ABSALOM’S DEATH

DAVID MOURNS

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Text:

2 Samuel 18:1-33,

1. David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.  
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."  
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. It would be better now for you to give us support from the city."  
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.  
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.  
6. The army marched into the field to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraïm.  
7. There the army of Israel was defeated by David's men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men.  
8. The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword.  
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.
10. When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree."
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 of silver and a warrior's belt."
12. But the man replied, "Even if a thousand shekels 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.'
13. And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me."
14. Joab said, "I'm 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.
15. And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.
16. Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.
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.
18. During his lifetime 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.
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."
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."
21. Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.
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."
23. He said, "Come what may, I want to run." So Joab said, "Run!" Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran the Cushite.
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.
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.
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."
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."
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."
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."
30. The king said, "Stand aside and wait here." So he stepped aside and stood there.
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."
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."
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!"  (NIV)

Introduction:

I. “Absalom crossed the Jordan river with an immense force of more than forty thousand (40,000) men,” Coffman wrote.

   A. He was at the forefront of this great army anticipating a magnificent victory over David and becoming the uncontested king of all Israel.  (See Coffman.)

   B. This was an exact enactment of what Hushai had advised, Coffman wrote.

II. Absalom and his general Amasa did not expect a surprise attack against such a huge force as theirs.  (See Coffman.)

   A. However, David with an estimated four thousand (4,000) men (see Josephus), organized into three (3) contingents, launched a devastating attack that caught Absalom’s forces off guard.  (See Coffman.)

      1. Absalom’s glorious army was slaughtered!  (See Coffman.)

Commentary:

Absalom’s Death

2 Samuel 18:1, David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.  (NIV)
I. David mustered (numbered, organized) the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds; that is, in divisions and companies. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

A. In preparation for the coming battle, David “organized his men into a fighting force” and appointed commanders “over thousands and hundreds, the usual military divisions.” (Smith)

1. 1 Samuel 22:7, Saul said to them, "Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? (NIV)

2. Numbers 31:14, Moses was angry with the officers of the army—the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds—who returned from the battle. (NIV)

3. Exodus 18:21-25, But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. (NIV)
4. Deuteronomy 1:15, So I took the leading men of your tribes, wise and respected men, and appointed them to have authority over you—as commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens and as tribal officials. (NIV)

5. “Thousands” and “hundreds” were military units, not necessarily indicative of their numerical strength, Anderson wrote.

B. Absalom, following Hushai’s advice, enlarged his army which took some time.

1. David used this time wisely to organize his forces and plan for battle.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “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.”

A. David was king and commander-in-chief of the military which had grown by the addition of Transjordanic allies. (See Smith.)

B. The division of military forces into three (3) main divisions is mentioned elsewhere (Smith) and was common practice.

1. Judges 7:16, Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. (NIV)
2. Judges 9:43, So he took his men, divided them into three companies and set an ambush in the fields. When he saw the people coming out of the city, he rose to attack them. (NIV)

3. 1 Samuel 11:11, The next day Saul separated his men into three divisions; during the last watch of the night they broke into the camp of the Ammonites and slaughtered them until the heat of the day. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together. (NIV)

4. 1 Samuel 13:17, Raiding parties went out from the Philistine camp in three detachments. One turned toward Ophrah in the vicinity of Shual, (NIV)

5. 2 Kings 9:5-6, When he arrived, he found the army officers sitting together. "I have a message for you, commander," he said. "For which of us?" asked Jehu. "For you, commander," he replied. Jehu got up and went into the house. Then the prophet poured the oil on Jehu's head and declared, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anoint you king over the LORD's people Israel. (NIV)

C. Ittai, Coffman stated, had brought foreign troops with him who would be reluctant to serve under an Israelite commander. (The Pulpit Commentary concurs.)

1. Consequently, Ittai was given command of foreign troops.

2. Gittites were natives of the Philistine city of Gath.

   a. 2 Samuel 15:18-19, All his men marched past him, along with all the Kerethites and Pelethites; and all
the six hundred Gittites who had accompanied him from Gath marched before the king. The king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you come along with us? Go back and stay with King Absalom. You are a foreigner, an exile from your homeland. (NIV)

D. The customary three divisions consisted of a center and two (2) wings when readying for battle or a van, the main body, and a rearguard when on the march. (Pulpit Commentary)

1. Sometimes Israel’s army was divided into two (2) parts. (Pulpit Commentary)

    a. 2 Samuel 10:9-10, Joab saw that there were battle lines in front of him and behind him; so he selected some of the best troops in Israel and deployed them against the Arameans. He put the rest of the men under the command of Abishai his brother and deployed them against the Ammonites. (NIV)

II. “The king told the troops, ‘I myself will surely march out with you.’”

A. This was his customary procedure through the years, but there were exceptions.

1. 2 Samuel 21:17, But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to David's rescue; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, saying, "Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished." (NIV)

2. 1 Samuel 8:20, Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles." (NIV)
2 Samuel 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. It would be better now for you to give us support from the city." (NIV)

I. “But the men said, ‘You must not go out; if we are forced to flee, they won’t care about us.’ ”

1. Enemy forces would center all their efforts on killing David.

II. “Even if half of us die, they won’t care; . . .”

A. Absalom’s forces wanted David dead for only then could Absalom be the unquestioned king of Israel.

B. A great loss of men in David’s army would not produce this uncontested reign Absalom desired so long as David lived.

III. “but you are worth ten thousand of us.”

A. If king David were killed, the war would be over and Absalom would be the victor and the undisputed king.

B. The size of David’s army at this time is not definitely known.

1. The army had certainly been greatly reinforced since David left Jerusalem.

2. Some commentators understand this phrase to mean David’s army had grown to ten thousand (10,000) men. (See Clarke.)

IV. “It would be better now for you to give us support from the city.”
A. The plan called for David to remain in Mahanaim with certain troops.

B. If one of the three (3) units were overcome, David would send reinforcements from the city to the beleaguered troops.

C. David’s men feared for his life were he to go into battle with them.

1. The Pulpit Commentary states the commanders were well aware of how hard it would be for a father to do battle with his son.

2. They may have also been concerned about how doing battle with his son might affect his strategic decisions.

D. The commanders also knew his feelings for Absalom could well adversely affect the orders he gave in battle. (Anderson)

1. Also, David’s age could adversely affect his battlefield performance.

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. The king answered, “I will do whatever seems best to you.”

A. David realized the counsel of his commanders was very good and he accepted it as such.

B. He did not let his pride and other such personal motivation keep him from doing the prudent thing.
II. “So the king stood beside the gate while all the men marched out in units of hundreds and thousands.”

A. David reviewed his troops who were risking their lives to insure the continuance of his reign.

B. Some of these troops would not return, would die in battle.

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. “The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, ‘Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.’ ”

A. Smith wrote that this charge stemmed from:

1. David’s unbounded affection for his son, . . .

2. his recognition that Absalom was acting as an instrument of chastisement for David’s sins, and . .

3. David’s desire that his son not die in rebellion and sin.

B. Coffman took the position that David failed to understand that Absalom was totally corrupt and that the resolution of this national could only occur by the death of either Absalom or David.

1. Clarke wrote that “David was the father of this worthless young man; and is it to be wondered at that he feels as a father?”

II. “And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.”
A. “How could they win the victory for David and at the same time deal gently with Absalom?” Coffman asked.

B. The entire army did not actually hear what David had said, but the word spread rapidly through the ranks and, in this way, all heard the king’s command. (See Pulpit Commentary.)

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

I. “The army marched into the field to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim.

A. Commentators are generally agreed, Smith stated, that “the forest of Ephraim” was located in Gilead, in Transjordan, near Mahanaim, east of the Jordan River.

1. Judges 12:6, they said, "All right, say 'Shibboleth.' " He said, "Sibboleth," because he could not pronounce the word correctly, they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed at that time. (NIV)

2. 2 Samuel 17:26, The Israelites and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead. (NIV)

B. Others are of the opinion that Absalom’s troops retreated back across the Jordan and the “the forest of Ephraim” was west of the Jordan in the territory allotted to the tribe of Ephraim.

C. The exact location of “the forest of Ephraim” is not known with certainty, Coffman observed.
D. Coffman suggested “the forest of Ephraim” may have received its name from the fact that Ephraim had been defeated there by the troops of Jephthah.

1. Forty-two thousand (42,000) Ephraimites were slain in that battle.

a. Judges 12:1-6, The men of Ephraim called out their forces, crossed over to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you go to fight the Ammonites without calling us to go with you? We're going to burn down your house over your head." Jephthah answered, "I and my people were engaged in a great struggle with the Ammonites, and although I called, you didn't save me out of their hands. When I saw that you wouldn't help, I took my life in my hands and crossed over to fight the Ammonites, and the LORD gave me the victory over them. Now why have you come up today to fight me?" Jephthah then called together the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. The Gileadites struck them down because the Ephraimites had said, "You Gileadites are renegades from Ephraim and Manasseh." The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan leading to Ephraim, and whenever a survivor of Ephraim said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead asked him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he replied, "No," they said, "All right, say 'Shibboleth.' " He said, "Sibboleth," because he could not pronounce the word correctly, they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed at that time. (NIV)
2 Samuel 18:7, There the army of Israel was defeated by David's men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men. (NIV)

I. “There the army of Israel was defeated by David’s men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men.”

A. Twenty thousand (20,000) men dead, all because a father and son, adversaries, could not peacefully resolve their difference.

1. “David’s hardened veterans simply butchered them, by the thousand,” Coffman stated.

2. Clarke wrote that it is not possible to determine whether the twenty thousand (20,000) casualties were those killed by the sword only or if the number also included those ensnared by the forest dangers.

B. This scenario in one form or another has been repeated thousands upon thousands of times through history.

C. The Pulpit Commentary raises the question, “Where was Amasa?”

1. He certainly had not distinguished himself as an exceptional general!

2. The Pulpit Commentary calls him a brave soldier, but an incompetent commander and no match for Joab.

2 Samuel 18:8, The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword. (NIV)

I. “The battle spread out over the whole countryside, and the forest claimed more lives that day than the sword.”
A. Skirmishes took place over a considerable area.

B. There were evidently concealed pits and crevices in the dense forest into which many fell and perished. (Smith)

C. Defeat and panic scattered Absalom’s troops in all directions. (Coffman)

D. Coffman quoted Bennett as saying, “Many fugitives lost their lives by falling headlong into the broken rocky country; and some, perhaps many of the wounded, died of hunger, thirst and exhaustion.”

1. Matthew Henry attributes some deaths to wild beasts encountered in the forest.

2. Clarke observed the Chaldaic, Syriac and Arabic versions state they were devoured by wild beasts in the woods.

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. Now Absalom happened (by chance) to meet David’s men.

A. Absalom was the ultimate target of David’s forces.

B. It appears that locating Absalom involved an element of chance or, more likely, divine providential intervention.

C. Absalom appears here to have been alone.
1. He ran, did not stand and fight!

2. Where were his chariot and the fifty (50) men to herald his greatness?

3. The Pulpit Commentary takes the position that Absalom was not acting from cowardice, but as general, was simply hastening to a place where he could regroup his forces.

II. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, (terebinth), Absalom’s head got caught in the tree.

   A. Smith understood this to mean “his head got wedged into the fork of a branch from which he could not extricate himself. There he hung stunned and helpless in midair.”

   B. Smith further wrote, “His predicament may have been further complicated by the entanglement of his long thick hair.”

   C. Coffman reminded his readers that “Absalom was caught, not by his hair, but by his head.”

1. “The most notable victim of the forest was Absalom himself,” Matthew Henry stated via Coffman.

2. Clarke wrote, “It has been supposed that Absalom was caught by the hair, but no such thing is intimated in the text. Probably his neck was caught in the fork of a strong bough, and he was nearly dead when Joab found him.”

III. “He was left hanging in midair, while the mule he was riding kept on going.”
A. This vainglorious aspirant to Israel’s throne was left alone with his head lodged in the fork of a tree.

1. Even Absalom’s mule didn’t stay around to help him!

2 Samuel 18:10, When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, "I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree." (NIV)

I. “When one of the men saw this, he told Joab, ‘I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.’ ”

A. This soldier reported to his superior officer what he had seen and, at the same time, obeyed the command of king David, “Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.”

2 Samuel 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 of silver and a warrior's belt." (NIV)

I. “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?’ ”

A. Joab reprimanded the soldier for failing to kill Absalom when he had the opportunity to do so.

B. Anderson wrote, “We assume that Joab is tempting the soldier with a bribe to go back and kill Absalom. . .”

II. “Then I would have had to give you ten (10) shekels of silver and a warrior’s belt.”

A. Smith wrote that “ten (10) shekels of silver” equals four (4) ounces of silver.
B. He would also have been honored with a special military, warrior’s belt if he had killed Absalom, a highly prized award.

1. Ezekiel 23:15, with belts around their waists and flowing turbans on their heads; all of them looked like Babylonian chariot officers, natives of Chaldea. (NIV)

2. Jonathan gave his warrior’s belt to David as a token of his esteem for David. (Clarke)

   a. 1 Samuel 18:4, Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt. (NIV)

2 Samuel 18:12, But the man replied, "Even if a thousand shekels 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.' " (NIV)

I. “But the man replied, ‘Even if a thousand (1,000) shekels were weighed out in my hands, I would not lift my hand against the king’s son.’ ”

   A. This soldier was loyal to David and said he would not harm Absalom, which David had forbidden, for any amount of cash money, even (a thousand (1,000) shekels or twenty-five (25) pounds of silver). (See Smith.)

II. “In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.' ”

   A. Smith observed that this soldier well “knew that Joab would not have come to his aid had the king ordered him executed for killing Absalom.”
2 Samuel 18:13, And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me." (NIV)

I. “And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me.”

A. Coffman, quoting The Pulpit Commentary, wrote, “. . .the man who thus answered Joab was not only loyal to king David, but he also thoroughly understood the unscrupulous character of Joab.”

B. Joab, it is here inferred, had this soldier killed Absalom, would have disavowed any connection with Absalom’s death, which would have left this soldier to stand before David as the killer of his son, a most unenviable position in which to have place himself. (See Clarke.)

C. This soldier was loyal to the king and well aware of Joab’s unscrupulous character. (The Pulpit Commentary)

1. Let us be certain we maintain our integrity regardless of all pressure exerted upon us by whomever! . . . even general Joab or king David!

2 Samuel 18:14, Joab said, "I'm 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. (NIV)

I. “Joab said, ‘I’m not going to wait like this for you.’ ”

A. Joab realized he had to dispense with Absalom himself.

B. He did not answer this soldier in regard to what he said, but simply paid him no further attention.
II. “So he took three (3) javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom’s heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree.”

A. Joab determined to personally and forthwith kill Absalom. (See Smith.)

B. “Javelins” can be defined as rods, staves, spears or darts.

1. 2 Samuel 23:21, And he struck down a huge Egyptian. Although the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, Benaiah went against him with a club. He snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. (NIV)

C. Heart, Smith wrote, means “not anatomically his heart, for the blows did not kill him outright; but “into the midst of his body.”

D. Smith wrote that Joab’s actions were meant to: . . .

1. inflict pain without killing, . . .

2. shed blood, . . .

3. perhaps symbolize the impalement of a traitor, and . . .

4. signify that his troops could kill Absalom with impunity.

E. While Joab clearly disobeyed the command of king David, Absalom’s death was essential for the peace of the nation and was warranted by the commands of the law of Moses. (See Clarke.)

1. He had murdered his brother Amnon.

2. He was guilty of an insurrection.
3. He had taken up arms against his own father.
   
a. Deuteronomy 21:18, 21, If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid. (NIV)

4. He had committed incest and rape with his father’s concubines.
   
a. Leviticus 18:29, "'Everyone who does any of these detestable things—such persons must be cut off from their people. (NIV)

2 Samuel 18:15, And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him. (NIV)

I. "And ten of Joab’s armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him, finished the job of killing Absalom.”

   A. Joab’s multiple armor bearers actually struck (beat) Absalom until he was dead.

   B. Absalom was not killed by one (1) person, but by at least ten (10) armor-bearers and Joab.

   C. Smith wrote, Joab “did not believe that the king would be safe nor the kingdom at peace so long as Absalom was alive.”

   D. Joab, the old soldier, could have killed Absalom with one (1) blow.
1. Did Joab intend to prolong Absalom’s suffering?

2. Joab clearly disobeyed a specific direct command of his superior, David himself.

3. Joab did what was best for the nation and acted to end once and for all Absalom’s rebellion.

4. David loved his son Absalom, may not have executed him, and may have failed to decisively end the rebellion.
   
a. Trouble could have continued for years to come.

**2 Samuel 18:16, Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them. (NIV)**

I. “Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them; that is, halted the men under his command.”

   A. **2 Samuel 2:28, So Joab blew the trumpet, and all the men came to a halt; they no longer pursued Israel, nor did they fight anymore. (NIV)**

   B. “. . . with the death of Absalom the rebellion had collapsed. Further bloodshed was unnecessary,” Smith wrote.

   1. The trumpet signaled the end of hostilities. (Smith)

   2. Absalom’s rebellion was over!

      a. Peace was restored to the land and David remained king of Israel.
C. The Pulpit Commentary states Joab, in killing Absalom, acted in the national interest rather than for personal reasons “although he may have grimly remembered his own blazing barley field.”

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a great heap of rocks over him.

A. “The soldiers unceremoniously threw Absalom’s body into a big pit in the forest,” (smith) which was not exactly what he had expected!

1. David’s men piled up a great (large) heap of rocks over him which was a monument of shame over the rebel’s grave.

a. Absalom was given “the burial of an accused man.” (See Anderson.)

b. Joshua 7:25b-26, Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the Valley of Achor ever since. (NIV)

c. Deuteronomy 21:18-21, If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us.
He is a profligate and a drunkard." Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid. (NIV)

d. Joshua 8:29, He hung the king of Ai on a tree and left him there until evening. At sunset, Joshua ordered them to take his body from the tree and throw it down at the entrance of the city gate. And they raised a large pile of rocks over it, which remains to this day. (NIV)

e. Joshua 10:27, At sunset Joshua gave the order and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had been hiding. At the mouth of the cave they placed large rocks, which are there to this day. (NIV)

2. Absalom’s men fled!

a. That was the end of this wicked man’s hopes and dreams.

b. We reap what we sow!

II. “Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.”

A. Absalom’s supporters knew they had been soundly defeated and their cause destroyed.

B. These people fled for safety knowing that David’s forces might come looking for them next.
2 Samuel 18:18, During his lifetime 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. (NIV)

I. “During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King’s Valley as a monument to himself, . . .”

   A. It takes more than a rock for a person to be remembered with love, admiration and respect.

   B. Absalom had an over supply of pride, vanity and grandiose dreams, but he rests in a big hole in the ground in the woods.

   1. Where is Absalom’s pillar today or his burial site in the forest?

   2. This scribe doesn’t know either.

   3. Where is the “King’s Valley?”

   4. Smith informs us that there is a structure in the Kifron Valley known as Absalom’s tomb which is about forty (40) feet high and is pointed like a pyramid, but it was built in Hellenistic times long after Absalom’s death.

   C. Coffman identified the King’s Valley or the King’s Dale as the Vale of Shaveh, the place where the king of Sodom met Abraham, although the exact location of the place is unknown.

   1. Genesis 14:17, After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). (NIV)
2. The Pulpit Commentary concurs, but emphasizes that “whether it was near Jerusalem or near Sodom is uncertain.”

II. “for he thought, ‘I have no son to carry on the memory of my name.’”

A. Absalom either erected his monument before his sons were born or they died young. (See Smith.)

1. 2 Samuel 14:27, Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. The daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman. (NIV)

III. “He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom’s Monument to this day.

A. The monument Absalom wanted and the monument he actually received were as different as daylight and dark! (See Peake via Coffman.)

B. Saul had erected a comparable monument. (See Clarke.)

1. 1 Samuel 15:12, Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, "Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal." (NIV)

David Mourns

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)
I. “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.’ ”

A. Ahimaaz was one of the runners which brought vital information to David from Hushai regarding Absalom’s plans.

1. 2 Samuel 17:17, Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En Rogel. A servant girl was to go and inform them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they could not risk being seen entering the city. (NIV)

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “You are not the one to take the news today,” Joab told him.

A. Joab was protecting the good man Ahimaaz.

1. David had executed messengers on occasion in the past who brought him bad news.

a. 2 Samuel 1:15-16, Then David called one of his men and said, "Go, strike him down!" So he struck him down, and he died. For David had said to him, "Your blood be on your own head. Your own mouth testified against you when you said, 'I killed the LORD's anointed.' " (NIV)

b. 2 Samuel 4:5-12, Now Recab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, set out for the house of Ish-Bosheth, and they arrived there in the heat of the day while he was taking his noonday rest. They
went into the inner part of the house as if to get some wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Recab and his brother Baanah slipped away. They had gone into the house while he was lying on the bed in his bedroom. After they stabbed and killed him, they cut off his head. Taking it with them, they traveled all night by way of the Arabah. They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who tried to take your life. This day the LORD has avenged my lord the king against Saul and his offspring." David answered Recab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered me out of all trouble, when a man told me, 'Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and put him to death in Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news! How much more—when wicked men have killed an innocent man in his own house and on his own bed—should I not now demand his blood from your hand and rid the earth of you!" So David gave an order to his men, and they killed them. They cut off their hands and feet and hung the bodies by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in Abner's tomb at Hebron. (NIV)

II. "You may take the news another time, but you must not do so today, because the king’s son is dead."

A. Perhaps Joab wanted to spare Ahimaaz the unpleasantness or even the animosity of David when he heard the bad news of his son’s death. (See Smith.)
2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. “Then Joab said to a Cushite, . . .”

A. A Cushite (Ethiopian), foreigner, was sent with the bad news to David because this would certainly be a thankless and even dangerous job depending on David’s response.

1. This Cushite was, several commentators wrote, an Ethiopian, a black slave in Joab’s service.

B. David was more grieved over his son’s death than he was elated over the victory that ended the rebellion!

II. “Go, tell the king what you have seen.”

A. This was inclusive of both the victory of David’s forces and the death of Absalom.

III. “The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.”

A. This was a courtesy and an act of respect, a salute if you please.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “Ahimaaz son of Zadok again said to Joah, ‘Come what may, please let me run behind the Cushite.’”

A. Ahimaaz really wanted to take the news to David and was very willing to assume the risks involved.
II. “But Joab replied, ‘My son, why do you want to go? You don’t have any news that will bring you a reward.’”

A. Joab persisted in his position that there were no benefits to taking this news to David, that it was a thankless job.

B. Perhaps Joab sought to befriend and protect Ahimaaz.

2 Samuel 18:23, He said, "Come what may, I want to run." So Joab said, "Run!" Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran the Cushite. (NIV)

I. “He said, ‘Come what may, I want to run.’”

A. Ahimaaz was persistent in his seeking permission to take the message to David.

II. “So Joab said, ‘Run!’ Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and outran the Cushite.”

A. Ahimaaz may have taken the longer route but one that had less difficult terrain which helped him arrive in Mahanaim before the Cushite.

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. “While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates, the watchman went up to the roof of the gateway by the wall.”

A. “The gateway was in a tower in the city walls, and David was sitting in the space between the inner and outer gates. Over this
space was a chamber, where the sentinel was posted upon the front wall over the outer gate,” The Pulpit Commentary states.

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

A. The sentry was vigilant, dutiful as we should be in our relationship with God and with our earthly relationships as well.

2 Samuel 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. (NIV)

I. “The watchman called out to the king and reported it.

A. The sentry continued to perform his duties well.

II. “The king said, ‘If he is alone, he must have good news.’ ”

A. If the news had been bad, many men would have been retreating back toward Mahanaim. (See Smith.)

III. “And the man came closer and closer.”

A. Ahimaaz was intent on reaching his destination ahead of the Cushite.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “Then the watchman saw another man running, and he called down to the gatekeeper, ‘Look, another man running alone!’ ”
A. One runner meant good news while a second runner would mean more complete news about the occurrence being reported. (The Pulpit Commentary)

II. The king said, “He must be bringing good news, too.”

A. Additional information about the good news event would be expected from the second runner.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “The watchman said, ‘It seems to me that the first one runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok.’ ”

A. Ahimaaz evidently had an atypical running style identifiable at a distance.

II. “He’s a good man,” the king said. “He comes with good news.”

A. Ahimaaz was too loyal and brave a man to have fled the battlefield when the troops were in a desperate situation. (See Smith.)

1. “In the case of victory the fastest runner would be sent, and in the case of defeat there would be no eagerness to bring news of it,” Smith wrote.

B. His appearance was a positive sign!

C. Anderson quoting McCarter suggests that “a good man” may imply political loyalty and that he must be bringing good news.
1. Lesser important staff members would ordinarily be assigned to carry bad news.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “Then Ahimaaz called out to the king, ‘All is well!’ ” (literally, “peace.”)

A. This expression, Smith stated, is a Hebrew salutation, not a message of victory.

B. Nonetheless, as The Pulpit Commentary states, this expression does convey the idea that his report would be favorable to the king.

II. “He bowed down before the king with his face to the ground and said, . . .”

A. This indicates deep respect and loyalty which Ahimaaz felt for David.

III. “Praise be to the Lord your God! He has delivered up the men who lifted their hands against my lord the king.”

A. David’s enemies had been restrained (hedged, shut in) and confined within limits so they would not be able to work their evil schemes, Smith wrote.

B. Prosperity is compared to living in a broad place while poverty and distress are compared to a narrow place, being hedged in.

1. Psalm 31:8, You have not handed me over to the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place. (NIV)
2. 2 Samuel 22:20, He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me. (NIV)

3. 1 Samuel 26:8, Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won't strike him twice." (NIV)

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “The king asked, ‘Is the young man Absalom safe?’ ”

A. Absalom was upper most in David’s mind.

B. David appears to be more concerned about Absalom than about his own life and kingdom.

C. Absalom certainly was not concerned about David and would have killed him if he had the chance.

II. “Ahimaaz answered, ‘I saw great confusion (tumult) just as Joab was about to send the king’s servant and me, your servant, but I don’t know what it was.’ ”

A. Ahimaaz answered David like a seasoned politician!

1. “He skillfully, though untruthfully, evaded the question,” Smith stated.

2. Ahimaaz “pled ignorance regarding Absalom’s welfare.”
3. Ahimaaz left it to the Cushite runner to relay the bad news to David, which was not the bravest thing Ahimaaz ever did!

   a. Ahimaaz now well understood why Joab insisted that he not be the messenger that day. (See Smith.)

   b. In answer to David’s question, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” Ahimaaz plainly lied by saying, “I don’t know” what happened to Absalom.

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

I. “The king said, ‘Stand aside and wait here.’ ”

   A. David would be able to further question the two (2) messengers and compare their accounts if necessary.

II. “So he stepped aside and stood there.”

   1. Ahimaaz respectfully complied with David’s directive.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “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.’ ”

   A. The Cushite told the truth, faithfully and accurately delivered his message in a very discreet and diplomatic manner.

   B. Intrigues and maneuverings for advantage were everywhere in David’s government and army.
1. It is often difficult to identify our friends and adversaries, to differentiate friends from adversaries.

2 Samuel 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." (NIV)

I. “The king asked the Cushite, ‘Is the young man Absalom safe?’”

   A. “Alarm for Absalom is the dominant feeling in David’s mind” and the Cushite gave David the information he had been sent to deliver.” (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

II. “The Cushite replied, ‘May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man.’”

   A. The Cushite’s answer was true and both kindly and diplomatically spoken. (See Smith.)

2 Samuel 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!" (NIV)

I. “The king was shaken.”

   A. David’s body was agitated indicating a violent trembling. (Pulpit Commentary)

   B. He immediately sought a place of solitude where he could grieve for his son.
1. His son’s dying in sin and rebellion caused David deep grief.

2. His men and most trusted commander had disobeyed his direct order and this must have caused anger and great frustration for David.

3. Also, David knew that his own sins had brought these troubles on himself and the nation.
   a. This caused David pain and anguish of conscience. (See Pulpit Commentary.)

II. “He went up to the room over the gateway and wept.”

   A. David was in the deepest grief at this time for Absalom.

   B. This also reminds us of David’s grief at the time of the illness and death of his infant child born to Bathsheba.

   1. 2 Samuel 12:1-23, The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this
deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity." Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' "This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.' " Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die." After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and went into his house and spent the nights lying on the ground. The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them. On the seventh day the child died. David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, "While the child was still living, we spoke to David but he would not listen to us. How can we
tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate." David noticed that his servants were whispering among themselves and he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked. "Yes," they replied, "he is dead." Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate. His servants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!" He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.' But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." (NIV)

III. “As he went, he said: ‘O my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O Absalom, my son, my son!’ ”

A. “My son” was repeated here five (5) times.

B. David would have gladly died, sacrificed himself, to save the life of his son.

C. “David’s lamentation is deeply pathetic, and the sincerity of it beyond any doubt. To such a state had his own sins brought him.” (The Pulpit Commentary via Coffman.)

D. “It was David’s conscience which smote him here.” (ibid)

1. Psalm 38:1-22, O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. For your arrows have pierced me, and your hand has come down upon me.
Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin. My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear. My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly. I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning. My back is filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body. I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart. All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes. My friends and companions avoid me because of my wounds; my neighbors stay far away. Those who seek my life set their traps, those who would harm me talk of my ruin; all day long they plot deception. I am like a deaf man, who cannot hear, like a mute, who cannot open his mouth; I have become like a man who does not hear, whose mouth can offer no reply. I wait for you, O LORD; you will answer, O Lord my God. For I said, "Do not let them gloat or exalt themselves over me when my foot slips." For I am about to fall, and my pain is ever with me. I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. Many are those who are my vigorous enemies; those who hate me without reason are numerous. Those who repay my good with evil slander me when I pursue what is good. O LORD, do not forsake me; be not far from me, O my God. Come quickly to help me, O Lord my Savior. (NIV)

2. Psalm 40:1-17, I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD. Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not
look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare. Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, "Here I am, I have come—it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly. Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me. For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me. Be pleased, O LORD, to save me; O LORD, come quickly to help me. May all who seek to take my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" be appalled at their own shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "The LORD be exalted!" Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay. (NIV)
Conclusion:

I. “David’s choice of Mahanaim as his temporary capital must have been dictated by practical and diplomatic factors.” (Anderson)

II. “It is impossible to say how much time had elapsed between Absalom’s entry into Jerusalem and the fateful battle in the Forest of Ephraim, but it is obvious that the whole rebellion was quelled by this one decisive battle.” (Anderson)

III. “Joab, who was responsible for Absalom’s return from Geshur to Jerusalem, was now responsible for his death.” (Anderson)

IV. “David as king and father found himself in a difficult predicament. Absalom was a traitor, but he was also David’s son.” (Anderson)

Questions

on

2 Samuel 18:1-33

(Questions based on NIV text.)

1. ______________________ crossed the ________________________
   ______________________ with an __________________ ______ of
   more than ______________________ men. He was at the ___________________ of this great __________________
1.  _____________ a _____________ and becoming the ________________
over ___________________ and becoming the ________________ of _________________. This was an exact
_______________ of what ________________ had ___________________

2.  Who was Amasa?  Evaluate his performance in Absalom’s army. Why did David later appoint Amasa to a command position in his army?

3.  ________________ with an estimated ________________ men, organized into ________________, ________________, launched a ________________ that caught ________________’s ________________ off guard. ________________’s ________________ was ________________!

4.  How did the delay in Absalom’s attack on David’s forces work for David’s advantage?

5.  Who were David’s commanders?  Give information about each, especially the Gittite.
6. Why did David’s troops advise against his going into battle with them? ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

7. Why did David order his commanders to be gentle with Absalom? How could they obey this command and still give their full unfettered effort to winning this battle? ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

8. Where did the battle take place? ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

9. Relate how the battle progressed and tell of its outcome. __________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
10. What did Absalom do when he happened to meet some of David’s men? Who was with Absalom at that time?

11. Was Absalom caught and held in the tree by his hair? Explain your answer.

12. Did the man who told Joab, “I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree,” do the right thing? Was Joab pleased with what he did? Why or why not?

13. What did Joab do regarding Absalom? Did he do what was right? Did he do what was best for the nation? Explain your answer.
14. What would Joab have given this soldier had he killed Absalom? Did this soldier trust Joab? Why or why not? ____________________

15. By what designations are David’s forces and Absalom’s forces referenced in 2 Samuel 18? What is signified by these designations? ____________________

16. Who killed Absalom? How was he killed? ____________________

17. Where was Absalom buried? What is the significance of the way he was buried? How did the way he was buried differ from the way he wanted to be memorialized? ____________________

18. ____________________ sounded the ____________________, and the ____________________ stopped pursuing ____________________. The war was over. With the ____________________ of ____________________
the ______________________ had ______________________. Further
____________________ was ______________________.

19. Why did Ahimaaz want to take the news of the battle to David?
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

20. Why was Joab opposed to Ahimaaz’s being the runner to take this
news to David? _____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

21. Joab sent a Cushite to inform David of developments. Who were the
Cushites? __________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

22. Joab then permitted Ahimaaz to also run to take news to David. How did Ahimaaz arrive in Mahanaim before the Cushite when the
Cushite started first. _________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
23. Why was a single man running alone regarded as a good sign? What would two runners mean? Why might a second runner be needed?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

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24. Did Ahimaaz, “a good man,” lie to king David? If so, what did he say that was not true? Why would he lie? ______________________

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25. Did the Cushite tell the whole truth about Absalom and the war? What was David’s response to this news? ______________________

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26. Intrigues and maneuverings were rampant in David’s court. How could he and how can we tell our friends from our enemies?

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27. Why did David choose Mahanaim as his temporary capital? _______
28. How did David use the time between his arrival in Mahanaim and the time of his battle with Absalom? 

29. Why did Joab kill Absalom? Give all the reasons possible?

30. David found himself in a very difficult situation. How could he have handled the situation better?