were the most serious in taking Jehovah's God's name in vain, and Jehovah did not want to justify him (Exodus 20:7), followed by "Cursed be he who sleeps with his stepmother, because he lifts up the skirt of his father's garment." (Deuteronomy 27:20).

Absalom's injustice and disrespect for David were stubborn sins, and God judged them with a stone and hung on a tree according to the law. But it is clear that David did not want to betray his son, and even went so far as to ask his three generals to be lenient with him, in 2 Samuel chapter 18 David divided his army into three groups to fight Absalom's army. And David himself remained in the city while Joab was guided. And the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. And David's army prospered, and slew twenty thousand of the men of Absalom. During the battle, Absalom rode on a mule, his hair was caught in a branch suspended in the air. One of David's soldiers saw him, and told Joab, who found Absalom, and slew him against David's commandment. David was devastated by the news of his son's death (18:32), and "the king trembled and went up to the tower of the gate of the city, weeping bitterly, and went and said, 'O Absalom, my son, Absalom, I desire to die for you, Absalom, my son.'" The news spread across the country. This chapter highlights the tragic end of Absalom's rebellion and the consequences of his actions. It also shows the emotional cost the conflict has taken on David and his followers.

God's abundant providence of grace, which perfectly shows God's justice and love, enables us not to walk on Absalom's stubborn and unruly path to destruction, and we cherish this freely acquired righteousness so that the glorious grace of Christ may be glorified in us. David's love for Absalom foreshadows God's redemption for the world. In the Christian faith, God's judgment and mercy are two basic concepts that demonstrate the balance between God's justice and love.

Judgment represents God's righteous judgment for sin, while mercy shows God's deep concern and forgiveness for sinners.

God's judgment is a severe punishment for sinful behavior and embodies God's holiness and justice. There are many scenes in the Bible that describe God's judgment, such as the depiction of the Last Judgment in the book of Revelation. Judgment is the complete end of evil and the penalty for sin, demonstrating God's unwavering commitment to justice.

But God's mercy is also irreplaceable. Mercy is God's deep mercy and forgiveness for sinners and embodies God's love and mercy. Despite humanity's sin, God is ready to give them mercy and enable them to repent and be saved. The Bible is full of stories of God's mercy, such as Jesus Christ's mercy to the Samaritan woman and forgiveness for Peter.

God's judgment and mercy together constitute divine perfection. Judgment shows God's intolerance of sin, while mercy shows God's love and forgiveness for sinners. For believers, acknowledging the balance of God's judgment and mercy will cause them to fear God's holiness more deeply and to more deeply appreciate God's love and forgiveness.

There are many passages in the Bible that describe the circumstances and events of God's return.

Here are some verses:

Matthew 24: The Second Coming of Jesus is called the sign of the last days, which includes prophecies about the end times and a description of Jesus' return.

Matthew 25: This chapter includes a parable of the ten virgins that describes Jesus' preparation and vigilance when he returns.

Matthew 26: At the Last Supper, Jesus prophesied about His return and the return of the Son of Man.

Mark 13: The Gospel of Mark also contains accounts of the end times and the return of Jesus, including Jesus' prophecies about the destruction of the temple and the events of the end times.

Luke 21: The Gospel of Luke contains a description of the end times and Jesus' return, including Jesus' prophecies of the end times and signs of the end times.

John 14: Jesus promised His disciples that He would come again and take them to his heavenly home.

John Revelation 19-22: The book of Revelation includes a description of Jesus' return, as well as a vision of the end times and a depiction of the New Jerusalem.

These verses provide descriptions and related prophecies about God's return.

We pray

Dear Father God

Let us receive God's guidance and protection as we prepare for God's return. Let us meet this great day with humility and reverence. Pray that the Lord will give us wisdom and courage so that we may prepare for the return of Christ. Let us glorify God's name by demonstrating love, justice, and kindness in our lives. Pray that the Lord will give us unwavering faith in the face of difficulties and trials. May the Holy Spirit of the Lord fill our hearts and lead us in the way of righteousness and walk with God forever. In the name of Jesus, amen.

2Samuel chapter 18

2Sa. 18:1 David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.

2Sa. 18:2 David sent the troops out — a third under the command of Joab, a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under Ittai the Gittite. The king told the troops, "I myself will surely march out with you."

2Sa. 18:3 But the men said, "You must not go out; if we are forced to flee, they won't care about us. Even if half of us die, they won't care; but you are worth ten thousand of us. [Two Hebrew manuscripts, some Septuagint manuscripts and

Vulgate; most Hebrew manuscripts care; for now there are ten thousand like us] It would be better now for you to give us support from the city."

2Sa. 18:4 The king answered, "I will do whatever seems best to you." So the king stood beside the gate while all the men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands.

2Sa. 18:5 The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake." And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

2Sa. 18:6 The army marched into the field to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.

2Sa. 18:7 There the army of Israel was defeated by David's men, and the casualties that day were great — twenty thousand men. 2Sa. 18:8 The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword.

2Sa. 18:9 Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's head got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in mid-air, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

2Sa. 18:10 When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, "I have just seen Absalom hanging in an oak tree."

2Sa. 18:11 Joab said to the man who had told him this, “What! You saw him? Why didn’t you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels [That is, about 4 ounces (about 115 grams)] of silver and a warrior’s belt.”

2Sa. 18:12 But the man replied, “Even if a thousand shekels [That is, about 25 pounds (about 11 kilograms)] were weighed out into my hands, I would not lift my hand against the king’s son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, ‘Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.’ [A few

Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; most

Hebrew manuscripts may be translated Absalom, whoever you may be.]

2Sa. 18:13 And if I had put my life in jeopardy — [Or Otherwise, if I had acted treacherously towards him] and nothing is hidden from the king — you would have kept your distance from me.”

2Sa. 18:14 Joab said, “I am not going to wait like this for you.” So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom’s heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. 2Sa. 18:15 And ten of Joab’s armour-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.

2Sa. 18:16 Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.

2Sa. 18:17 They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.

2Sa. 18:18 During his life-time Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King’s Valley as a monument to himself, for he thought, “I have no son to carry on the memory of my name.” He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom’s Monument to this day.

2Sa. 18:19 Now Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, “Let me run and take the news to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the hand of his enemies.”

2Sa. 18:20 “You are not the one to take the news today,” Joab told him. “You may take the news another time, but you must not do

so today, because the king’s son is dead.”

2Sa. 18:21 Then Joab said to a Cushite, “Go, tell the king what you have seen.” The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.

2Sa. 18:22 Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joab, “Come what may, please let me run behind the Cushite.” But Joab replied, “My son, why do you want to go? You don’t have any news that will bring you a reward.”

2Sa. 18:23 He said, “Come what may, I want to run.” So Joab said, “Run!” Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain [That is, the plain of the Jordan] and outran the Cushite.

2Sa. 18:24 While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates, the watchman went up to the roof of the gateway by the wall.

As he looked out, he saw a man running alone.

2Sa. 18:25 The watchman called out to the king and reported it. The king said, "If he is alone, he must have good news." And the man came closer and closer.

2Sa. 18:26 Then the watchman saw another man running, and he called down to the gatekeeper, "Look, another man running alone!"

The king said, "He must be bringing good news, too."

2Sa. 18:27 The watchman said, "It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok." "He's a good man," the king said. "He comes with good news."

2Sa. 18:28 Then Ahimaaz called out to the king, "All is well!" He bowed down before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Praise be to the LORD your God! He has delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king."

2Sa. 18:29 The king asked, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz

answered, "I saw great confusion just as Joab was about to send the king's servant and me, your servant, but I don't know what it was."

2Sa. 18:30 The king said, "Stand aside and wait here." So he stepped aside and stood there.

2Sa. 18:31 Then the Cushite arrived and said, "My lord the king, hear the good news! The LORD has delivered you today from all who rose up against you."

2Sa. 18:32 The king asked the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" The Cushite replied, "May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man."

2Sa. 18:33 The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: "O my son Absalom!

My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you

— O Absalom, my son, my son!"

In chapter 18 of the book of 2 Samuel, David divides his forces into three groups to fight Absalom's army. David himself stays behind in the city while Joab leads the charge. The battle takes place in the forest of Ephraim, and David's forces are successful, killing 20,000 of Absalom's men. During the battle, Absalom rides on a mule and gets his hair caught in the branches of a tree, leaving him suspended in midair. One of David's soldiers sees him and reports it to Joab, who finds Absalom and kills him against David's orders. David is devastated by the news of his son's death, and the news spreads throughout the land. The chapter highlights the

tragic end of Absalom's rebellion and the consequences of his actions. It also shows the emotional toll the conflict took on David and his followers. Chapter 18 of the book of 2 Samuel continues the story of Absalom's rebellion and the final battle between his forces and David's loyalists. Here are some important verses from this chapter:

1. "And the men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the loss there was great on that day, twenty thousand men." (2 Samuel 18:7) - This verse describes the initial battle between Absalom's forces and David's loyalists, which resulted in a significant loss for Absalom's army. This shows that despite Absalom's numerical advantage, David's forces were able to triumph through their military skill and loyalty to their leader.

2. "And Joab said to the man who told him, 'What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt.'" (2 Samuel 18:11) - This verse shows Joab's ruthless determination to eliminate Absalom, even if it meant going against David's wishes to spare his son's life. Joab's actions here highlight his loyalty to David, as well as his willingness to take matters into his own hands when necessary.

3. "And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!'" (2 Samuel 18:33)

- This verse is one of the most poignant and emotional moments in the book of 2

Samuel, as it shows David's grief over the death of his son Absalom. Despite Absalom's rebellion and attempts to overthrow him, David still loved his son and wished that he could have taken his place.

Overall, chapter 18 of 2 Samuel depicts the tragic end of Absalom's rebellion and the toll it took on both David and his kingdom. It shows the brutal reality of warfare and the difficult choices that leaders must make in order to protect their people and maintain their power.

. In 2 Samuel Chapter 18, we witness the battle between David's forces and Absalom's rebels, resulting in Absalom's death. Here are some key reflections from the chapter:

The Tragic Consequences of Rebellion: The chapter opens with the conflict between David and Absalom, highlighting the tragic consequences of Absalom's rebellion against his father. It serves as a reminder of the destructive nature of rebellion and the potential harm it can cause to individuals and relationships.

David's Concern for Absalom: Despite Absalom's rebellion, David expresses deep concern for his son's safety and well-being. He instructs his commanders to deal gently with Absalom, reflecting his love as a father and his desire for reconciliation, even in the midst of conflict. This

demonstrates David's capacity for forgiveness and his willingness to extend grace to his wayward son.

Absalom's Demise: The battle results in Absalom's death, as he becomes entangled in a tree while fleeing from David's forces. This serves as a sobering reminder of the consequences that can arise from disobedience and rebellion. Absalom's fate illustrates the tragic outcome of his actions and the significance of choices made.

Joab's Controversial Actions: Joab, one of David's commanders, disregards David's instruction to deal gently with Absalom and instead kills him. Joab's decision sparks debate and controversy among the people. While it may be seen as a strategic move to secure David's reign, it raises ethical questions about the use of force and the limits of loyalty.

David's Grief and Reflection: Upon hearing the news of Absalom's death, David is deeply grieved and mourns for his son. He laments Absalom's fate, highlighting the complexities of their relationship and the pain of a father losing his child. David's grief and reflection underscore the profound impact of broken family dynamics and the cost of rebellion.

Overall, 2 Samuel Chapter 18 offers reflections on the tragic consequences of rebellion,

David's concern for Absalom, Absalom's demise, Joab's controversial actions, and David's grief and reflection. It serves as a reminder of the complexities of family relationships, the weight of choices made, and the consequences that can arise from disobedience and rebellion.