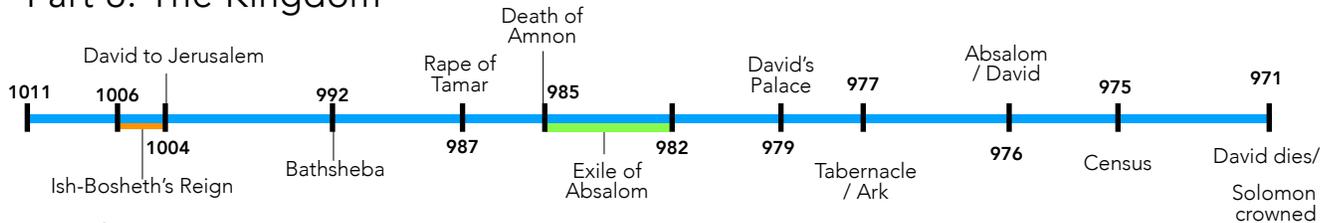


# Making Promises

## Part 6: The Kingdom



### Review

- Amnon “fell in love” with his half-sister Tamar. Acting on the advice of his cousin Jonadab, he pretended to be ill and asked David to let Tamar attend him. As she attended him by feeding him in his bed he acted on his debased lusts by making sexual advances. When she refused his advances, he raped her.
- The writer portrays each of the four major male characters in chapter 13 as deficient in some way: Amnon exercises passion without love. Jonadab exercises wisdom without principle. David exercises anger without justice. Absalom exercises hatred without restraint.
- After two years of silence concerning Amnon’s rape of Tamar, Absalom arranged for Amnon to join him and the rest of his brothers at a sheep shearing party. While in the midst of the festivities, Absalom had his servants kill Amnon.

### David and Absalom

- Having heard that Amnon was dead, David fell into **inconsolable anguish**. Absalom meanwhile fled from Baal Hazor and sought and found refuge with Talmai, his **maternal grandfather**, at Geshur, east of the Sea of Galilee. Absalom remained there for three years (**2 Sam. 13:34-39**).
  - ▶ Apparently David had little enthusiasm for Absalom’s **return from exile** and still less for **reconciliation** with him. Although often translated “longed” or “yearned” 13:39 and 14:1 probably mean something more like “come to an end” or “to be used up.” Further, the expression ‘to go out to’ can be used in a hostile sense like “march out against” (**Deut. 28:7**).
  - ▶ The translation of 13:39 should probably be understood, “the king’s enthusiasm for marching out against Absalom was spent.” In 14:1 there is no verb ‘long/long for’. That verse most likely says Joab knew that the heart of the king was **‘against Absalom’** (he remained hostile to him).
- After Absalom had been in Geshur for three years, Joab enlisted the help of a **wise woman of Tekoa**, who tricked David into pardoning Absalom, much as Nathan’s parable had caught the conscience of the king (**2 Sam. 14:1-24**).

- ▶ The woman hired by Joab played the role of a **bereaved widow**, claiming that her two sons had had a quarrel in which one killed the other (v.4-7). In accordance with the law, the guilty son was being pursued by the **avenger of blood**. Though this was a legitimate procedure, the death of her second son would obviously deprive the widow of her last male protection and would bring an end to her husband's name.
  - ▶ David promised not to allow her son to die (v. 8). Once David had rendered the decision, she revealed that her story was an **allegory** of **Absalom's** history (vv. 12–17). **Israel** was the widow in the story; her two leading sons were **Amnon** and **Absalom**; Amnon was dead, and if Absalom was killed or permanently banished, she would be left with no one to carry on the family heritage. Without Absalom, Israel would be like water poured out that cannot be regathered (v. 14).
  - ▶ As with Nathan, David was **convinced** and **convicted** by the parable, and he called Joab to tell him to bring the prodigal home.
- Joab was not loyal to **Absalom**. Even when Absalom took the throne, Joab remained with David. Joab's motivation for bringing Absalom back is not stated, but two possibilities can be inferred:
    - ▶ First, these events likely took place **later in David's reign**. Joab probably discerned that the king was weak and that the succession might be troublesome. Amnon, the eldest prince, was dead, and Absalom, who was apparently next in line, was in exile. Joab wanted Absalom back to ensure that the kingdom would not **fall apart** after David's death.
    - ▶ Second, Joab may have been supporting Absalom to prevent **Solomon from becoming king**. Though it cannot be conclusively demonstrated, it is likely that David had already designated Solomon as king when Joab helped Absalom to return.
      - ◆ Joab, it appears, hoped that Absalom would be restored to David's good graces and to what Joab believed was his rightful position as king-designate. Bringing back Absalom was Joab's way of **undermining Solomon**.
      - ◆ Joab's later actions are also clarified if we understand that they were motivated by a persistent opposition to Solomon. Joab will later support **Adonijah's** succession campaign, which looked suspiciously like Absalom's (**1 Kgs. 1:5–10**).
  - Although Joab's intentions may have been to preserve **the strength** of the kingdom in Absalom's return, his disregard for **God's word** leads to further weakening of the kingdom.

## Part 6: The Kingdom

<p><b>2 Sam. 13:34– 39</b></p>	<p><a href="#">34</a> But Absalom fled. And the young man who kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, many people were coming from the road behind him by the side of the mountain. <a href="#">35</a> And Jonadab said to the king, "Behold, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about." <a href="#">36</a> And as soon as he had finished speaking, behold, the king's sons came and lifted up their voice and wept. And the king also and all his servants wept very bitterly. <a href="#">37</a> But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. <a href="#">38</a> So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. <a href="#">39</a> And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom, because he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead.</p>
<p><b>Deut. 28:7</b></p>	<p>"The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.</p>
<p><b>2 Sam. 14:1–24</b></p>	<p><a href="#">1</a> Now Joab the son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart went out to Absalom. <a href="#">2</a> And Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a wise woman and said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner and put on mourning garments. Do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. <a href="#">3</a> Go to the king and speak thus to him." So Joab put the words in her mouth. <a href="#">4</a> When the woman of Tekoa came to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and paid homage and said, "Save me, O king." <a href="#">5</a> And the king said to her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow; my husband is dead. <a href="#">6</a> And your servant had two sons, and they quarreled with one another in the field. There was no one to separate them, and one struck the other and killed him. <a href="#">7</a> And now the whole clan has risen against your servant, and they say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed.' And so they would destroy the heir also. Thus they would quench my coal that is left and leave to my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth." <a href="#">8</a> Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." <a href="#">9</a> And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be guiltless." <a href="#">10</a> The king said, "If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." <a href="#">11</a> Then she said, "Please let the king invoke the Lord your God, that the avenger of blood kill no more, and my son be not destroyed." He said, "As the Lord lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground." <a href="#">12</a> Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a word to my lord the king." He said, "Speak." <a href="#">13</a> And the woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again. <a href="#">14</a> We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But God will not take away life, and he devises means so that the banished one will not remain an outcast. <a href="#">15</a> Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid, and your servant thought, 'I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. <a href="#">16</a> For the king will hear and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together from the heritage of God.' <a href="#">17</a> And your servant thought, 'The word of my lord the king will set me at rest,' for my lord the king is like the angel of God to discern good and evil. The Lord your God be with you!" <a href="#">18</a> Then the king answered the woman, "Do not hide from me anything I ask you." And the woman said, "Let my lord the king speak." <a href="#">19</a> The king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has said. It was your servant Joab who commanded me; it was he who put all these words in the mouth of your servant. <a href="#">20</a> In order to change the course of things your servant Joab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth." <a href="#">21</a> Then the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom." <a href="#">22</a> And Joab fell on his face to the ground and paid homage and blessed the king. And Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant." <a href="#">23</a> So Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. <a href="#">24</a> And the king said, "Let him dwell apart in his own house; he is not to come into my presence." So Absalom lived apart in his own house and did not come into the king's presence.</p>
<p><b>1 Kings 1:5–10</b></p>	<p><a href="#">5</a> Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. <a href="#">6</a> His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, "Why have you done thus and so?" He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom. <a href="#">7</a> He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him. <a href="#">8</a> But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and David's mighty men were not with Adonijah. <a href="#">9</a> Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the Serpent's Stone, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, <a href="#">10</a> but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men or Solomon his brother.</p>

# Appendix A:

