

SERIES: **MELTDOWN- *How God most High Meets us in our lows*** (LAST WEEK IN THIS SERIES)

TITLE: **A Father's Dilemma**

HOOK-

2 Samuel 18:33 The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber above the city gate and wept. As he walked, he cried, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"

How did we get here????

OUTLINE-

- ***Leading up to David's meltdown***
- ***Looking at David's meltdown***
- ***The Divine Dilemma***
- ***Meeting God at the crossroads***
- ***Where do we go from here?***

Leading up to David's meltdown

Who is David?

Shepherd turned king; Killed Goliath; Wrote many Psalms; Man after God's heart; ...Bathsheba

Alistair Begg says that the bible presents its heroes, "warts and all"

David had at least 8 wives, plus his concubines (all the rights of a wife without the respect)

Which meant there's a bunch of half bro's and sis's running around

DISCLAIMER: The bible tells it "As is", even when it's broken, damaged or not right, or even "Eww"

Only in Jesus do we get "*As should be*".

The Rundown leading up to the Meltdown:

2 Samuel 13 David's son, **Amnon**, rapes his half-sister (David's daughter) **Tamar**;

David hears about it, is furious (**13:21**) but doesn't do anything about it!

2 years later David's other son, **Absalom**, avenges his sister's abuse and murders Amnon, then he flees.

3 years later, after David's grieved his murdered son, he now finds himself missing his missing son.

But he can't just bring him back, can he? Justice must be served;
he already failed to execute justice once when Amnon.

2 Samuel 14

David's people notice his mind is on his son so they devise a complex plan to convince David to bring back Absalom. He agrees but says Absalom can't see the king (him).... totally ignoring any correction or reconciliation.

David is caught between **love** and **justice** once again.

2 years pass, and Absalom requests to see the king.

2 Samuel 14:33 ...So David summoned Absalom, who came to the king and paid homage with his face to the ground before him. Then the king kissed Absalom.

All seems well??? Not quite. Absalom begins a plan to take over the kingdom.

2 Samuel 15:6 ...So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

4 years pass, then sneaky Absalom makes his move-

2 Samuel 15:10-13 Then Absalom sent agents throughout the tribes of Israel with this message:

"When you hear the sound of the ram's horn, you are to say, 'Absalom has become king in Hebron!'"

¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom. They had been invited and were going innocently, for they did not know the whole situation. ¹² While he was offering the sacrifices, Absalom sent for David's adviser Ahithophel the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh. So the conspiracy grew strong, and the people supporting Absalom continued to increase.

¹³ Then an informer came to David and reported, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."

2 Samuel 15:14 David said to all the servants with him in Jerusalem, "Get up. We have to flee, or we will not escape from Absalom! Leave quickly, or he will overtake us quickly, heap disaster on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

2 Samuel 15:23 Everyone in the countryside was weeping loudly while all the people were marching out of the city. As the king was crossing the Kidron Valley, all the people were marching past on the road that leads to the wilderness.

2 Samuel 15:30 David was climbing the slope of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he ascended. His head was covered, and he was walking barefoot. All of the people with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they ascended.

It's during this time away that David writes **Psalms 3**

Looking at David's meltdown

Absalom marched his army out to fight his dad, David

2 Samuel 18:1- 5 David reviewed his troops and appointed commanders of thousands and of hundreds over them. ² He then sent out the troops, a third under Joab, a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and a third under Ittai of Gath. The king said to the troops, "I must also march out with you."

³ "You must not go!" the people pleaded. "If we have to flee, they will not pay any attention to us. Even if half of us die, they will not pay any attention to us because you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore, it is better if you support us from the city." ⁴ "I will do whatever you think is best," the king replied to them. So he stood beside the city gate while all the troops marched out by hundreds and thousands.

⁵The king commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, “Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake.” All the people heard the king’s orders to all the commanders about Absalom.

2 Samuel 18:6-8 Then David’s forces marched into the field to engage Israel in battle, which took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷Israel’s army was defeated by David’s soldiers, and the slaughter there was vast that day—twenty thousand dead. ⁸The battle spread over the entire area, and that day the forest claimed more people than the sword.

2 Samuel 18:9 Absalom was riding on his mule when he happened to meet David’s soldiers. When the mule went under the tangled branches of a large oak tree, Absalom’s head was caught fast in the tree. The mule under him kept going, so he was suspended in midair.

Joab throws 3 spears into his chest, they cut him down and Joab’s men finish him off.

2 Samuel 18:17 They took Absalom, threw him into a large pit in the forest, and raised up a huge mound of stones over him. And all Israel fled, each to his tent.

2 Samuel 18:24-32 David was sitting between the city gates when the watchman went up to the roof of the city gate and over to the wall. The watchman looked out and saw a man running alone. ²⁵He called out and told the king. The king said, “If he’s alone, he bears good news.”

As the first runner came closer, ²⁶the watchman saw another man running. He called out to the gatekeeper, “Look! Another man is running alone!” “This one is also bringing good news,” said the king.

²⁷The watchman said, “The way the first man runs looks to me like the way Ahimaaz son of Zadok runs.” “This is a good man; he comes with good news,” the king commented. ²⁸Ahimaaz called out to the king, “All is well,” and paid homage to the king with his face to the ground. He continued, “Blessed be the Lord your God! He delivered up the men who rebelled against my lord the king.”

²⁹The king asked, “Is the young man Absalom all right?” Ahimaaz replied, “When Joab sent the king’s servant and your servant, I saw a big disturbance, but I don’t know what it was.”

³⁰The king said, “Move aside and stand here.” So he stood to one side. ³¹Just then the Cushite came and said, “May my lord the king hear the good news: The Lord has vindicated you today by freeing you from all who rise against you!” ³²The king asked the Cushite, “Is the young man Absalom all right?”

The Cushite replied, “I wish that the enemies of my lord the king, along with all who rise up against you with evil intent, would become like that young man.”

David’s Metdown-

2 Samuel 18:33 The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber above the city gate and wept. As he walked, he cried, “My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!”

2 Samuel 19:1-8 It was reported to Joab, “The king is weeping. He’s mourning over Absalom.” ²That day’s victory was turned into mourning for all the troops because on that day the troops heard, “The king is grieving over his son.” ³So they returned to the city quietly that day like troops come in when they are humiliated after fleeing in battle. ⁴But the king covered his face and cried loudly, “My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!”

⁵Then Joab went into the house to the king and said, “Today you have shamed all your soldiers—those who saved your life as well as your sons, your wives, and your concubines—⁶by loving your enemies and hating those who love you! Today you have made it clear that the commanders and soldiers mean nothing to you. In fact, today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead, it would be fine with you!⁷“Now get up! Go out and encourage your soldiers, for I swear by the Lord that if you don’t go out, not a man will remain with you tonight. This will be worse for you than all the trouble that has come to you from your youth until now!”⁸So the king got up and sat in the city gate, and all the people were told, “Look, the king is sitting in the city gate.” Then they all came into the king’s presence....

The story continues, but the struggle is never resolved, the tension remains

What does any of this have to do with us?

David faced a dilemma we also face: **How do we reconcile Mercy & Justice?**

How can you reconcile this undeniable love and this inescapable justice?

-You can’t let the guilty go unpunished

-You can’t hold back your love from those you care for

The Divine Dilemma

How does God reconcile this same tension??

God’s Dilemma: **How can a loving God remain just, yet pardon sinners?**

- All are affectionately loved because God is love (**1 John 4:8**)
- All stand guilty before Him (**Romans 3:23**); He is a just judge

Meeting God at the crossroads

David failed to reconcile love and justice; mercy and righteousness.

God did not.

The tension between love and justice could only be resolved on the cross.

At the cross of Christ, mercy and justice flawlessly meet

Now love covers over a multitude of sins.

Now justice has been satisfied in the sacrifice of Jesus.

Now we can find for ourselves the resolution to the tension here

Absalom hung on a tree as a rebel; Jesus hung on a tree for the rebels

Absalom’s end was in a grave of stones; Jesus rose out of the grave of stone

David wept and mourned for his dead son; Jesus mourned for those dead in their sin

David wanted to go to battle but wasn’t allowed; Jesus went to battle on our behalf

David crossed the Kidron valley and went up the mount of olives to flee death;

Jesus went down the mount of olives across the Kidron valley to face death

‘Behold the Lamb of God’, by Ghost Ship-

The God who reigns above; He is the God who loves

The God who is our judge; is he who pleads for us

The God who gave us life; He is the God who died

Where do we go from here?

1. We meet Jesus at the crossroads of our guilt and his grace

2. We extend to others what we ourselves have received from God

BULPEN-

Psalm 3

- V1 trouble comes in bundles
- V2 this is the most frightening possibility if true
- V3 shield around, from every which way
- V4 God hears
- V5-6 he can rest and rise because confidence in God;
attacks on every side, shield on every side
- V7 desperation and confidence are not exclusive
- V8 there is no help in God vs there is only help in God

How Deep the Fathers Love

*How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.*

RC Sproul Term Paper Illustration- Justice vs Mercy

God never punished an innocent person.

We are quick to demand God's justice not realizing that it places us also in the danger zone.