

**Saturday, June 1**

**All passages taken from Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996.  
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189.  
All rights reserved.**

**2 Samuel 18:1 - 19:10**

**18** **1** David now mustered the men who were with him and appointed generals and captains to lead them. **2** He sent the troops out in three groups, placing one group under Joab, one under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and one under Ittai, the man from Gath. The king told his troops, "I am going out with you." **3** But his men objected strongly. "You must not go," they urged. "If we have to turn and run—and even if half of us die—it will make no difference to Absalom's troops; they will be looking only for you. You are worth 10,000 of us, and it is better that you stay here in the town and send help if we need it." **4** "If you think that's the best plan, I'll do it," the king answered. So he stood alongside the gate of the town as all the troops marched out in groups of hundreds and of thousands. **5** And the king gave this command to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake, deal gently with young Absalom." And all the troops heard the king give this order to his commanders. **6** So the battle began in the forest of Ephraim, **7** and the Israelite troops were beaten back by David's men. There was a great slaughter that day, and 20,000 men laid down their lives. **8** The battle raged all across the countryside, and more men died because of the forest than were killed by the sword. **9** During the battle, Absalom happened to come upon some of David's men. He tried to escape on his mule, but as he rode beneath the thick branches of a great tree, his hair got caught in the tree. His mule kept going and left him dangling in the air. **10** One of David's men saw what had happened and told Joab, "I saw Absalom dangling from a great tree." **11** "What?" Joab demanded. "You saw him there and didn't kill him? I would have rewarded you with ten pieces of silver and a hero's belt!" **12** "I would not kill the king's son for even a thousand pieces of silver," the man replied to Joab. "We all heard the king say to you and Abishai and Ittai, 'For my sake, please spare young Absalom.'" **13** And if I had betrayed the king by killing his son—and the king would certainly find out who did it—you yourself would be the first to abandon me." **14** "Enough of this nonsense," Joab said. Then he took three daggers and plunged them into Absalom's heart as he dangled, still alive, in the great tree. **15** Ten of Joab's young armor bearers then surrounded Absalom and killed him. **16** Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and his men returned from chasing the army of Israel. **17** They threw Absalom's body into a deep pit in the forest and piled a great heap of stones over it. And all Israel fled to their homes. **18** During his lifetime, Absalom had built a monument to himself in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to carry on my name." He named the monument after himself, and it is known as Absalom's Monument to this day. **19** Then Zadok's son Ahimaaz

said, "Let me run to the king with the good news that the LORD has rescued him from his enemies." **20** "No," Joab told him, "it wouldn't be good news to the king that his son is dead. You can be my messenger another time, but not today." **21** Then Joab said to a man from Ethiopia, "Go tell the king what you have seen." The man bowed and ran off. **22** But Ahimaaz continued to plead with Joab, "Whatever happens, please let me go, too." "Why should you go, my son?" Joab replied. "There will be no reward for your news." **23** "Yes, but let me go anyway," he begged. Joab finally said, "All right, go ahead." So Ahimaaz took the less demanding route by way of the plain and ran to Mahanaim ahead of the Ethiopian. **24** While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the town, the watchman climbed to the roof of the gateway by the wall. As he looked, he saw a lone man running toward them. **25** He shouted the news down to David, and the king replied, "If he is alone, he has news." As the messenger came closer, **26** the watchman saw another man running toward them. He shouted down, "Here comes another one!" The king replied, "He also will have news." **27** "The first man runs like Ahimaaz son of Zadok," the watchman said. "He is a good man and comes with good news," the king replied. **28** Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "Everything is all right!" He bowed before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Praise to the LORD your God, who has handed over the rebels who dared to stand against my lord the king." **29** "What about young Absalom?" the king demanded. "Is he all right?" Ahimaaz replied, "When Joab told me to come, there was a lot of commotion. But I didn't know what was happening." **30** "Wait here," the king told him. So Ahimaaz stepped aside. **31** Then the man from Ethiopia arrived and said, "I have good news for my lord the king. Today the LORD has rescued you from all those who rebelled against you." **32** "What about young Absalom?" the king demanded. "Is he all right?" And the Ethiopian replied, "May all of your enemies, my lord the king, both now and in the future, share the fate of that young man!" **33** The king was overcome with emotion. He went up to the room over the gateway and burst into tears. And as he went, he cried, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son."

**19 1** Word soon reached Joab that the king was weeping and mourning for Absalom. **2** As all the people heard of the king's deep grief for his son, the joy of that day's victory was turned into deep sadness. **3** They crept back into the town that day as though they were ashamed and had deserted in battle. **4** The king covered his face with his hands and kept on crying, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!" **5** Then Joab went to the king's room and said to him, "We saved your life today and the lives of your sons, your daughters, and your wives and concubines. Yet you act like this, making us feel ashamed of ourselves. **6** You seem to love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that your commanders and troops mean nothing to you. It seems that if Absalom had lived and all of us

had died, you would be pleased. **7** Now go out there and congratulate your troops, for I swear by the LORD that if you don't go out, not a single one of them will remain here tonight. Then you will be worse off than ever before." **8** So the king went out and took his seat at the town gate, and as the news spread throughout the town that he was there, everyone went to him. Meanwhile, the Israelites who had supported Absalom fled to their homes. **9** And throughout all the tribes of Israel there was much discussion and argument going on. The people were saying, "The king rescued us from our enemies and saved us from the Philistines, but Absalom chased him out of the country. **10** Now Absalom, whom we anointed to rule over us, is dead. Why not ask David to come back and be our king again?"

### **John 20:1 - 31**

**20 1** Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. **2** She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, "They have taken the Lord's body out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" **3** Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. **4** They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. **5** He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn't go in. **6** Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, **7** while the cloth that had covered Jesus' head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. **8** Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— **9** for until then they still hadn't understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. **10** Then they went home. **11** Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. **12** She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. **13** "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him." **14** She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. **15** "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him." **16** "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). **17** "Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" **18** Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message. **19** That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was

standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. **20** As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! **21** Again he said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” **22** Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. **23** If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” **24** One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. **25** They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” **26** Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. **27** Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!” **28** “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. **29** Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.” **30** The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. **31** But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

### **Psalm 119:153 - 176**

**119 153** Look upon my suffering and rescue me, for I have not forgotten your instructions. **154** Argue my case; take my side! Protect my life as you promised. **155** The wicked are far from rescue, for they do not bother with your decrees. **156** LORD, how great is your mercy; let me be revived by following your regulations. **157** Many persecute and trouble me, yet I have not swerved from your laws. **158** Seeing these traitors makes me sick at heart, because they care nothing for your word. **159** See how I love your commandments, LORD . Give back my life because of your unfailing love. **160** The very essence of your words is truth; all your just regulations will stand forever. **161** Powerful people harass me without cause, but my heart trembles only at your word. **162** I rejoice in your word like one who discovers a great treasure. **163** I hate and abhor all falsehood, but I love your instructions. **164** I will praise you seven times a day because all your regulations are just. **165** Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble. **166** I long for your rescue, LORD, so I have obeyed your commands. **167** I have obeyed your laws, for I love them very much. **168** Yes, I obey your commandments and laws because you know everything I do. **169** O LORD, listen to my cry; give me the discerning mind you promised. **170** Listen to my prayer; rescue me as you

promised.**171** Let praise flow from my lips, for you have taught me your decrees.**172** Let my tongue sing about your word, for all your commands are right.**173** Give me a helping hand, for I have chosen to follow your commandments. **174** O LORD, I have longed for your rescue, and your instructions are my delight. **175** Let me live so I can praise you, and may your regulations help me. **176** I have wandered away like a lost sheep; come and find me, for I have not forgotten your commands.

#### **Proverbs 16:14 - 15**

**16** **14** The anger of the king is a deadly threat; the wise will try to appease it.**15** When the king smiles, there is life; his favor refreshes like a spring rain.