

SORROW OF A FATHER

2 Samuel 18:33

*Felton King*

Sorrow of a father  
 2 Sam. 18:33

Epitaph -  
 Why King Sobbing -  
 Story - 3rd son - Handsome 254:25  
 Hearts of people -  
 Rebellion -  
 K.G. - Mule -  
 King Ahimaaz -  
 Several sons - Why weep?  
 Rich man - Poor man 7 children -  
 Baby - Day Trips - Suffered - Smile -  
 Look Mother - Elders' Treatment - Wayway son  
 (work harder)

my son Absalom! Would God I had died for

sorrowing father. It is quite different from  
 mystery. As you read words that have -- that people  
 How they have finished their life's work and  
 they have been loved and how they have not been

about not a marble tomb with a marker. But it is  
locks and a man has been thrown into that pit and  
 7. And it is not in stone or carved in stone, but  
 a wind. Oh my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom!  
 O Absalom, my son, my son! The one sobbing out  
 The one who is dead is Absalom - his handsome son.  
 of his sorrow.

Why is Absalom here? Why is the king sobbing.

I. THE STORY

David was a great king of Israel. He ruled in the golden age of his country.  
 He had wealth, honor, fame, fine family.

his third son was Absalom. He loved him with all his heart. You see...

Father Day

SORROW OF A FATHER

2 Samuel 18:33

O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

INTRODUCTION:

This is the epitaph of a sorrowing father. It is quite different from others that we read in the cemetery. As you read words that have -- that people remember about different ones. How they have finished their life's work and now they are resting. And how they have been loved and how they have not been forgotten.

But our story today is about not a marble tomb with a marker. But it is simply a pit with a pile of rocks and a man has been thrown into that pit and soldiers have covered his body. And it is not in stone or carved in stone, but it comes on the breeze of the wind. Oh my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! The one sobing out his sorrow is the mighty king. The one who is dead is Absalom - his handsome son. And these are the sad words of his sorrow.

Why is Absalom here? Why is the king sobing.

I. THE STORY

David was a great king of Israel. He ruled in the golden age of his country. He had wealth, honor, fame, fine family.

His third son was Absalom. He loved him with all his heart. You would think

that this son would have grown to be an honor to his father. For he had everything in his favor. But his heart was black with sin. He was jealous of his own father. He wanted to be ruler instead of his father.

He went out and with his charm and personality he tried to win the following of the people to his side. He had plenty of charm, because the Scripture tells that there was not a man in Israel as handsome as he was. That he did not have a single blemish in his body from the crown of his head to the soul of his feet. 2 Samuel 14:25, states that there was much praise to Absalom for his beauty.

Day after day Absalom stood at the gates in the city - there he met with the people who came to make their complaints and to present their grievances. He would say to them, your cause is just but there is no one to hear you. If I were the judge of this land, you would have justice. A man would come up to kneel to him since he was the king's son, but he would grasp the man by the shoulder and say, no - I'm your friend. He would put his arms around him and kiss him and express again his friendship. No wonder we read that he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

Soon he had gathered a great army about him and was leading a rebellion against the king. The time of the battle comes that David was going forth to fight - but his men said to him, - no, you must not go. You are worth 10,000 men. Then David replied, I will stay behind if you will grant me just one request. Deal gently with Absalom for my sake.

v. 9 Now David's army was victorious. As they were at battle, and Verse 9 says that 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. The low hanging boughs of the tree Absalom had become entangled with and was hanging. And Joab came along and saw it in Verse 10. V. 14 says that Joab took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten other young men also smote Absalom and slew him. Joab blew the trumpet and they took Absalom and cast him into the great pit in the wood. And lay a great heap of stone upon him, and Israel fled everyone to his own tent.

V. 19 Ahimaaz - V. 19 - said now let me bear the king tidings, how that the Lord hath avenged his enemies. Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings but there shall be another day. And then Joab said to Cushi - go tell the king what thou hath seen. But Ahimaaz wanted to run. And Joab said wherefore wilt thou run. Thou hast no tidings ready. But he said unto him, run. Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran Cushi and got there first. And the king asked the first runner about the situation, he said I saw a great tumult - V. 29. And I knew not what it was. The king said to him, stand aside. The second runner arrived and the king asked him. Is the young man Absalom safe. And the messenger said no, the young man Absalom is dead. Then the old king dragged himself up to the room about the wall. And there is that most dramatic scene in the Bible. As David climbs the stairs and you hear the cry coming from this sorrowing father. Oh my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom. Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

## II. THERE IS SORROW IN THE FATHER'S HEART

David had many sons. Why did he grieve over the loss of one. You might see a father who had ten sons and one of them dies, you say to the father, why do you weep.

You have many sons left. But that will not comfort him. For a father's heart is not like that. He loves all of his children and the loss of one breaks his heart.

I read an old story the other day of a rich man who had no children and a poor man who lived near him who had seven. He found it difficult to make a living. One day he wrote the poor man a letter. He said, give me one of your children. And I will give you a house, land, and money. The father read the letter to the mother that night. And they decided that this would be the best course. They went into the bedroom to choose the child who would be given away. When they came to the first bed - the mother said, oh, he is just a baby. I can't give him away. In the next bed was a little boy with tear stains on his cheeks. He had cried himself to sleep. The father said, we must keep him. In the next bed was a little child who had suffered greatly. The mother said, we cannot let him go. We must keep him and take care of him. In the next bed, was a little boy with a smile upon his face. He was always happy - he brought joy and laughter to the home. They couldn't possibly give him up. Then they came to the little girl who looked so very much like her mother. And the father who loved her devotedly said no, we must keep her. They passed on into the room of the eldest son, he was steady and trustworthy and they felt that they could not do without him. And then they came to the last bed - there lay the wayward son. He was the one who had gone astray and had caused so much trouble. But the mother said, we cannot let him go. He would have no mother there to pray for him. So the father sat down and wrote a letter and told the rich man that they couldn't give up one of their children. And in his heart, he had just decided that he would work a little harder in order to care for them all.

Is there a loving father anywhere who is willing to give up one of his children. No of course not. So we think of our children - we say, I could not part with them! What a sorrowful thing it was when David had to give up his son. Even though that

Explorers of an old Egyptian tomb found the burial place of a little child. For a thousand years the tomb had been sealed. But carved above were these words - "Oh, my life, my love, my little one - I would God that I had died in thy stead." The explorers took off their hats, sealed the tombs, backed up - and left love to its eternal vigil.

Calvin Coolidge was in the White House. One of his sons died. Mr. Coolidge sorrowfully said, it took the glory of the Presidency away with him.

Some day you may lose your boy or girl. There are some questions. First, could you stand it. So you have a Saviour to comfort you and carry you through such an hour.

Second, have you taught that child the way of God. Is he ready to die and face the judgement. I speak to you Fathers and Mothers - we must not give all our time to the world. There must be some time for God and for leading children in the right way.

### III. RETRIBUTION FOR PAST SIN

David was a man after God's heart. But there came a day when God's man grievously sinned. And the dark events in David's life had brought judgement. God said the sword shall not depart from thy house.

David wept over Absalom that day. He knew that he was paying part of the price of his sin. He knew that he was paying for sin as he climbed up the stairs - he was forced to say, it is my own fault. I brought this upon myself because of my sin. Since that time, many fathers have seen their sons go off into sin.

And they too have said, it is all my fault. It came because of my own sin.

A certain boy was arrested because of the crime that he had committed. The preacher in the community went to the family and tried to comfort them. But all the parents could say - it was our fault. There was a time when we prayed for the boy everyday. We took him to church and tried to lead him right. But after awhile we forgot to pray, soon we neglected the church, and our Christian duty in the boy has drifted off into sin. It is not his fault - it is ours. Now that is true of so many parents today. God has given you children and you need to lead them.

James Stirling, a temperance lecturer in Scotland, at 60 years of age he was a drunkard. But he was saved by the grace of God and was made over into a man that was sober. For the next 20 years he worked for the cause of temperance. But his son became a drunkard and finally committed suicide. The cry of this broken-hearted father was like the cry of David. If I had been a sober man all my life - this might not have happened.

Yes, you love your son and would do nothing to harm him. Do you want to help him - then live a good life. And set the right example before him, and lead him in Christ's way. If you do not lead the child in the right way - some day he will go out and break your heart. And you will say, I would to God that I led my child right - that I had set an example for him.

There are a lot of fathers who do not line up with the church. They do not even come to church with them. Now, if you do, and the boy goes wrong - it will not be your fault.

✓ IV. LOOK AT THE TRAGEDY OF A WASTED LIFE

Absalom had wonderful opportunities. He had wealth, position, training, personality. He could have been a great king. He was a miserable failure. He wasted his life.

Suppose you saw a man in a boat with a bag of gold throwing piece by piece in the ocean. You would cry to him - quit wasting that gold. Now life is more important than money. God has given you just one life. It is very short at the best. I would say to you, young man, quit wasting your life. Use it for God and for others.

V. 18 Now Absalom built a costly tomb. He expected to occupy this tomb. V. 18 - it says that it was built from the kings dale. Because he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance and he called the pillar after his own name. And even to this day it is called Absalom's place. Now Absalom expected to have a great state funeral. He expected all the nation to mourn for him and all the people to come by in their robes. And they would come and say, here lies Absalom, the mighty king.

How different it was - instead of resting in that marble tomb which was once a handsome flawless body - is now broken and thrown into a pit and covered with stone.

And there were no people there to mourn except his poor broken-hearted father. Many a young man starts out in life with wonderful possibilities and prospects. But because of the lack of reverence or purity, the lack of faith in God, he comes to a miserable end.

A young man was found drown in one of the rivers, in this country. The officers were not able to identify his body. An account of the tragedy was published in the



newspapers. In a few days time, 200 letters came from 200 fathers and mothers asking for a description of the boy. What a terrible fact was revealed. A fact, a wayward wasted life and broken-hearted parents.

Two young men were taking a journey on a train. At the end of the first day one of them went into the washroom to clean and change his linen. The other one said, are you nearing the end of your journey. The first man replied, no, I have another day to go yet. Why then, did you clean up and change the linen. He replied, I find that the best way to get to the end of the way clean is to keep clean as I go along.

Young men, if you want to come to the end of the way clean, start out in the right way with a good life. Stay clean everyday. Don't waste your life - give it over to Christ and his service.

✓ V. THE PICTURE OF GOD'S HEART

I think David weeping here and he says, would God I had died in thy stead. Well, no human father can do that. But Christ felt that way about the world. And did something about it. He wept over this sinful world. And he went out and died for it.

David wept over Absalom but it was too late. Now God is weeping over you but it is not too late. He will save you.

Absalom was a wicked wayward son. But his father loved him. Though, you too,

are evil and sinful, God loves you. He loves you far more than David could love his son.

Dr. S. D. Jordan tells about two brothers - Tom and Joe who lived on a farm. And Tom was quite careless and one day he left the bars to the pasture fence down. The cows wandered out into the field and devoured much of the crop. The father told him that if it happened again, he would be forced to punish him severely. So everything went fine for a few days. But then Tom was careless again. Once more the cows went into the field and destroyed more of the crop. The father took Tom out to punish him and Joe, the other brother, interceded. Father, do you remember reading the 53rd chapter of Isaiah at breakfast this morning. He said, yes, it is a wonderful chapter. Then Joe said the chapter told how one suffered for another. And I want to suffer for Tom. Let me take his punishment. Then tears came to the fathers eyes - he put his arms around both boys and the three wept. And Tom never again did forget or disobey.

Now that's what Jesus did for us. We had sinned. And God reserved punishment for us but Jesus came and actually offered himself in our place and took our sins.

May God help the fathers today to say I will give my heart to Christ and will live for him. And I will be the right kind of example for my children.

A visitor came to a prominent home and the men were soon engaged in a game of cards and drink. The father noticed the little boy at his side. He told the boy to go to bed. Later, he slapped him in the face, cursing, saying - go to bed! The boy said but Daddy, I can't go to bed, because I haven't said my prayers. The visitor said, get these things out of the way and let this boy say his prayers. The little boy knealt down - Now I lay me down to sleep. Take care of Daddy and take care of

baby. And when he had finished his prayer, he went off to bed. Do you see the Christian's task - do you see the father's task. A year before the mother had slipped across to eternity. And her little child could not forget that she had instructed him to pray. And this old sinful father was not only hurting himself but he was hurting his son.

There is no substitute for a man getting right with God. And a man living right before his children and his family, and leading them right in the church.

Let me ask you fathers, what are you going to be remembered for. What's the thing that your child is going to remember most about you. Will it be your loyalty to your church and your Lord. Or will it be something else. What a sad epitaph.  
My son, my son.