

A Disobedient Son

MEMORY VERSE: "Train up a child in the way he should go." Proverbs 26

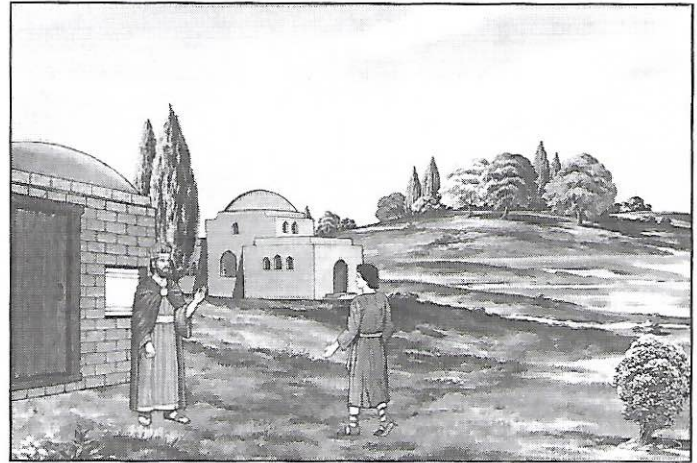
SCRIPTURES: 2 Samuel 15; 18; 19

AIM: To teach that the battle with self can be won with Christ's help.

THE BIBLE IN LIVING SOUND: Volume 3, Tape 24, Stories 142-144



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First show Absalom, 80, caught in the tree, and donkey 154.

Absalom stood in front of his mirror of polished metal. "No one in Israel is as handsome a man as I am," he said. "People keep praising me for my good looks. And no wonder!"

Then Absalom tossed his hair over his shoulder.

"It's time to cut my beautiful hair. I hate to do it but it's grown so much it weighs three pounds and that's too much for me to carry around! And I'll look even better with it shorter!" And Absalom laughed at his own remark.

Absalom was handsome on the outside but he had a selfish and cruel heart on the inside. He even wanted to kill his own father David so he could be the king.

David was partly to blame for Absalom's actions. David was so busy being king he didn't take time to be a good father. David spoiled his son when he should have disciplined Absalom.

Absalom had a wicked plan to take the throne of his father David. He bought a magnificent chariot and horses. He hired fifty runners to serve as traffic police to clear a path before the chariot. This was done when an important person traveled through the crowded streets. They even announced Absalom's name. This was one way to get the people to think Absalom was very special.

He would get up early every morning, go out to the gate of the city and when anyone came to bring a case to the king for a trial, Absalom would stop them.

"I'll help you with your problem," offered Absalom. "I know you are right in this matter. It's too bad the king doesn't have someone like me to hear these cases. I surely wish I were the judge and I'd give you justice."

People liked what Absalom told them because even if the people were wrong, Absalom said he'd see that they were treated as if they were right. People started liking Absalom better than King David.

After four years, Absalom said to his father, "I made a promise to the Lord I'd make a sacrifice to Him at Hebron. Please let me go."

David said, "Go, my son." He was glad Absalom wanted to worship God.

But Absalom was only tricking his father. While there, he sent spies to every part of Israel asking them to join in a revolt against King David, his own father.

A messenger came to David and told him of Absalom's plans. "We must leave at once," said David. "If we leave quickly, they can't kill me and the palace will be saved."

Poor King David felt sad and discouraged as he left the city. But many soldiers were still loyal to David. He appointed colonels over his troops and said to the leaders of the regiments, "When you are in battle, deal gently with my son Absalom."

The battle raged in the forest at Ephraim. The followers of Absalom were beaten back by David's men. David's soldiers were victorious in the battle. Many of Absalom's soldiers ran through the thick woods and got lost. Absalom, too, tried to escape through the woods on his mule. His mule ran under an oak tree that had low branches. The branches caught Absalom by his hair. The mule did not stop running, and Absalom was left hanging by his hair.

A soldier came and told one of the leaders, Joab, what had happened. Joab hurried to the oak tree and killed Absalom. When Absalom's soldiers heard their leader had been killed, they crossed the Jordan River and returned to their homes as fast as they could.

David was waiting for news of the battle. At last a messenger came and told David what happened to his son.

King David covered his face and cried aloud. Over and over he cried, "My son Absalom! My Son! My son! I wish I had died instead of you."

When Joab heard David crying he went to David and said, "Think of the people who won a victory for you. Go and thank them or they will think you love their enemies more than your friends."

David knew Joab was right. He stopped crying and went to talk to his followers. Then David returned to the place but continued to mourn his ungrateful son.

Absalom had never learned that the battle with self and against selfishness is the hardest battle of all. But with Christ's help, the battle can be won.