



# FEED MY SHEEP

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Issue #95

October 2006

## Absalom the Pentecostal

God Almighty saw fit to include in His Word all manner of dark deeds, some committed by men and women who ultimately became among the greatest in God's pantheon of saints, such as King David. But because of David's earlier transgression, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Thus we are in the midst of examining some of the darkest periods in the life of David. It was a time where one son, Amnon, raped his half-sister, Tamar. Thereupon, Tamar's full-brother, Absalom, conspired to murder Amnon under the pretext of a sheep-shearing party. We noted that having the eldest brother, Amnon, out of the way was also convenient for Absalom in his lust for his father's throne. We now pick up the narrative where the first messenger has arrived back at the palace and the news—albeit false—is conveyed to David that all his sons have been slain.

**2 Samuel 13: 31** Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

My, oh my! Look now who stops by the palace to set the record straight! It's that instigator of Amnon's rape plot, his cousin Jonadab, the nephew of the king. (Consult the genealogy chart we published in FMS #93 for Jonadab and other characters in the story.)

**32** And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

How did Jonadab know that? I'm just guessing

here; but it seems to me that cousin Jonadab seems to have a backstage pass. He seems to be "in the know" about everything. Do you think he is a back-stage manipulator? Did he know in advance of Absalom's plan? I think so. Is it possible he furtively whispered the suggestion in Absalom's ear to murder Amnon? The Machiavellian Jonadab continues speaking.

**33** Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.

**34** But Absalom fled. [End of thought; because after that three word sentence, the scene shifts to Jerusalem where David is anxiously awaiting confirmation that only Amnon was killed.] And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him.

**35** And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.

**36** And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.

**37** But Absalom fled, and went to Talmi, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day.

**38** So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.

**39** And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

Absalom, knowing that his premeditated murder would allow him no sanctuary in his own land, flees for asylum to Talmai, King of Geshur, who is also his grandfather on his mother's side. The Geshurites were an Aramean people, otherwise called Syrians in some Bible versions. They were descended from Shem and also from Nahor who was a brother to Abraham. Was David's intermarriage permissible? Isaac's wife Rebekah was from the line of Nahor. So was Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel. Therefore, when David married Princess Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of the Geshurites, it was not an unlawful marriage from a racial standpoint. Of course, it was unlawful in the sense that David was multiplying wives to himself. We covered that previously.

Absalom remained with his grandfather for three years. During that time, David got over the initial shock and loss of Amnon, his first-born, and he began to have desires to see Absalom again. But he had a sticky situation here, as we shall see momentarily. To begin with, look who comes on stage again; why, it's David's old nemesis, General Joab.

**2 Samuel 14:1 Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom.**

Let's briefly review some of the main points about this intriguing man named Joab. (See FMS #72 & 73, or for a more complete study, obtain tape/CDs #409, 410: *Providence and Politics*, \$10 ppd.) Joab was another nephew of King David, being the son of David's sister, Zeruiah (see chart). Secondly, recall that Joab's brother, Asahel, had foolishly chased after Gen. Abner to try to kill him but got himself killed by Abner instead. In revenge, Joab assassinated Abner. Then, instead of having his nephew put to death for murder, David's character was too weak in that area. Moreover, we noted how Joab somehow seemed to be able to manipulate David; he seemed to have some kind of mysterious "Rasputin" power over him.

Joab was a man of skill both in war and politics, but of dubious character. It was that amoral character which David counted on when he sought Joab's help in the conspiracy to have Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, killed in combat. Joab saw his help in this conspiracy as being of great benefit to himself in the future when he could use it as leverage over David.

Now here Joab sees another opportunity. As we

already pointed out, Absalom was probably next in line for the throne after Amnon. So Joab figures that if Absalom, who already enjoyed great popularity with the people, can be brought back and Joab can be the deal-maker between David and Absalom, then both father and son are in his debt, and if David should happen to die prematurely, then Joab is assured that he is in the inner circle of the new king. All this is part of Joab's motivation. He lusted after power. In today's jargon, he was the consummate "control freak."

He has now perceived that David secretly pines for a restored relationship with Absalom. But Joab also senses that David has scruples about it (1) because David knows God's law demands the murderer be put to death; and (2) because David sees that the people would like to have Absalom back in the palace court. This is the sticky situation Joab feels he can manipulate to his advantage. If he can somehow persuade David's conscience it's okay to bring the murderer back from exile, then it will be a feather in Joab's....er...helmet. But how could he persuade him?

**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.**

What the woman says to King David is in the manner of a parable, but she is pretending like it's a true story of her own case. This is now the *second* time that David is being tricked by someone telling a parable to get him to change his mind. The first time was by Nathan the prophet telling the story of the little ewe lamb, and that was for the *good* purpose of bringing David to repentance. This second time is perhaps not for such a good purpose. We will see as the story unfolds over the next seven chapters. The story the woman told David is difficult to understand at first or even second reading (it goes on for the next 17 verses), so let me present a synopsis of it.

Joab finds this wise woman from Tekoah who is also a very capable actress. Tekoah was about 12 miles south of Jerusalem in the wilder country of Judah where a lot of nomadic people lived a rougher existence than those in the cities. Remember, this is

the same general area where David and his men offered security services for the ranchers, like “Stone-cold” Nabal, whose wife, Abigail, David took for himself after Nabal died. (Hear our Bible lecture *David, Abigail and Stone-cold Nabal*, tape/CD #399. \$6 ppd.)

So this woman comes to David and basically tells him that she is a widow woman and that one of her two sons killed the other. She goes on with the charade claiming that she is protecting the survivor brother from the people of their clan who want to put him to death. She realizes that if the clan executes her son, not only will the name of her husband be extinct in Israel, but that she will be left totally destitute. She implies that the clan’s motivation is not really based on a desire to follow God’s law, but to execute her son so they can grab all the family possessions by some quirk of custom. She pleads to David for protection.

She paints this story as similar to David and Absalom’s situation as she can without showing her hand prematurely. She says she had only two sons. David had many sons. Her son was killed with no witnesses. Amnon was killed in full view of many witnesses. She wants the king to see the parallel but not until the proper time. There are two conflicting principles in the case she presents. One is that justice be done for a murder and the other is that the widow woman be protected and the seed of her husband not become extinct. Sure enough, David falls for it. He pledges protection for the woman and her son.

Then, when David realizes the parallel and that this was all concocted to get him to change his mind about Absalom, he then accuses the woman of being in the employ of Joab. She confesses immediately, but she was so skilled at the acting job and so flattering in her praises for David that he lets her go and sends for Joab. To Joab, he says, “Okay, you got me with that one. Now go tell Absalom he can come back.”

**2 Samuel 14:22 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.**

Joab now feels that he has succeeded in bringing both father and son into his debt. Absalom and David both owe him. Remember how David had needed Joab’s help to place Uriah at the head of the suicide

mission? In granting this pardon of his son, David was acting like the heathen absolute monarchs, not as head of the limited monarchy of Israel, where the king not only was bound to the people by some sort of constitution—the details of which we were not told—but more than that, he was bound to be the executor of impartial justice and judgment on behalf of the King of kings. In this, David has fallen short once again. But the die is cast.

**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.**

Well, this is not quite what we expected, is it? He brings Absalom back from exile and lets him go to his own home, undoubtedly within spitting distance of the palace, but he was banned from the court and ***banned from his father’s presence!*** ...for a time. Remember that for later (probably next FMS).

This quasi-house arrest may have been David’s own doing, or it is possible that he ordered it under the influence of Bathsheba who wanted to preserve, or to better *her* son, Solomon’s, chances to ascend to the throne after David. By the way, so far we have encountered nothing in the story of David concerning the interrelationships among David’s wives and concubines. I mean, think about it, if you were one of eight or ten wives of the king, and you and most of the other women had sons by David, do you think there might just be a bit of rivalry going on to see whose son will succeed David on the throne? Indeed! That is probably another reason why each of the wives and her children had a separate royal residence. Next, the historian inserts the first actual physical description of Absalom into the narrative. This is especially significant.

**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 [i.e., cut his hair], (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.**

That amounts to about 3 pounds, 2 ounces of

hair! Alright, who does that remind us of? Isn't it reminiscent of old King Saul? Remember how when Saul was made king, we were told how good looking he was? He was head and shoulders above everyone else. Remember, that in biblical symbolism, 200 is the number of "insufficiency." It is the number associated with the pentecost realm, and naturally, it was also connected with King Saul. Now here is Absalom's hair which weighs 200 shekels. Why is that detail of "200" placed in the holy writ, unless it is important? Hair is a symbol of virility and power. Samson was also a type of an Old Testament pentecostal and you know what happened to him and his hair. The Bible is clearly associating Absalom with King Saul.

On a personal level, what do these types and shadows tell us? Well, as with David, it seems to indicate that not only are we persecuted by and confronted with our personal Sauls while in our personal wilderness—whatever that is in your life circumstances—but for heaven's sake, just when we think our Saul has died, figuratively speaking, or he or she has been taken out of our life; then bam! ...along comes another Saul type. And where do we find *this* Saul-type? ... Gulp! ...Right in our own family! But some of you knew that already, didn't you?

So if we have a Saul-type among our kin, then patently, Father thinks we need more training, doesn't He? Did any of us think we had finished the overcomer course already? I didn't. That's the personal level of application. Let's now recall once again one of the major themes of this entire series which is dealing with the character of Saul compared to that of David.

On the corporate level, whom or what does Saul represent? The non-overcomer church, right? To define it even more sharply, Saul rebelled against Father Yahweh, didn't he? Therefore, Samuel told him that rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft. Now look at Absalom. Just like Saul, he represents the rebellious church, a church which wishes to usurp the throne of their Father and the overcomers.

We will see in an upcoming FMS how Absalom tries to usurp his father David's throne. He, like Saul, is not only representative of the non-overcomer church in general during the church age, but Absalom is also specifically representative of what is rotten and bad in the so-called charismatic and pentecostal movements. Before anyone picks up stones to throw

at me, I want you to understand that I am not condemning everything and everybody in the pentecostal movement. Most of you know that I did not come from that kind of church background, but I had a certain amount of exposure to it over the years.

Many years ago, right after I did tapes on the deity of Christ and the deity of the Holy Spirit, I was fully intending to next do a series "exposing" the pentecostal/charismatic movement as totally bogus. But the Lord held me back from proceeding with my intent. It would have been a grave mistake. I have long since come to the conclusion that indeed there is much fraud, charlatantry, hokum and deceit in those movements—perhaps a high percentage of it is such. But I also recognize that the gifts of the Spirit that pentecostals speak of are real. I have had my own experiences. However, many recipients of the gifts abuse them for their own aggrandizement—for money, power and control, and for fame. However, to single out one of the gifts for an example, I know that miraculous healings do occur. I have seen them. God has worked through me and others to bring them about. But it certainly was not me doing the healing; it was God. Furthermore, it is certainly a rare occurrence that someone is healed by God using this little vessel as His conduit.

I have experienced other gifts in limited ways, but I am now certain that the pentecostal anointing is genuine—it's just obscured and overshadowed by the flesh and carnality of many of those who are in leadership positions in the pentecostal/charismatic movements. Therefore, as we now begin to apply the types and shadows from the story of Absalom to the church today, I want my friends of the pentecostal and charismatic backgrounds to understand that I am only seeking to identify the evil, so that we all can hold on to what is true and righteous, okay? You see, I am not condemning the whole pentecostal realm because I am part of it...but I do not want to remain there. Tabernacles awaits! In the next issue, we will continue by examining the Absalom-Saul-pentecost church.

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