

## II SAMUEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Samuel chapter 15 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw David suffering the consequences of his sin with Bathsheba. We saw David's son Amnon rape his own half-sister Tamar and then throw her out of his house like garbage when he was done. We saw Tamar's brother, Absalom care for Tamar and he let this thing that Amnon did to her fester in him for two full years. And, since David did not do anything about it, he was just mad that it happened, Absalom killed Amnon for what he did to Tamar.

And then Absalom fled for his life to Geshur, returning after three years because of a trick that Joab played on David, having a woman, this widow come to him and tell him that her two sons were fighting and one killed the other and now, because of this, they want to put to death her only remaining son. And David said that he is safe and the woman asked David, "Then why have you not brought your son Absalom home?" David knew that Joab put this woman up to this, but he allowed him to come home but did not see Absalom for another two full years and then David finally agreed to see him and this is how chapter 14 ended, **"So Joab went to the king and told him. And when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king. Then the king kissed Absalom."** II Samuel 14:33.

That is where we will pick up our study this evening, in II Samuel chapter 15, starting in verse 1 as Absalom is going to plot an overthrow of the kingdom, he will try to take it away from his father, king David. So let's see what the Lord has for us as we continue our study through His Word.

**II SAMUEL 15****VERSES 1-6**

1. Why did Absalom need these chariots and horses and fifty men to run before him? He was trying to impress the people that he was somebody. You see, Absalom was gathering a following and he was drawing the people away from David and to himself. He would get up early and sit at the gate greeting people. And as they would go by he would listen to their complaints, their problems and encourage them that their case is strong, it is good. And then there is always that “But!” You see, but the king and his men are too busy to see them and yet if he were a judge he would quickly settle the matter and see that justice was carried out. Absalom was a great politician. He kissed the babies and said what the people wanted to hear. And it is possible that David was so busy that he was removed from the people and Absalom saw this as a great opportunity to steal the hearts of the people away from David.

2. Absalom realized that his father, David, could not live forever and he is positioning himself for an overthrow of his father’s kingdom, he wants it before David dies! Clarke put it like this, “Absalom appeared to be the *real* and was the *undisputed* heir to the throne; David could not, in the course of nature, live very long; and most people are more disposed to hail the beams of the *rising*, than exult in those of the *setting*, sun.”

VERSES 7-10

1. It says that this revolt took place “**after forty years.**” That seems like a long period of time, how can it be? Some feel this was the age of Absalom when he began his revolt, it could be. I tend to lean that it should read “**after four years.**” The reason I say that is that is what the text says in the Syriac and Arabic translations, as well as in Josephus and some other Hebrew manuscripts.

2. So now Absalom is ready for a revolt, he has laid the groundwork; his following has grown in these four years. So Hebron was going to be the place in which his revolution would start, the place he grew up and the place his father David began to rule as king. It is possible that the people of Hebron may have felt betrayed by David for moving the capitol from Hebron to Jerusalem. Thus, Absalom was safe to begin his overthrow in this city. Also, it was far enough away that David would not be able to do anything about it if he does find out, at least not right away.

VERSES 11-12

1. As this conspiracy continues to grow, Absalom is gathering more and more people to his side, influential people like Ahithophel, David's counselor and close friend. Why did Ahithophel do this to David? Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba, and it is possible that because of David's actions against his son-in-law, killing him, that Ahithophel had a lot of bitterness in his heart towards David. And when the right time came, he gave David his due reward, and sided with his son Absalom. And David is heartbroken over this, for Ahithophel was one of David's closest friends. In fact Psalm 55 speaks of this incident, this agony over the loss of a dear friend.

In Psalm 55 starting in verse 12 we are told, **“For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng. Let death seize them; Let them go down alive into hell, For wickedness is in their dwellings and among them.”** Psalm 55:12-15. And in Psalm 41:9-12 David again speaks of his friend Ahithophel, **“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me. But You, O Lord, be merciful to me, and raise me up, That I may repay them. By this I know that You are well pleased with me, Because my enemy does not triumph over me. As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And set me before Your face forever.”** We will deal more with Ahithophel and this bitterness, this anger that he would not let go and it finally destroyed him as we continue on in II Samuel.

VERSES 13-14

1. As we will see, David feels that this may be God's judgment upon him for his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah. Thus, he has no fight left in him and he understands that if he does fight against his son Absalom, Jerusalem will be turned into a blood bath. And I think David does the right thing here, he leaves this situation, this rebellion against him by his own son, in the hands of God knowing that God will do what is right. That is a great lesson for us. There is a time to fight and there is a time to pray and for David, in a sense what he is doing when he leaves Jerusalem is he has given it over to God as I have said. I don't think it is a fatalist attitude, but trusting in the Lord that if God wants him to be king, then it is a done deal!

VERSES 15-18

1. As David watched this procession leave Jerusalem with him, who was following him? Not his own countrymen, the people he was caring for, but we see his army, the malcontents who were with David when he was on the run from king Saul and became mighty men of God, his army, his bodyguards! How tragic we don't see family and friends, his own following with him, there were some, but that is the way it goes when trouble comes many times, those that say they are friends, those that are suppose to be close to us walk away, they distance themselves from us.

2. David also leaves 10 of his concubines behind to care for his home while he is gone, which may indicate that David felt he would return one day, that this rebellion was not going to last forever!

3. For David, it was obviously a very difficult time for him and it is during this time that he wrote Psalm 3, 55, 41, 61, 62 and 63! In Psalm 55:4-8 we see the fear that David felt during this time as he wrote, **“My heart is severely pained within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, And horror has overwhelmed me. So I said, ‘Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. Indeed, I would wander far off, And remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape From the windy storm and tempest.”**

But do not forget that even though there was this fear of the enemy, of Absalom and what he was doing and what he could do to David, he also put his trust in the Lord as we are told in Psalm 3, which says beginning in verse 1, **“Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, ‘There is no help for him in God.’ But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, O Lord; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people.”** Psalm 3:1-8.

As we look at the things that are happening around us we too may be fearful, but look to the Lord and He can replace that fear with His peace that surpasses all understanding, if you let Him!

VERSES 19-23

1. As this procession of faithful friends passed by David all of a sudden David sees this man Ittai the Gittite pass by and he can't believe his eyes. You see, this man just arrived in Jerusalem and yet his loyalty to David and his position as king outshines those who were living in Jerusalem! In fact, he would stick with David no matter the cost, even his life. How does that relate to us? Listen to what Spurgeon wrote regarding this, "If Ittai, charmed with David's person and character, though a foreigner and a stranger, felt that he could enlist beneath his banner for life - yea, and declared that he would do so there and then-how much more may you and I, if we know what Christ has done for us, and who He is and what He deserves at our hands, at this good hour plight our troth to Him and vow, 'As the Lord liveth, surely in whatsoever place my Lord and Savior shall be, whether in death or life, even there also shall His servant be.'" In other words, are we willing to lay our lives down and follow Jesus wherever He leads us? That is what Ittai did for David. You see, true loyalty is not really demonstrated until it costs us something to be loyal. Again, that was Ittai towards David!

2. So David and all those who followed after him, left the city of Jerusalem, down the Kidron valley, over the top of the mount of Olives heading toward Mahanaim, on the east side of the Jordan River according to II Samuel 17:24, which tells us, "**Then David went to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.**"

VERSES 24-26

1. Here we see the priests siding with David and this was not an easy decision, because if Absalom caught them, they would be put to death. And as David sees them he tells them to return to Jerusalem with the Ark of God. Why did he do that? First of all to protect the priests and I think even more importantly, that there would be godly men to lead the people and not just leave them in the hands of wicked Absalom. We will also find out another reason David sent them back in the next few verses but keep in mind that David knew that this whole situation was in the hands of God. If this was God's dealing with David, then he will accept it. His life was in the hands of God and not in the Ark of God! It was not David's will in this situation, but the Lord's and David was humble enough and to allow God's will for his life to be done and not fight against it.

VERSES 27-29

1. Here is another reason for sending the priests back. Zadok and Abiathar were two chief priests whom David sends back to be spies for him. Ahimaaz was Zadok's son and Jonathan was Abiathar's son. Thus, they could provide valuable information for David, letting him know what Absalom was up to. Yes, David submitted to the will of God but that does not mean he just laid down and played dead. He is walking and seeing what God has for him, where God will lead him and he just wants to be prepared.



VERSE 30

1. I can't imagine how hard this was for David. As he goes up the Mount of Olives he is mourning, weeping not because of what he was loosing, but what his sin has brought not only upon his own life but also upon the nation! Morgan makes these remarks, "In light of all the facts it is almost certain that the tears David shed as he climbed Olivet, were rather those of humiliation and penitence, than those of self-centered regret. For Absalom there was no excuse, but David carried in his own heart ceaselessly the sense of his own past sin."

2. Fast forward now to the time of Jesus and the night of the Last Supper as He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and to get there He crossed the Brook Kidron as David did and went up the Mount of Olives, just as David did. And both were to suffer for sin. David was to suffer for his own sin and Jesus suffered for the sins of the world, our sins, for He was sinless! It is as Paul said in Hebrews 4:14-15, "**Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**" We are also told in I John 3:5, "**And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.**" Jesus has taken away our sins because He alone could pay in full the penalty for them!

VERSE 31

1. Just when David thought it could not get any worse than it already was, he finds out that his close friend, Ahithophel, his counselor has turned his back on him and has sided with Absalom! Why did Ahithophel turn against David? Because Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba and he saw what David did to her family. He committed adultery with her, got her pregnant, murdered her husband and thus, all these years now bitterness, anger has been growing inside of him and finally it is being unleashed against David! Folk's, anger, bitterness is never good and it will keep eating at you and eating at you until you do something about it. You need to either let it go, give it to God or you will explode somehow, someday against the person you are angry or bitter against as we see here with Ahithophel!

2. What can David do about this? He prays to the Lord that this man with his wise, godly counsel will be turned into foolishness. It is the power of prayer! Trapp wrote this about what David did and the power of prayer, "This was done accordingly: great is the power of faithful prayer. The queen-mother of Scotland was heard to say, that she more feared the prayers of John Knox than an army of fighting men." May we not forget what we have at our disposal, prayer, the heavy artillery of the Christian soldier!

VERSES 32-37

1. This is interesting to me. David's life seems like it is a mess and it is. He is fleeing for his life into the wilderness from his own son, Absalom. And yet, as he reaches the top of the Mount of Olives he takes the time to pray, to worship God! Why did he do that?

Remember what Paul said in I Thessalonians 5:18, "**in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**" And in Romans 8:28 Paul reminds us, "**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**"

I don't always understand why things are happening but I do know that God is in control and I need to trust Him and one way to keep anger, bitterness, frustration out of my life is to worship the Lord. It gets me refocused and I am able to thank Him in everything and not for everything. I know He has a plan and purpose.

Here is Romans 8:28, a verse we like to give to others but it is also for us, wants us to understand that God is working in us so that He can work through us. Now that phrase "**work together**" is SUNERGE in the Greek and it is a word from which we get our English word "synergism." It is a word that means "the working together of various elements to produce an effect greater than, and often completely different from, the sum of each element acting separately." A great example of this is table salt, which is composed of two poisonous chemicals, sodium and chloride or chlorine, which is a chemical contained in chloride. And yet, when they are put together they produce a chemical that is extremely beneficial, sodium chloride or table salt!

Why does God allow those difficult times in our lives? Not to hurt us but to help us to grow, strengthen our faith, draw us closer to God, protect us from other tragedies and ultimately, conforming us into His image. For some, this is hard to believe. How can God turn a tragedy into good? Let me give you the ultimate example of how God can do this. God sent His Son into the world to save the world by going to the cross of Calvary, taking all that Satan could devise and turned God's people against Jesus, turned the Gentiles against Jesus, and it looks like all things are not working together for good, but for evil, but that was not the case as we know because we can look back and see what took place, the good that came out of it. You see, out of that evil that was thrown at Jesus came the ultimate gift, eternal life, eternal salvation, the forgiveness of our sins! God is working in us for good – ultimately, even though in the here and now we may not see it or fully understand it. David placed his life in the hands of God, worshiped God even during this difficult time and so should we!

2. David sends Hushai back to Jerusalem. He was an old man, and thus it would be difficult for him to travel with David. So David sends him back to be a spy for him, for he was going to be able to do more good in Jerusalem than with David. It is Hushai who will frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel, as we will see as we continue on in II Samuel.

3. Absalom is now king and yet David has infiltrated his kingdom with several spies that will ultimately bring Absalom's kingdom down to the ground. Now keep in mind what is going on here. Absalom prepares to return from Hebron, where he was proclaimed as king, David is leaving the city of Jerusalem, leaving the kingdom behind, and heading for Mahanaim, on the east side of the Jordan River, in the area of Gilead. A very sad day not only for David, as his own son rebelled against him, but for the entire nation of Israel. We will get some more details of what transpired as David is leaving Jerusalem and Absalom is moving in as king as we move into chapter 16 of II Samuel.

## **II SAMUEL 16**

### **VERSES 1-4**

1. Remember that Mephibosheth is the son of Jonathan who was crippled at a young age and when David became king he restored Mephibosheth to a place of honor instead of doing what was usually done to the previous kings sons, killing them so they would not try to take the throne. And here is Mephibosheth's servant, Ziba and he brings to David all kinds of supplies for him and those traveling with him. And it looks like Ziba is doing the right thing, showing kindness to David.

And then the truth comes out. David asks him about his master, Mephibosheth, where he was at and Ziba lies to David. He tells David that he has been waiting for this day when the kingdom would be taken away from David and given back to him, the one who deserves it. Thus, he is not going to go with David but stay in Jerusalem! That was a lie! Ziba was trying to gain favor with David and make Mephibosheth look bad! How do I know he was lying? Because in II Samuel 19:24-30, as David has returned to Jerusalem as king, we are told, **“Now Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, ‘Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?’ And he answered, ‘My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, ‘I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,’ because your servant is lame. And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, but my lord the king is like the angel of God. Therefore do what is good in your eyes. For all my father’s house were but dead men before my lord the king. Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to cry out anymore to the king?’ So the king said to him, ‘Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, ‘You and Ziba divide the land.’” Then Mephibosheth said to the king, ‘Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house.’”** It is good to get both sides of the story before you come to any conclusions!

2. Can you imagine the pain this must have brought to David knowing the man he restored has turned against him also, Mephibosheth. You are in the middle of a crisis and those whom you love, your trusted, you helped are turning against you, or so David thought. In regards to what Ziba did, Morgan tells us that Ziba “was utterly despicable, and the more so because at the moment the sorrow he brought to the heart of David was his feeling that his kindness toward Mephibosheth was ill requited.” And Trapp wrote, “A shameless and senseless slander, uttered by a false and faithless sycophant [flatterer].” That was Ziba and David believed his words at this time. Thus, he rewarded the loyalty of Ziba and he punished the disloyalty of Mephibosheth. That is what Ziba wanted as he used this crisis to benefit himself and he did so by lying to David!

#### VERSES 5-8

1. Just when you thought it could not get any worse for David, here comes this man, Shimei, a distant relative of Saul. And he meets up with David at Bahurim, which was near Jerusalem, east of the Mount of Olives. And this guy begins to curse David, he is throwing stones at David, he is telling David that he is only getting what he deserves. He is calling him a worthless man, and he speaks of David’s hands being filled with the blood of Saul and his family. Obviously that was not true! David did not usurp the throne from Saul. In fact on two occasions David had the option of killing Saul, and yet he refrained from touching the Lord’s anointed. And remember, Saul was killed in battle and God placed David on the throne in Israel. God anointed David as king, and not man, David did not do that on his own accord or by his own power.

2. Now, if you were in this situation, how would you respond? Think about it, you have at least 700 mighty men with you against this one guy. He would be toast I think if I was in that situation. Let's see how David will respond to this man's threats, his throwing stones, his slanderous words. But before we do, let's see what his men have to say about what is happening to their king, how they want to respond in verse 9.

### VERSE 9

1. The son's of Zeruiah were loose canons, ready to blow at any time. And Abishai, the brother of Joab was no exception. He just could not take it any longer and tells David to let him take this guys head off, he is nothing more than a dead dog anyway! Remember in I Samuel chapter 26, as David and Abishai are standing over king Saul as he slept. He tells David, "**God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time!**" I Samuel 26:8. And if it were not for David, I'm sure he would have cut up king Saul right there on the spot. And we are going to see once again David restrain Abishai from his impetuous reaction to this situation.



2. Now, how many times do we feel like Abishai, ready to blow, to take off someone's head? We have all been there and done that. The thing is, do we want to be driven by our emotions, which are not good, or lead by the Spirit, which is good. Remember what Paul said in Galatians 5:16-25, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”** Thus, it is much better to be led by the Spirit of God than to be driven by our emotions! Let's see how David responds to Abishai's words.

VERSE 10

1. Notice how different David's response is to that of Abishai, and I think it is because of David's relationship with the Lord, he trusted in the Lord. Now it seems that David feels that God has sent this man to curse and humiliate him because of his sin. And you can look at this incident two ways. The first is that David still had a lot of guilt over his sin. He was feeling a lot of condemnation that did not come from God, but Satan. You see, God forgave David as soon as he repented of his sin. God convicted David, which drew David back to God. Satan condemns us which draws us away from God. This was a result of his sin, at least that is the way he may have felt. The other way to look at this is that David submits to the will of God, as he feels that this man was sent from God. I tend to think it is both. David still felt guilty over his sin and it was hard for him to let that go. Thus, it took the fight out of him. His sin condemned him. But also we see David rightly recognize that if God wants him back in Jerusalem, and on the throne, He will bring him back. It is as Morgan wrote, "This is radiant illustration of the deep and inward peace given to any man who is living in fellowship with God in motive and desire."

VERSES 11-12

1. David is in a very passive mode now and just submits to God's will. He looks at it this way, "If I am not going to do anything against my rebellious son Absalom, then how can I come against this man for what he is doing?" That was a true statement and yet, look at this guy who was tracking David as he goes, cursing and throwing stones at him, kicking up dirt. Not an easy thing for David to do, to leave him alone but on his death bed, David charges his son Solomon to hold Shimei responsible for his actions. In I Kings 2:8-9 we are told, "**And see, you have with you Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a malicious curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim. But he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.'** Now therefore, **do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man and know what you ought to do to him; but bring his gray hair down to the grave with blood.**" David said he would not kill this man for his actions, but Solomon, David's son will. Solomon has Shimei executed for his wickedness that he had shown to David.

VERSES 13-14

1. What a great lesson we see here. They were tired, weary and David has them rest so they can be refreshed. This is so true in our own lives. Some of the hardest times we go through in ministry, in our life in general, are when people bring false accusations against us. We become weary as we hear these things. And the best thing to do with these lies, is let them die on their own. If they are lies, they will fall apart. Just ask the Lord to strengthen you during these times. Ask him to refresh you. I will just give you a few verses to show you that our strength, our peace, our rest, our hope, our refreshing is in the Lord. In Isaiah 40:31 we are told, **“But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”** In Isaiah 41:10 we are told, **“Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”**

And in Philippians 4:6-9 we are told, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”** As we have the peace of God in our lives we will be refreshed!

VERSES 15-19

1. Remember that Ahithophel was David's dear friend who turned his back on David and sided with David's rebellious son Absalom. The Lord is just driving home this point that Ahithophel has sided with Absalom. And as I have said before, Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather, and he may be trying to repay David back for killing Uriah and destroying his granddaughter's family.

2. Hushai was also David's friend, an elderly man. And David told Hushai to go back to Jerusalem and be an informant for him. Be a spy and send word back on what is going on. While you are there confuse the counsel of Ahithophel. And as he approaches Absalom, we see that Absalom is not sure what side he is on. And Absalom hears only what his pride allows him to hear. Hushai is saying to Absalom that he will serve the one whom God has chosen, and Absalom thought he was speaking of him. But Hushai was speaking of David. And Hushai goes on to say that he will serve the son of David if he was loyal to his father. It is amazing how our pride can cloud what is being said.

Now there are some who feel that Hushai lied to Absalom, that he was a spy and was doing what a good spy does, lies about who he is or which side he is on. Again, I don't see that here. I see Hushai speak the truth and Absalom, in his pride thought that he was speaking of him, that Hushai would serve him!

VERSES 20-23

1. The counsel of Ahithophel was to show to all that Absalom was now king. You see, by his actions it would be such an offensive action that it would eliminate any possibility of reconciliation with David. He had passed the point of no return and the people would recognize that fact. Thus, this was more of a political move than a lustful move, to solidify the people's support around him and to sever any hope of reconciliation between David and Absalom. You see, it was customary in the Ancient Near East for the king of a new dynasty to take the harem of the previous monarch, thus he was showing to all that there is no turning back, that he was now the king.

2. Now this is also the fulfillment of what God had told David would happen as a result of his sin with Bathsheba back in II Samuel 12:11-12, "**Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'**" That is what is happening here and Absalom had a choice to make.

Don't think that he was innocent of his actions. It is as Clarke wrote, "Every part of the conduct of Absalom shows him to have been a most profligate [reckless] young man; he was proud, vindictive, adulterous, incestuous, a parricide [the murder of one's close relative, particularly one's father], and in fine, reprobate to every good word and work."

That was Absalom!

3. Now was Ahithophel's counsel that he gave to Absalom, having sex with David's concubines in a place where the people could watch, be of God? Folk's, this was wise counsel, but it was not of God. Yes it was clever but it was not righteous or holy! But it says that his words came from God, doesn't it? No, it doesn't. It says, "**Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. . . .**" II Samuel 16:23. You see, "**as if**" and thus, this counsel was not from the lips of God, but from the heart of a bitter, angry man. He was wise and Ahithophel had acquired such a reputation that his counsel was taken to be equivalent to a word from the Lord, but it was not, at least not in this case!

4. As I close this evening, let me leave you with these words from J. Vernon McGee. He wrote:

We now find David back out in the dens and caves of the earth. What is he going to do? Absalom is going to try to win a victory over David's forces. David, however, is an old veteran and knows how to fight. Absalom is doing a very dangerous thing by going against his father. The tragic thing is that David loves him and wants to save him.

These were difficult days for David. I am sure by now that your heart goes out in sympathy to him. But David does not whimper or cry aloud. He says in substance, "Just as long as I know that things are right with God, I will bear these burdens that come upon me."

David was a great man, friend. He had committed an awful sin, but he is like a wonderful piece of statuary with one flaw in it. That is the way many Christians are today. Did you ever meet one who didn't have a flaw? We all have flaws in our lives. Thank God that He will not throw us overboard because of the flaws.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. II, p. 225

5. Next time we will continue on with this rebellion of Absalom and the counsel of Ahithophel as we see David restored to the throne in Jerusalem as king!