

## 17.31 Absalom and Amnon (2 Samuel 12:26–31; 1 Chronicles 20:1–3; 2 Samuel 13:1–39; 14:1–24, 28–33)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [ . . . ] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *spoil*: goods and animals taken from a conquered nation
- *to be spoiled*: harmed in character by being treated too leniently or indulgently

### Scripture: (ESV)

2 Samuel 12:26 and 1 Chronicles 20:1–3 Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and took the royal city. 27 And Joab sent messengers to David and said, “I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the city of waters. 28 Now then gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called by my name.” 29 So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah and fought against it and took it. 30 And he took the crown of their king from his head. The weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone, and it was placed on David’s head. And he brought out the spoil of the city, a very great amount. 31 And he brought out the people who were in it and set them to labor with saws and iron picks and iron axes and made them toil at the brick kilns. And thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

13:1 Now Absalom, David’s son, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar. And after a time Amnon, David’s son, loved her. 2 And Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David’s brother. And Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4 And he said to him, “O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?” Amnon said to him, “I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.” 5 Jonadab said to him, “Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. And when your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Let my sister Tamar come and give me bread to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat it from her hand.’” 6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. And when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand.”

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, “Go to your brother Amnon’s house and prepare food for him.” 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house, where he was lying down. And she took dough and kneaded it and made cakes in his sight and baked the cakes. 9 And she took the pan and emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, “Send out everyone from me.” So everyone went out from him. 10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from your hand.” And Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11 But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, “Come, lie with me, my sister.” 12 She answered him, “No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this outrageous thing. 13 As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the outrageous fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.” 14 But he would not listen to her, and being stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.

15 Then Amnon hated her with very great hatred, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, “Get up! Go!” 16 But she said to him, “No, my brother, for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me.” But he would not listen to her. 17 He called the young man who served him and said, “Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the

door after her.” 18 Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves, for thus were the virgin daughters of the king dressed. So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. 19 And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she wore. And she laid her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went.

20 And her brother Absalom said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this to heart.” So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom’s house. 21 When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. 22 But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar.

23 After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king’s sons. 24 And Absalom came to the king and said, “Behold, your servant has sheepshearers. Please let the king and his servants go with your servant.” 25 But the king said to Absalom, “No, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome to you.” He pressed him, but he would not go but gave him his blessing. 26 Then Absalom said, “If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us.” And the king said to him, “Why should he go with you?” 27 But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him. 28 Then Absalom commanded his servants, “Mark when Amnon’s heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon,’ then kill him. Do not fear; have I not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant.” 29 So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons arose, and each mounted his mule and fled.

30 While they were on the way, news came to David, “Absalom has struck down all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left.” 31 Then the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants who were standing by tore their garments. 32 But Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David’s brother, said, “Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men, the king’s sons, for Amnon alone is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day he violated his sister Tamar. 33 Now therefore let not my lord the king so take it to heart as to suppose that all the king’s sons are dead, for Amnon alone is dead.”

34 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. 35 And Jonadab said to the king, “Behold, the king’s sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about.” 36 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.

37 But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. 38 So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 39 And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom, because he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead.

14:1 Now Joab the son of Zeruah knew that the king’s heart went out to Absalom. 2 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. 3 Go to the king and speak thus to him.” So Joab put the words in her mouth.

4 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.” 5 And the king said to her, “What is your trouble?” She answered, “Alas, I am a widow; my husband is dead. 6 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. 7 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.”

8 Then the king said to the woman, “Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you.” 9 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.” 10 The king said, “If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again.” 11 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.”

12 Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a word to my lord the king." He said, "Speak." 13 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. 14 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. 15 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. 16 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.' 17 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!"

18 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." 19 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. 20 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."

21 Then the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom." 22 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." 23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. 24 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.

28 So Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king's presence. 29 Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but Joab would not come to him. And he sent a second time, but Joab would not come. 30 Then he said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. 31 Then Joab arose and went to Absalom at his house and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" 32 Absalom answered Joab, "Behold, I sent word to you, 'Come here, that I may send you to the king, to ask, Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still. Now therefore let me go into the presence of the king, and if there is guilt in me, let him put me to death.'" 33 Then Joab went to the king and told him, and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

### **Introduction/Review:**

In our last lesson we learned about David's terrible sin with Bathsheba. Nathan told David a story about a rich man who stole a poor man's lamb. What punishment did David say the rich man should get? [To die and to pay four times the value of the lamb.] In mercy, God said David, although he was the rich man in the story, would not die but would suffer consequences for his sin—his family would be in conflict; the sword would not depart from his house. In addition, David and Bathsheba's baby son would die. No sooner had Nathan pronounced this judgment than the baby boy became very sick; within a week he died.

### **Story:**

#### ***Summoning David***

While David was again hanging around Jerusalem, Joab and Israel's arm were back at Ammon, finishing up that war. In fact, Joab had all but totally defeated the Ammonite king's city, Rabbah. Still, David was in Jerusalem. So Joab sent a messenger to David whose message read, "Get down here with some more men to Ammon and defeat this city in your own name, for I am about to take it. It will be named after me instead of you if you don't get here."

David got the soldiers together, went to Ammon, defeated the king's city, and got lots of spoil. He also got the Ammonite king's gold crown that was decorated with a single precious stone. It must have been a very

large crown and a very large stone because it weighed about 75 pounds. ✓One wonders if it took two or three men to put such a heavy crown on David's head and if David wanted to wear it very long.

### ***Defiling Tamar***

Now the judgment within David's family was about to begin. Remember, David had married many wives. He had nineteen living sons and one daughter.<sup>1</sup> These sons were now men, ✓wild and probably spoiled.

"One of David's sons was Absalom, whose mother was the daughter of . . . the king of a little country called Geshur [locate]. . . Absalom became very angry with Amnon because Amnon had done wrong to Tamar, Absalom's sister" (Hurlbut's *Story of the Bible*). David was very angry with Amnon, too, but did nothing to punish him.

### ***Killing Amnon***

Absalom hid from Amnon the fact that he was angry, though. After two years went by, Absalom invited Amnon and all his other half brothers (David's sons) to a sheep-shearing party.

I went to a sheep-shearing party once. The sheep need their wool cut, and while everyone is helping do this job, they also have good food and a nice time. King David said all his sons could go to this event.

But Absalom had told his servants, "When I give the signal, you slay Amnon. Don't be afraid, but do as I command you."

Surely, those servants knew the sixth commandment. What is it? [You shall not murder.] Should they have obeyed their master if it meant breaking God's law? What will you do when someone encourages or commands you to do wrong? I pray you will stand for and do right.

In the midst of the party after Amnon had drunk too much wine, Absalom's servants did slay Amnon. ✓Can you imagine being one of the other king's sons? Wouldn't you wonder, "Is he going to slay me too? Get me out of here!" That's what they did: they got on their mules and fled this scene.

Someone, who got the news wrong, beat those princes back to Jerusalem and told King David, "Absalom had killed *all* the king's sons, and there is not one of them left!"

When David heard this, he tore his clothes in sorrow and lay on the ground. His servants did the same. But David's nephew, Jonadab, who understood the situation, said, "Oh, don't think all your sons are dead but only Amnon. For Absalom has been planning this for a while. Only Amnon is dead. . . . ✓Oh! Do you hear that watchman on the wall? He is saying your sons are coming over the hill."

As those sons reached David, they began to raise their voices in grief, crying very long and very hard because Absalom, their brother, had killed Amnon, their oldest brother. The sword was beginning to work in David's family. "Just as David had planned Uriah's death, used someone else to do the job, and made Uriah drunk, so did Absalom" (A. W. Pink).

### ***Fleeing Israel***

Absalom ran away to his grandfather's country Geshur and stayed there three years.

Now, God had already given His law regarding a murderer: "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). In other words, a murderer should be slain. What should the king have done to Absalom according to this command? [Have him slain.] What did David do? I'll tell you.

At first, he spent a lot of time grieving over the loss of his son, Amnon. But then he started grieving for Absalom, wanting to have him home in Jerusalem. ✓Yet, perhaps because of pride ("I'm not going to ask him to come back; he can ask me") or ✓because of a sort of punishment of Absalom, David would not invite Absalom back until Joab finally convinced him through a wise old woman's story. Even then, David refused to see Absalom.

## ***Shunning Absalom***

Two more years (five in all) went by, and Absalom wasn't allowed to see David even though the two were now in the same city. ✓That was the only punishment Absalom received. Hardly enough to fit the crime of murder. Absalom sent two times to Joab for help, but since Joab wouldn't answer, Absalom set Joab's barley field on fire. You can believe that Joab came to see Absalom then!

Absalom told Joab, "I sent for you to tell the king, 'Why did I come from Geshur? I should just have stayed there since I can't even *see* the king here in Jerusalem!' Now, let me see him."

✓Does this sound like a man who is sorry for his sin? No. He is bold and pushy and disrespectful.

Joab made the arrangements, and Absalom came to the king, bowing to the ground. David received Absalom with a kiss, pardoning Absalom's sin. But this isn't the end of the story.

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<sup>1</sup>The named sons are as follows. First those born in Hebron:

Amnon, David's firstborn, born in Hebron to Ahinoam of Jezreel. . . .

Kileab (or Daniel), second son, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel. It is not known what happened to this Daniel. . . .

Absalom, the third son, born to Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. . . .

Adonijah, the fourth son of King David from Haggith (2 Samuel 3:4). . . .

Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital.

Ithream, whose mother was Eglah, "David's wife".

The sons born to David in Jerusalem. . . .

Shimea, or Shammua, probably the first surviving child of Bathsheba

Shobab, from Bathsheba

Nathan, from Bathsheba, the ancestor of Jesus according to the Genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:31. . . .

Solomon, also called Jedidiah whose mother was Bathsheba, the ancestor of Jesus according to the Genealogy of Jesus in Matthew, often considered to be Joseph's line.

Nine other sons were born of other wives:

Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet ([Sons of David - Wikipedia](#)).

### **Lessons from This Lesson:**

- We see Jesus:  
David did not bring Amnon or Absalom to justice. Sometimes it seems as if God's justice is very slow in coming, but we know it will be done perfectly in His time. Jesus will be the Judge.
- ✓David's great sins against God might have kept him from judging sin in his family. We must not be hampered from doing right because of past sin in our lives. Do right; be right with God.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: crown; sheep
- Snack: Greek yogurt on crackers with blueberries to look like a crown. This should be made shortly before serving, or the cracker might become soggy. Find the photo and instructions at <https://thediylighthouse.com/healthy-snacks-for-kids-5-abc-back-to-school-snacks/>.
- Sing "Obedience" by Mike and Ruth Greene, found in *Praises I* songbook, published by Majesty Music.
- Have younger students tell consequences for the causes given. What might happen if—
  1. You leave a toy on the stairs?
  2. You leave chewed gum lying around?
  3. You carry too many glasses to the sink at one time?

4. You brush your teeth every day?
  5. You let go of someone's hand in a crowd?
  6. You leave one of Daddy's tools outside several days?
  7. You eat your food?
- Review questions: (Game: Prepare a ½-inch dot out of card stock. Place a small amount of adhesive putty on the back of the dot. Print the map found below. For each correct answer, students move the dot from Jerusalem to Geshur and back to Jerusalem by way of the numbers 1–9 on the map.)
    1. Why did Joab, when he was about to claim victory in Ammon, send a message to David? [Because David needed to be in the battle in order to claim the conquered city.]
    2. What did David get from the king of Ammon? [His heavy gold crown.]
    3. What was the name of David's daughter who was also Absalom's sister? [Tamar.]
    4. What was the name of David's oldest son? [Amnon.]
    5. To what event did Absalom invite all his brothers? [A sheep shearing.]
    6. What terrible act did Absalom commit at the sheep shearing? [He murdered Amnon.]
    7. To what place did Absalom flee and stay three years? [To his grandfather's area, Geshur.]
    8. How many times did Absalom see David in the two years after he returned to Jerusalem? [Zero.]
    9. Who was the go-between, getting Absalom back to Jerusalem and back to seeing David? [Joab.]

**Memory Verse[s]:** I heartily recommend the song and visual at [Psalm 139 - NKJV \(thywordcreations.com\)](http://thywordcreations.com).

- Psalm 139:1 O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.
 

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

13 For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You. . . .

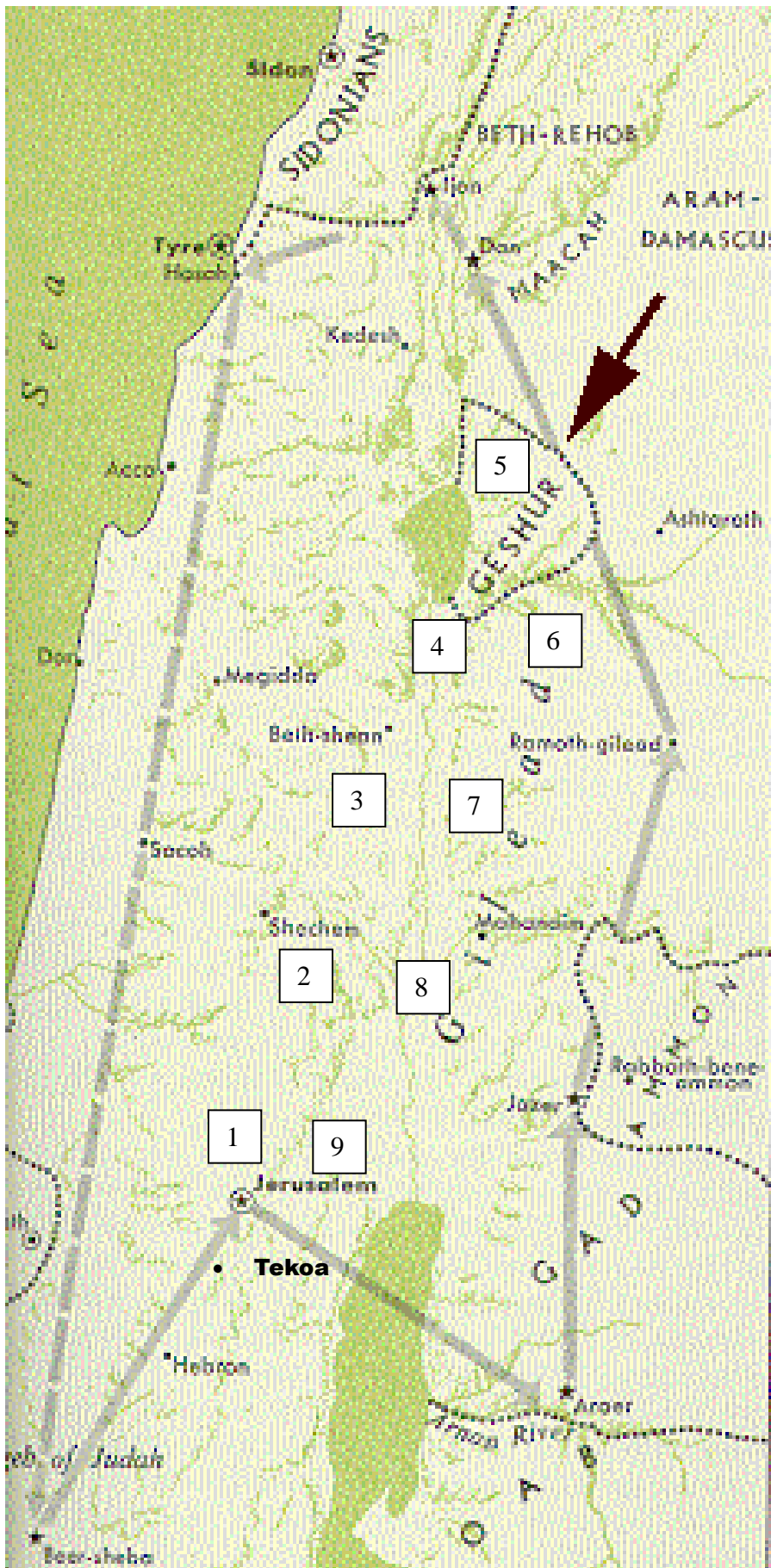
23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

**Handwork:**

- Print and have students color the picture of grieving David found at [834 Pinterest](http://834Pinterest.com).

to spoil

to be spoiled



Maacah3.gif (232x474) (womeninthebible.net)

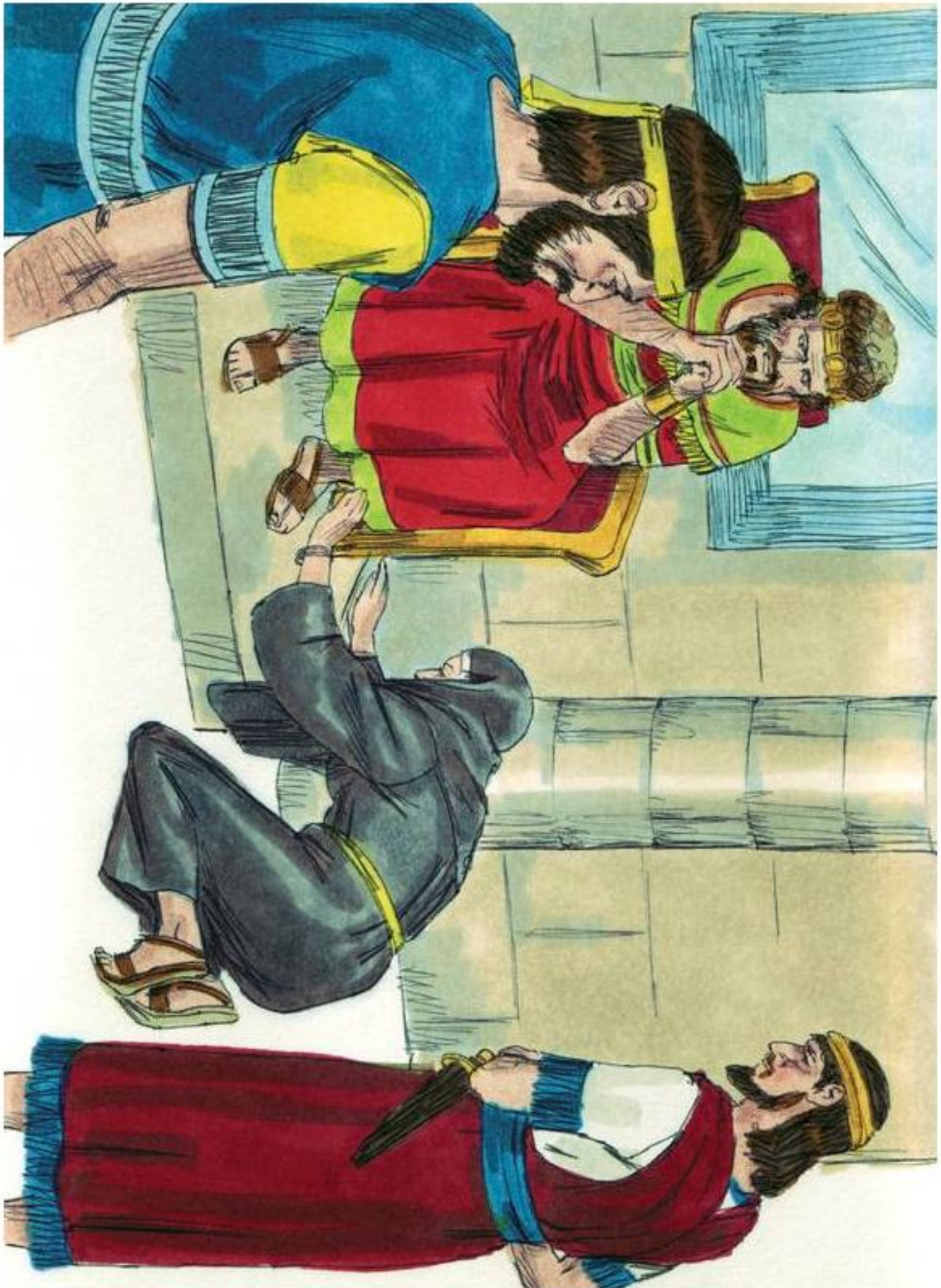




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