May 2 Answers

1) David's return and Sheba's rebellion. David realized that the elders of **Judah** feared reprisal for what they had done, so he reached out to them with words of friendship and peace. Another man might have launched a campaign of **retribution**, but not David. He showed great **generosity**: he restored Mephibosheth, spared Shimei, and rewarded faithful Barzillai. This teaches us the importance of **mercy** when we have the upper hand on those who have wronged us. In spite of his best efforts, David's return to Jerusalem was marred by *another* rebellion. **Sheba** took advantage of the squabble between Judah and Israel over who had the honor of bringing the king across the **Jordan**, and he rallied Israel against David with the cry, "We have no **portion** in David!" This shows us how **fickle** people can be. We need to be careful lest we are carried about in the ever-changing winds of public **opinion**. Our decisions should be based on the **principles** and wisdom of God's Word. Abishai and Joab pursued Sheba to the city of Abel-beth-maacah and put an end to the revolt. A wise **woman** there spoke up and saved an entire city from ruin. Often the **courage** to speak a few words of wisdom can prevent great disaster (cf. Ecc 9:13–18). The kingdom had been restored, but the price had been high: over **20,000** men dead, the king's son slain, and the unity of Israel fractured. David had killed a single man in secret, but he reaped a bloody harvest of death and destruction.