

# *Over Indulging Our Grief*

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2 Samuel 19:1-8 And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son! And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now. Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

- I. David's response to the news of Absalom's death is a rare instance in the life of David when he risked losing everything else in his life to indulge his own passion.
  - A. He simply cast himself completely into his mourning and self-pity and indulged his own grief and loss without consideration for others.
  - B. In a way this was very much like his sin with Bathsheba – he put everything else aside and considered not the consequences of indulging his own passion.
  - C. He allowed his feelings to swallow him up completely and forgot everything and everyone else.
  - D. Moral law is to consider God and others and when we fail to do that for any reason we are violating moral law, and that constitutes sin.
  - E. No matter how deep our grief, there are still others around us, and we must rein in our feelings for their sake.
  - F. Over indulging in grief is simply a raw form of selfishness, which a person can easily justify in themselves.
    1. It becomes obvious that it is selfishness when they start exhibiting contempt for others who try to comfort them.
    2. They have convinced themselves that no one understands and their case is unique and simply worse than anyone else has ever had to deal with.
  - G. This is how David's mourning was perceived by Joab and the rest of the people.
    1. "...thou lovest thine enemies and hatest thy friends."
    2. "...I perceive that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well."
  - H. He was completely absorbed by his feelings for his son regardless of the circumstances which brought it about.
  - I. Anyone can sympathize with his broken heart and his grief at the loss of his son, but not to the degree to which he took it.
  - J. It is always a grave error to allow our feelings to so control us that we lose sight of the situation around us as it really is.

- K. It is always a grave error to allow our feelings to overwhelm us to the point that we lose sight of the people around us and forget our feelings toward them.
  - L. Our over-indulgence and obsession with our grief for what we have lost can end up costing us all that we have left.
- II. The lesson from this is NOT that we should not grieve such a loss, but that we should not allow our feelings to cause us to forget everything else.

[Ecclesiastes 3:4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;](#)

- A. “A time” means a limited period of time.
- B. There is an acceptable, understandable, and reasonable period of time to mourn.

[Deuteronomy 34:8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.](#)

- C. It is not wrong to mourn, but it is wrong to mourn too much and too long.
- D. When it goes past the “time to mourn” and you continue to indulge yourself in it, you lose the sympathy and the support of others.
- E. They become offended with you because you have stopped showing any interest or feelings for them while they are still with you and you are only indulging your feelings for the thing or the person who has been taken from you.
- F. If we have learned anything from suffering loss and experiencing grief it ought to be to show more appreciation and love toward those that still remain with us.
- G. This is how we are comforted in our loss anyway.

[Genesis 24:67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.](#)

1. When David got up and went back to attending his business as king his bitter grief was put aside.
  2. When he showed the love and appreciation to whom it was due then healing began for everyone.
- H. This whole situation was not only about David and whatever the situation in our life, we must remember that it is not all about us, either.
  - I. All these people were involved and had invested much and suffered loss, also.
  - J. It was a tragedy for everyone – not just David.
  - K. When we lose someone in our life we are not the only one who has suffered loss and we are not the only one who is grieved.
  - L. It should not be a contest for who is the most hurt and grieved, and for the most attention and sympathy from others.

- III. Over-indulging in grief will warp our judgment and values about right and wrong.
- A. Absalom was a villain by any measure you want to apply.
  - B. His demise was a blessing to the nation of Israel, and a just judgment of God upon evil.
  - C. Those who protected the king and dealt with this unholy threat to God’s people were the real heroes in this situation.
  - D. David was a just man and righteous in his judgments, but he allowed this grief and sorrow to warp his sense of righteousness and justice and faith in God.
  - E. He wished Absalom still living and himself dead.

- F. He grieved that this evil person who had caused the death and misery of so many, was gone and failed to show any appreciation or loyalty to those who had administered true justice.
  - G. I have seen this same thing happen with people who drown themselves in their grief.
  - H. So many times we will see people make a saint of someone after they die, who was a villain while he lived.
  - I. At the same time they will make a villain out of a living saint who dares to remember what that person was like when he lived.
  - J. When this happens the grieving person not only suffers the loss of their loved one, but also finds themselves isolated and alone after they have lost everyone else.
- IV. To cease your open mourning does not say to others that you did not care enough about the one who you lost.
- A. It simply shows you have a healthy soul and faith in God.
  - B. It shows that you have learned through the loss to love and appreciate much more those you still have in your life.
  - C. We will always mourn for those that we have lost to death, but we learn to live with it and when we shed a tear about it we do it mostly in private.
  - D. We stop expecting and demanding sympathy and attention about it.
  - E. We realize that we must go on living and to throw the rest of our life away is the foolish thing to do, and that it is harmful to others that we love.
  - F. David almost went too far with this.
  - G. Even though Joab is not to be praised, he was right in what he told David and did him a great service by doing so.
  - H. What I have said here is not going to be well-received by some, but I am doing you a service by pointing out this near miss of David.
  - I. It is ok to grieve, it is expected and it is unavoidable.
  - J. But it is not ok to drown ourselves in our grief and throw away the blessings that remain to us still.

Revelation 3:1-2 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.