

David's Crown

By Calderon de la Barca

Play no. 8

Opening show: 23/05/1929

Creative team

Staged by: Alexei D. Dicky

Settings by: M. Schmidt

Music by: Shlomo Rosovsky

Musical Direction: Fordha Ben Zissi

Technical Supervision: Jehudah Rubinstein

Cast

King David: Aaron Meskin

Amnon, the king son: Shimon Finkel

Absalom, the king son: Zvi Friedland

Adoniyahu, the king son: Chaim Amitai

Solomon, the king son: Raphael Klatzkin

Eliphelet, the king son: Abraham Barartz

Tamar, the king's daughter: Hana Rovina

Joab, the king's general: Joshua Bertonov

ACT ONE

Scene 1. David's Triumphant Home Coming.

Achitophel seeks vengeance on King David for wrongs done to his family. Greeted by his sons on his return home from a victorious campaign, David is saddened that his favorite, Amnon does not appear. Summoned before his father, Amnon appears dejected and gloomy. He declares himself in love with his sister Tamar, who, frightened, runs away.

Scene 2. At David's House.

King David, after telling his sons that he will not be the one to build the Temple because of the blood he has shed, is told by an Ethiopian Sorceress that she foresees Shimeon casting stones, Joab throwing darts, and Absalom slain. Achitophel prevents Absalom from attacking Solomon with his sword during a quarrel over the succession to the throne.

Tamar is ordered by her father to sing to Amnon in order to drive away his melancholy.

Scene 3. Amnon and Tamar.

Tamar tries with the love of a sister to free Amnon from his melancholy, but, after a long internal struggle, Amnon seizes Tamar and carries her off to his room.

Scene 4. Amnon and Tamar.

"Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he loved her".

Tamar vows vengeance when Amnon, repentant for his deed, drives her off.

Scene 5. Amnon's Trial

The King's sons and counsellors demand the death sentence for Amnon's sin of incest, but David pardons him. Absalom vows to avenge Tamar and plots to seize the throne.

ACT TWO

Scene 1. Absalom's Feast.

Two years later at the feast of sheep-shearing at Absalom's home in Baal Hazor, the sons quarrel about the succession to the throne. Absalom, at the advice of Achitophel, acts as peace maker, throwing away his sword. All the sons follow his example, and, after Achitophel has collected the swords, Tamar enters and, too late, Amnon realizes he is trapped. He is killed by Absalom's men.

Scene 2. Abshalom's Plot

David's sons continue to intrigue for the throne. Waking out of a troubled sleep, David learns of Abshalom's plot against him. David flees and Abshalom triumphantly takes the throne. Achitophel urges Abshalom to pursue David, but Hushai, the King's Counsellor, fawningly prevents the pursuit. Achitophel takes his own life.

Scene 3. David alone in the Hills

David is downcast, but Joab wages war against the rebellious Abshalom. When Abshalom is defeated and killed by Joab, the crown is restored to David, but he rejects it, as the cause of the death of his two sons and the ruin of his life. Over the body of Abshalom, their dead brother, Adoniyahu and Solomon stretch out their hands for the coveted crown.