

APRIL 6

Read 2 Samuel 14–15

CHAPTER 14

NOW Joab the son of Zeruah perceived that the king's heart *was* toward Absalom.

2 And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:

3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab put the words in her mouth.

4 ¶ And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, Help, O king.

5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, I *am* indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead.

6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and *there was* none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

7 And, behold, the whole family

is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband *neither* name nor remainder upon the earth.

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's house: and the king and his throne *be* guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whosoever saith *ought* unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the LORD thy God, that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, As the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on.

13 And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.

14 For we must needs die, and *are* as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect *any* person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.

15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, *it is* because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man *that would* destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.

17 Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable: for as an angel

of God, so *is* my lord the king to discern good and bad: therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.

18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

19 And the king said, *Is not* the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid:

20 To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord *is* wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all *things* that *are* in the earth.

21 ¶ And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my

lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.

23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

25 ¶ But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

26 And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled *it*: because *the hair* was heavy on him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight.

27 And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name *was* Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

28 ¶ So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and

when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto *his* house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? *it had been* good for me *to have been* there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me.

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom.

CHAPTER 15

AND it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any

man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters *are* good and right; but *there is* no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee.

4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was *so*, that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him,

Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

10 ¶ But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, *that were* called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, *even* from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

13 ¶ And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

14 And David said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants *are ready to do* whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

16 And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the house.

17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

19 ¶ Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou *art* a stranger, and also an exile.

20 Whereas thou camest *but* yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth *be* with thee.

21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the LORD liveth, and *as* my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that *were* with him.

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

24 ¶ And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites *were* with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.

25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me *both* it, and his habitation:

26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, *here am* I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, *Art not* thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me.

29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 ¶ And David went up by the ascent of *mount Olivet*, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that *was* with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

31 ¶ And *one* told David, saying, Ahithophel *is* among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

32 ¶ And it came to pass, that *when* David was come to the top of *the mount*, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:

33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me:

34 But if thou return to the city,

and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; *as I have been* thy father's servant hitherto, so *will* I now also *be* thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And *hast thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell *it* to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold, *they have* there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's *son*, and Jonathan Abiathar's *son*; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

In our reading today David is reaping the sad harvest of the sins he committed in II Samuel 12:10-12. Our God is gracious to forgive when we confess our sins, but He will not violate His holiness and sinlessness by interfering with the tragic results of our sins. We must reap what we sow, and we will see today that David is reaping those sinful seeds he spread in earlier chapters.

Absalom, David's son, was the apple of the king's eye. David loved him dearly, but God allowed Absalom to break David's heart. Absalom led the rebellion that drove David from the throne. Absalom betrayed his own father.

Absalom won the hearts and the favor of the leaders of Israel. Just as God had given the hearts of these men to David earlier, now Absalom steals that admi-

ration. How could such a thing happen? For a season, the power of God is lifted from David's head. For David had sinned, and the price must be paid for willful sin.

All too often, as children of God, we forget where the power comes from. Zechariah 4:6 tells us, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." We should constantly be aware that we can do nothing apart from the power of God. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

PROVERB FOR TODAY

"Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

Spend this month reviewing the previous 13 lessons.

For today, review Memory Verse Assignment 4 (found on page 10).

HYMN FOR TODAY

NEAR THE CROSS by Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

The cross was a superb triumph over Satan, death, and hell. Never was Christ more a king than when He shouted from the cross—"It is finished." Out of the hideous suffering at Calvary He has carved His victory and His kingdom. The victory of the cross assures us that we no longer need to be kept separate from God—either in this life or for eternity. Even now we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). And the best is yet to come—"the golden strand just beyond the river."

As God's people, we should live daily with a sensitive awareness of Christ's cross. We should review its scenes of suffering as well as revel in its triumph. "Near the Cross," this simply stated hymn by Fanny Crosby, has been widely used by God to teach people this truth since its first publication in 1869.

As she did with many of her 8,000 hymn texts, Fanny Crosby wrote this poem to fit an existing tune that had been composed by William H. Doane. Although she worked with a number of other gospel musicians, William Doane was Fanny Crosby's principal collaborator. Doane was a very successful businessman in Cincinnati, as well as a composer and publisher of numerous gospel songs. He was a very wealthy man when he died and he left much of his fortune to philanthropic causes, including the construction of the Doane Memorial Music Building at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.

*Jesus, keep me near the cross—there a precious fountain,
free to all, a healing stream, flows from Calv'ry's mountain.*

*Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;
there the Bright and Morning Star sheds its beams around me.*

*Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day with its shadows o'er me.*

*Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river.*

Chorus:

*In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever,
till my raptured soul shall find rest, beyond the river.*

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1830

MORMONISM WAS FOUNDED BY JOSEPH SMITH.

Pray for Mormons today and try to win them to Jesus Christ. As long as they adhere to the false teaching of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they are in darkness!

1837

GEORGE MUELLER OPENED HIS FAMOUS ORPHANAGE.

George Mueller opened his orphanage in two rented houses on Wilson Street in Bristol. Each house housed thirty children. From this humble beginning, George Mueller built an orphanage of 1,677 children, and fed them all with prayer and faith in God. How long has it been since you have prayed for an orphanage? How long has it been since you sent an offering to one? James reminds us in his epistle pure religion and undefiled before God, the Father, is to visit the fatherless. In other words, pure religion has a concern in it for orphans.

1892

THE BIRTHDAY OF LOWELL THOMAS.

1909

ADMIRAL PEARY DISCOVERED THE NORTH POLE.

1914

THE UNITED STATES ENTERED WORLD WAR I.

This, of course, was war with Germany. Pray for peace today. Pray for Germany and God's people there. Oh, that men might dwell together in peace. Oh, that nations could work harmoniously one with the other. Thank God, the day will come when men shall beat swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nation will not lift up war against nation, nor kingdom against kingdom; but Jesus will rule and reign over all the earth. And we shall rule with Him on the earth for a thousand years. "Even so come, Lord Jesus." "Thy kingdom come."

**ON THIS DATE IN
AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY**

1830

JAMES AUGUSTINE HEALY, FIRST BLACK ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP IN AMERICA, born to Irish planter and slave on plantation near Macon, Georgia.

1869

EBENEZER DON CARLOS BASSETT, Principal of the Institute for Colored Youth, Philadelphia, named minister to Haiti and became the first major black diplomat and the first American black to receive a major appointment from the United States Government.

1909

MATTHEW HENSON, EXPLORER, leads a party of six to reach the North Pole.

1917

AMERICA ENTERED WORLD WAR I. President Wilson, who had just inaugurated a policy of segregation in government agencies, told Congress that “the world must be made safe for democracy.”

1931

FIRST SCOTTSBORO TRIAL BEGAN IN SCOTTSBORO, ALABAMA. Trial of nine black youths accused of raping two white women on a freight train became a *cause celebre*.

THE STORY OF THE PSALMS

Psalm 29

AUTHOR: David.

THE STORY BEHIND THE PSALM:

It is not clear concerning the conditions surrounding the writing of the Psalm. It is strongly suggested that David was watching a storm rise and subside. This is the only hint we have concerning the background of the Psalm. Verse 5 reminds us that the Lord breaketh the cedars. Then in verse 7 he obviously makes reference to lightning. Verse 8 may have to do with a mild quake or at least a heavy rumbling storm. Verse 10 talks about the floods. The Psalmist is seeing the Lord even in the destruction of a bad storm.

THE WAY IT WAS USED BY GOD'S PEOPLE:

The Jewish people sang the 29th Psalm on the first day of the feast of pentecost which was a harvest feast. This was 50 days after the passover. They also sang this Psalm when they wanted to be cheered. When the Jew was melancholy or somewhat sad, he would often give himself the recipe of taking the 29th Psalm.

MEMORY VERSE ASSIGNMENT 4 (for review):

Please spend time reviewing these memory verses. If you have been completing the assignments in the TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING, then you already have spent a week memorizing the Scriptures below. Now it's time to review!

DEFINITE ASSURANCE GIVEN TO THOSE WHO EXPERIENCE NEW BIRTH

Assurance of an inward witness.

() Romans 8:16

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Assurance given by the Holy Spirit.

() 1 John 4:13

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

Assurance is evident by new love for Christians.

() 1 John 3:14

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

Assurance is evident by new life.

() 2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Assurance, a result of believing.

() 1 John 5:13

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.