

FINAL STUDY NOTES – 2 Samuel Chapters 15-16 11/17-18/2025

CLASSROOM LOCATION AND ZOOM – SIGN IN INFORMATION:

Phil Twente: <https://www.ptwente.com> - Previous Audio/notes ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221

NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE ONLINE (ZOOM) STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM PACIFIC STANDARD Time (US and Canada)
THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY WILL BE MEETING ON ZOOM ONLY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

MEETING ID - 878 5864 4763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM PACIFIC STANDARD Time (US and Canada).

TUES MORNING MTG PLACE: 1201 KEY WEST, CORONA DEL MAR (shown as 1201 KW, Corona del Mar, CA 92625) on Global Positioning System (GPS) in automobiles. For driving directions, suggest using (waze.com/live map) or *MapQuest* (mapquest.com), **AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!**

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OPENING PRAYER

2 SAMUEL – Chapter 15 – Absalom’s Treason – (vs. 1-12); David Escapes from Jerusalem – (vs. 13-37); Chapter 16 – Mephibosheth’s Servant Ziba – (vs. 1-4); - Shimei Curses David – (vs. 5-14); The Advice of Ahithophel.

- **Review: There has developed a breach between David and his son Absalom.** As the result of Absalom, having ordered his servants to kill his older brother Amnon, for raping his sister. Absalom first fled to the land of the Geshurites. After three years, David called him back, but would still would not see him. It was two more years that David just refused him an audience. When Absalom finally came in, David kissed him, and it would seem that possibly things were forgiven.

Absalom's Conspiracy

2Sa 15:1 After this it happened that Absalom provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

- **He began to exalt** his own position. He is setting the stage for treason, for his own rebellion. So he has horses, chariots, and 50 men running in front of him. This is all for show.

2Sa 15:2-3 Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say,

"What city are you from?" And he would say, "Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel." [3] Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your case is good and right; but there is no deputy of the king to hear you."

- Absalom begins to steer the people and their loyalty away from David, the one who had been so good to them.

2Sa 15:4-6 Moreover Absalom would say, "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice." [5] And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. [6] In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

- Absalom being the oldest living son of David, was the heir apparent to the throne of David, however he decided that he would not wait until his father died. He started by these guises, to draw a popular movement after himself. He sought to steal the hearts of the people.

2Sa 15:7 Now it came to pass after forty years that Absalom said to the king, "Please, let me go to Hebron and pay the vow which I made to the LORD."

- *After forty years.* "Forty (arbaim)" or "four (arba)"? The number "forty" here seems to be a **copyist error**, since David's entire reign lasted just forty years. The Septuagint and Syriac translations, as well as Josephus, all agree that it was "four" years, a period which fits more realistically in the account. On the other hand, the "forty years" might conceivably refer to the period of David's popularity since slaying Goliath, rather than the length of his reign.

2Sa 15:8 For your servant took a vow while I dwelt at Geshur in Syria, saying, 'If the LORD indeed brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.' "

- "I promised God, if You bring me back to Jerusalem, I'm going to serve You." So, "I made this vow to God."

2Sa 15:9 And the king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron.

- Here David graciously says to his son, *Go in peace*. These are the last words that he will ever say to his son! This is the last time David sees his son alive. I am sure in a sense, David is glad that Joab was proactive; that in David's mind, he and Absalom have reconciled somewhat.

2Sa 15:10 Then Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, 'As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!' "

Now David first began his reign in Hebron. Absalom goes down there, sends messages out saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!' " That is the plan that was put together very effectively.

2Sa 15:11 And with Absalom went two hundred men invited from Jerusalem, and they went along innocently and did not know anything.

- The two hundred men did not really realize the conspiracy of Absalom, his plan to overthrow the kingdom of David. They were not really a part of the movement of Absalom.

2Sa 15:12 Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city—from Giloh—while he offered sacrifices (Absalom using as coverup). And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.

- *While he offered sacrifices.* Absalom is using this worship as a cover-up. He is offering sacrifices the whole time that he is setting the stage for his rebellion.
- **The word went out! Absalom is leading a rebellion** against his father. The people of Israel join in, including Ahithophel, Bathsheba's grandfather. Because of his incredible stature in Israel, he gives a great legitimacy to Absalom's rebellion!
- Absalom and Ahithophel, coming from very different backgrounds are partners now in bitterness. Ahithophel has zero respect for Absalom. They are joined together in hatred of David! The reason Ahithophel joins the rebellion of Absalom is to carry out his private war with David.
- Bitterness is a very strong, but unhealthy unifying factor in people. It is a very dangerous one, but powerful means by which people become unified and they stay unified. The Bible warns us against the forsaking even a **root** of bitterness in any of our lives.
- Considering his whole scenario, you would think that God would be on Ahithophel's side in this battle against David rather than on David's side. Yet, the exact opposite is going to happen. God is going to rise up and He is going to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel against David.

- **Ahithophel is going to end up hanging himself, committing suicide.** David is going to survive all of this to rule over the nation of Israel. God defeats Ahithophel, but He defends David. God knows something that we do not. God knew what Ahithophel did not know in his bitterness, which was the private price that David would pay the rest of his life for his sin. David had confessed and was forgiven, But he knew "my sin is ever before me."
- **If we decide in our own bitterness to pile on to what God is doing** in their life, God rises up and He will defend them and defeat us in that. The Bible says, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay.*" We must not get on the wrong side of God's grace in all of this. Instead of forgiveness, Ahithophel chooses the path of bitterness. All he succeeds in doing is to add his death to the sequence.
- **Ahithophel, after the Bathsheba incident makes the mistake of** leaving the service of David. He goes home to Giloh, and for 10 years just sat in bitterness and stewed in his bitterness
- **Bitterness must either be repented of and handed to God as an act of worship to Him; forgiving the other person,** putting the situation in His hands to work with, or it will just consume us. For 10 years, this bitterness grew into hatred to a degree that affected the entire kingdom. Ahithophel is waiting for some miracle would occur whereby he can hurt David as badly as David hurt him. As soon as he hears that Absalom has taken the throne, this was his chance!
- **Now hearing of Absalom's rebellion against David, he joins in. But he is overlooking a very important point!** David is not the same man anymore! He had grown a lot since his failure in his sin.
- **Ahithophel made a huge mistake in not considering that God had dealt with David. Do I make that same mistake? Staying in hatred, wanting to take revenge myself, not considering that is the LORD's job. Here He had already done it to David!**
- **May we beware of the danger of bitterness in our lives tonight.** You say, I have got my bitterness under control. If there is any bitterness in your heart, the devil will use it to draw you into a battle that will spoil your legacy of a lifetime of work for the LORD. That is how dangerous it is. How important it is to repent and give that bitterness to the LORD!
- **Is there any root of bitterness in my life? I pray to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit to take action and get rid of it, turning all of it to the Lord!**

David Flees Jerusalem

2Sa 15:13-14 Now a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." [14] So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

- David recognized that Absalom had developed a strong power base. David was not anxious to see the beloved city of Jerusalem brought into siege by the forces of Absalom. Rather than making the city a blood bath, David decided to flee, allowing Absalom to take it.

2Sa 15:15 And the king's servants said to the king, "We are your servants, ready to do whatever my lord the king commands."

- David, whatever you say. We are ready to serve.

2Sa 15:16-17 Then the king went out with all his household after him. But the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house. [17] And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts.

- This was probably a place just outside of the gates of Jerusalem. It was before he crossed the Kidron valley. It was to gather everybody together so that their departure would be orderly.

2Sa 15:18-19 Then all his servants passed before him; and all the Cherethites (David's personal bodyguards), all the Pelethites (personal messengers of the king), and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed before the king. [19] Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king. For you are a foreigner and also an exile from your own place."

- Ittai, probably one of the high ranking generals of the Philistines, had gotten himself in trouble who had admired David when he had seen him living there around Gath. So, he came to David, as an exile.

2Sa 15:20-21 In fact, you came only yesterday. Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I go I know not where? Return, and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth be with you." [21]

But Ittai answered the king and said, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be."

- Notice David's concern of Ittai, whose help is so badly needed, but David, now so committed to the LORD, is showing more concern for others than for himself!
- So Ittai, swearing by the LORD, and by the life of king David, pledges his undying obedience to David. "I will be with you in death or life, "whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be!"" What a tremendous commitment, friendship, commitment of love!
- Often when we want to express words of deep commitment, we turn to the book of Ruth. How that as Naomi was pressing the girls to go back to their parents, and her one daughter-in-law, Orpah, kissed her and said, "Goodbye." Ruth said, "Please do not ask me to leave you or forsake you, or to return from following after you, because wherever you go I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God, and God forbid if anything but death, should separate us."
- Those are tremendous words of commitment, words of love and faithfulness. But really they are not any greater than Ittai's, and his pledge to David, "Whether in life or death! Where you are, there is where your servant wants to be!"

2Sa 15:22 So David said to Ittai, "Go, and cross over." (Let's go!) Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who were with him crossed over.

- So he brought a group of defectors who had come from Gath.

2Sa 15:23-26 And all the country wept with a loud voice (a great wailing), and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron (at bottom of the Kidron Valley), and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness. [24] There was Zadok also, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar went up until all the people had finished crossing over from the city. [25] Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place." [26] But if He says thus: 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him."

- As they are escaping, Zadok the priest, with the Levites, brought this ark of the covenant with them.
- But David, having even a deeper understanding of the things of God than the priests, said, "Take the ark of the covenant back, and put it back there in the tabernacle. If God so desires, if we find favor with God, He will bring us back and we will see it again. You know, we are not going to lose it. We will see it again, if we find favor with God, and we will see it there in the house of God. But if God does not delight in us, then here I am. Let God do what He will, what seems good to Him!"
- Note David's total commitment of himself to God, for whatever! Even as Ittai committed himself in friendship to David, so David committed himself completely to God! "No matter how it falls LORD, I've just committed myself to You."
- **As I consider my commitment to the Lord and His will, how total is it? Is there any resemblance to that shown here by David, "not my will, but His will be done?"**

2Sa 15:27-28 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer (a prophet, one who sees spiritually)? Return to the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar." [28] See, I will wait in the plains of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."

- To let me know what is going on. I will stay down in the plain of the wilderness, on this side of the Jordan river. We will camp there and wait to hear from you as to what is happening!" So, David is beginning to set up his spy network. "You go back, with your son and the son of Abiathar, Jonathan, and you guys find out how things are going, and then send the boys. They are fast runners. Send them on down, and let me know what is going on."

2Sa 15:29-30 Therefore Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem. And they remained there. [30] So David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up.

- So, this sad procession, going up the Mount of Olives, towards the Judean wilderness. The people were weeping. David had his head covered, and barefooted. Weeping as he went.
2Sa 15:31 *Then someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!"*
- **Speaking of Ahithophel in (Psa 55:12-14)** *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. [13] But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. [14] We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng.* So, David prays vengeance upon them.
- **Again, speaking of Ahithophel in (Psa 41:9)** *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.* Interestingly, though this was a reference by David, of what Ahithophel had done, it is quoted in the New Testament of a prophecy of the betrayal of Jesus Christ by Judas Iscariot. (**Joh 13:18**) *"I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS BREAD WITH ME HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.'"*
- **Speaking of Absalom's rebellion in (Psa 3:1-8)** *Save Me, O My God [1] A Psalm of David When He Fled from Absalom His Son. LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. [2] Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." Selah [3] But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. [4] I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah [5] I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me. [6] I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. [7] 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. [8] Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah*
- Also read Psalms 4, 43, 61, 62, 63, 143.
- (**2Sa 23:1**) *Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; Thus says the man raised up on high, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel:*
2Sa 15:32 *Now it happened when David had come to the top of the mountain, where he worshiped God—there was Hushai the Archite coming to meet him with his robe torn and dust on his head.*
- **Where he worshiped God!** Notice that though David is fleeing, being banished from his kingdom, yet he is so committed to the ways and the will of God, that he worships God there on the top of the Mount of Olives, as he looks back over the city! We remember Jesus, who as He was on the Mount of Olives, looking at Jerusalem, wept over the city! (**Luk 19:41**) *Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,*
- **"David worshiped." How likely would I have stopped and worshipped the Lord under these conditions?**
- **Hushai the Archite.** He is an older man who stays close to David, who counsels David, who is with David, who is called David's friend. Hushai, the Archite, now came to meet him, his own clothes torn, he is mourning over what is taking place. His heart is broken!
2Sa 15:33-34 *David said to him, "If you go on with me, then you will become a burden to me. [34] But if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I was your father's servant previously, so I will now also be your servant,' then you may defeat the counsel of Ahithophel for me.*
- **David prays this prayer for God to defeat the council of Ahithophel.** All of a sudden, out of nowhere, here comes Hushai. David sees the answer to his prayer immediately and recognizes it. He now is going to use him to overthrow the counsel of Ahithophel. The idea was that Hushai would return to Jerusalem, pretending to be loyal to Absalom, while actually functioning as a spy for David. His task was very simple. Whatever Ahithophel says, you say the opposite! Because we are going to need Absalom to do the opposite of whatever Ahithophel would say. Because if they follow Ahithophel's counsel, we will surely be defeated!
2Sa 15:35-37 *And do you not have Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? Therefore it will be that whatever you hear from the king's house, you shall tell to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. [36] Indeed they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son;*

and by them you shall send me everything you hear." [37] So Hushai, David's friend, went into the city. And Absalom came into Jerusalem.

- So David now has set spies, Hushai, Abiathar, Zadok, and the two boys. They are to bring word to David of what goes on.

David and Ziba

2Sa 16:1 When David was a little past the top of the mountain, heading down towards Jericho, there was Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine.

- Ziba had been the servant to king Saul and Mephibosheth. Recognizing food is going to be especially appreciated, Ziba comes to David with a couple of donkeys that were saddled, loaded down with the two hundred loaves of bread, hundred bunches of raisins, and all.

2Sa 16:2-3 And the king said to Ziba, "What do you mean to do with these?" So Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who are faint in the wilderness to drink." [3] Then the king said, "And where is your master's son?" And Ziba said (lying) to the king, "Indeed he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.' "

- Now, Ziba was lying. He was lying about Mephibosheth, as David will later discover. This is just a big lie! But it only added, of course, to David's sorrows. I am sure that to think that "Here is a fellow that I took care of. I gave back to him everything that belonged to his grandfather's house, I let him eat at my table, and he too has turned from me! Yet, that was not the case. Mephibosheth tried to go, but because of his lameness, he could not get with David.

2Sa 16:4 So the king said to Ziba, "Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my lord, O king!"

- Not knowing that Ziba was lying, David offers, "Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." This is all going to turn around a little bit later.

Shimei Curses David

2Sa 16:5-8 Now when King David came to Bahurim (northeastern slope of Mount of Olives), there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came. [6] And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. [7] Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue! [8] The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul (not true for Saul, but was for Uriah), in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

- You are getting what you deserve!

2Sa 16:9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!"

- Abishai was a tough cookie, and not one to be messed with. He was one of David's generals. If David had not restrained him, he would have taken off Shimei's head.

2Sa 16:10 But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' "

- In other words, "How do we know but what God hasn't said, Go out and curse David!" David, you remember has committed himself totally to God! "If I find favor, God will bring me back, if He does not delight in me, then let Him do what He will. Here I am. Let God do it." And David now, is still in that commitment! "Maybe God told him to curse me!"
- David is still feeling guilty over his sin. He, no doubt remembered the words of Nathan, that, "The sword would not depart from your house." Part of the tragic consequences of David's sin. He is still reaping them. David is not striking out in his own defense. He is just accepting everything that comes. "Maybe it is of God, I do not know. But I am not going to defend myself." Wow! So, he restrained Abishai from going over and taking care of Shimei.

2Sa 16:11 And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him.

- My own son is seeking to kill me! How much more this guy. Let him alone! Let him curse! For maybe the Lord has ordered him. Again we see this beautiful account here of just fresh surrender on David's part. It is a terribly difficult trial that he is in, but as each of these things hit, he just freshly surrenders it to the LORD!
- **What wonderful examples of David's total commitment to the LORD! Regardless of the continuing bad news and difficult occurrences, He is steadfast and immovable in His commitment! How encouraging! Wow!**

2Sa 16:12 It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day."

- Later on when David was turning the kingdom over to Solomon, he said, "You know when I left Jerusalem in all that hardship, this guy Shimei came out and cursed me. Take care of him, son." So, David at this point is willing to commit it, but later on, he had Solomon take care of Shimei.

2Sa 16:13 And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust.

- He was close enough. They could hear the cursings; close enough that the stones were landing among them. He was throwing dust in the air.

2Sa 16:14-15 Now the king and all the people who were with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there. Absalom Enters Jerusalem [15] Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him.

- Absalom began his rebellion against David in the city of Hebron. He now enters into the capital that David has vacated and as David is fleeing now to the Judean wilderness, *Ahithophel was with him.* We remember that Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather, who was bitter against David because of his violation of his granddaughter and also the arranged murder of her husband, Uriah.
- **In his bitterness, he has joined with Absalom in his rebellion** against David. They have two entirely different agendas going on, but they are united together in this thing called bitterness. It is a powerful unifying a force for human lives, but it is very dangerous and it is always very destructive. These two men are both going to die before we get done with our chapters this evening.

2Sa 16:16 And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

- Hushai is saying several things to Absalom that could very easily be interpreted as being about his loyalty to David. But because Absalom has such a big ego, he assumes that Hushai is saying all of these things about him, when in fact Hushai, is saying, *Long live the king, long live the king,* concerning David out in the wilderness.

2Sa 16:17-19 So Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" [18] And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, but whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. [19] "Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so will I be in your presence."

- Hushai was a man of respected counsel and advice, A wise man.

2Sa 16:20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give advice as to what we should do."

- Absalom is good at rebellion, revolution, and overthrow. Once he has accomplished his overthrow, he does not have the foggiest idea what to do with what he has gained. There are many people, all good at destroying something, vying with others for the control of it. Once they get the control of it, they do not have any character at all or the necessary wisdom and gifting to be able to lead. That is Absalom all the way.

2Sa 16:21 And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong."

- **In a worldly way Ahithophel is very wise here** on this thing by Absalom going in and laying with his father's wives, which was the absolute highest humiliation you could mete out against a king, It was intended to create an irreparable rift between David and Absalom!
- **It does something very interesting in exposing the character of Ahithophel.** He now has the opportunity to show himself to be the moral superior to David, but he stumbles terribly. He is counseling for the rape of ten women, ten times what David ever did. He now advocates the violation of them in doing to them the very thing that had provoked so much bitterness in him. That is the danger of bitterness.
- **It is worth remembering. When God comes to us and he says, *Vengeance is mine*,** He is not kidding. Only God can mete out a vengeance or a judgment that is proportional to the crime, to the sin that has been committed. The danger for you and I in our bitterness is that we will go many times beyond what the person ever did to us!
- **You cannot control bitterness. If we allow it,** and I speak to myself as well, Any of us that are here right now with bitterness in our heart, if we allow it to live on, it will always work to express itself one day, and when it does, it will go way beyond what you ever intended!
- **Ahithophel has an opportunity to go down in Jewish history,** as one of the greatest leaders, greatest counselors in the history of the nation. Because of his hatred, Ahithophel throws it all away to express his bitterness, becoming ten times the sinner than David ever was. Now he was not in the actions of his counsel the moral superior to David at all. He was much less than David. We will see that he does not repent. He commits suicide.
- **It is easy to look at him and** read his account and his granddaughter and his grandson-in-law, and say, I understand him. I understand his bitterness. I understand his hatred. I understand his desire for vengeance. I understand Ahithophel better than I understand David, at least when David was committing the sin and had not repented.
- **The problem that we can understand is his bitterness! But look where it leads.** Absalom's going to die! Ahithophel is going to die! 20,000 young men of Israel are going to die, and they are going to die under Ahithophel's counsel. We can understand one another's bitterness, but it does not mean we can go down that path. That is why in *(Heb 12:15) looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.* Beware of a root of bitterness. I mean, not even a tree of bitterness or a shrub of bitterness or something that is sprouted above the ground. Bitterness hidden under the ground. Just a root of it. Only you and God are aware of it. He says, Beware of a root of bitterness, because it will end up defiling many. But Absalom's rebellion or his bitterness or Ahithophel's bitterness is going to end up defiling so many people. It is dangerous.
- **You say, Why invest the time in it? Why make a big deal out of it?** You already said it three weeks ago. Why say it again? I will tell you why. Because tonight, someone can go home, not taking the message of the Bible seriously or tomorrow or the next day, harboring that bitterness. And the next thing, we will be reading about you or me in the news, because if you act out bitterness rather than the leading of the Holy Spirit, you will way overreach, finding yourself in a lot of trouble. This man is going to mar his entire legacy in order to take vengeance out on David.
- **Here we see Ahithophel using his God given gift against His will, God restored David as king and Ahithophel and Absalom perished. How careful am I in using the gifts that God has given me, in making sure they are used in accordance with God's will?**

2Sa 16:22-23 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. [23] Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

- **The act of Absalom fulfilled what the Lord had spoken to David, (2Sa 12:11)** *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. [12] For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'*
- **The advice or the counsel of Ahithophel was looked upon as coming from God.** He was a brilliant man, being extremely wise in his strategies and all. And they looked upon his counsel as though it came directly from God.

- **It is interesting that out of these dark hours of David, there came forth a depth of commitment of himself to God**, which preserved David during these difficult times. God often boxes us in. He sort of puts us in a corner, in desperation where we have to just turn to Him, and depend upon Him, **committing** the situation to the Lord. “There’s nothing I can do.”
- **When we come to our limits, to our extremities, where we have to just give up.** “I cannot go any further. There is nothing more I can do. I have had it.” That is the time that God has the opportunity of taking over, and doing His work, and showing His salvation. Now some of us are a little tougher than others. A little stronger willed than others. This works a hardship on us. Because we have to get deeper in the hole, and we have to suffer the misery longer.
- **But God in His love for me, and His desire to bring me to His highest**, often allows me the place of the recognition of my limitations, in order that I might just cast my life, and all of the situations over onto the Lord, that He might show Himself strong and powerful, and that He might deliver, that I might praise Him, and trust Him more!
- **Some of you who have been asking, “God, why have you allowed this to happen to me? Oh God why haven’t you helped me?”** It is because you are still struggling. It is because you are still trying. It is because you are still seeking to manipulate and work things out for yourself. As long as you have got one idea left, God will hang back, until you have exhausted every idea. God lets me get to that place where I have to just say, “Lord, man if I die, I’ve had it Lord, I can’t do it!” And then God steps in, and God works! He lifted me out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay, setting my feet upon the Rock, establishing my goings! To God be the glory! Great things He has done!” God wants to work.
- **Are you are still kicking? Well, give up!** Turn it over to the Lord! **Commit!** Give it to God, let Him work. Just acknowledge you cannot do it. “Your extremities often become the time of God’s opportunity of showing His power, and showing His love, and showing His work.
- **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.”

SUMMARY

- **Ahithophel made a huge mistake in not considering that God had dealt with David.** Do I make that same mistake? Staying in hatred, wanting to take revenge myself, not considering that is the LORD’s job. Here He had already done it to David! ! (2Sa 15:12)
- **Is there any root of bitterness in my life?** I pray to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit to take action and get rid of it, turning all of it to the Lord! (2Sa 15:12)
- **As I consider my commitment to the Lord and His will, how total is it?** Is there any resemblance to that shown here by David, “not my will, but His will be done?” (2Sa 15:26)
- **“David worshiped.”** How likely would I have stopped and worshipped the Lord under these conditions? (2Sa 15:32)
- **What wonderful examples of David’s total commitment to the LORD!** Regardless of the continuing bad news and difficult occurrences, He is steadfast and unmovable in His commitment! How encouraging! Wow! (2Sa 16:11)
- **Here we see Ahithophel using his God given gift against His will**, God restored David as king and Ahithophel and Absalom perished. How careful am I in using the gifts that God has given me, in making sure they are used in accordance with God’s will? (2Sa 16:21)
- **How we have seen David’s commitment to the LORD. (Act 13:22b) ‘I HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL.’** He was a man after God’s heart!
- **LORD! I GIVE YOU MY HEART**

I GIVE YOU MY HEART - Darlene Zschech (4:08/4:11)

This is my desire To honor You Lord, with all my heart I worship You All I have within me I
give You praise All that I adore Is in You

Lord, I give You my heart I give You my soul I live for You alone Every breath that I take
Every moment I'm awake Lord, have Your way in me (2X)

CLOSING PRAYER

- **God bless you and may you see the hand of God, and the work of God in your life** this week, as He does for you, what you cannot possibly do for yourself. As you learn to walk with Him, in trust, and in confidence, committing your ways unto the Lord, knowing that God is able to do exceedingly above all that you might ask or think, and He will not let you fall, but He will keep you, by His power, through His grace. Amen

NEXT WEEK: Study 2 Samuel, Chapters 17-18!