

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This evening we are going to be continuing our study through 2 Samuel.

We are going to be in chapter 15.

**Let's pray...**

For those that haven't been following along the last couple of weeks.

I am going to provide a brief summary of where we are at.

After becoming king of a united Israel, David led Israel into a time of prosperity.

One of the first things that he did as king was to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

He actually desired to build a temple to house the Ark of the Covenant but God told him that it was not his purpose to build Him a home – but that God was still going to continue to bless him.

And God was true to His word and David led the army of Israel to victories over many of the enemies that had been thorn in their sides.

Then the incident with Bathsheba happened.

David committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Bathsheba became pregnant – David tried to cover it up by killing her husband Uriah – he thought he had gotten away with it.

And then his sin was exposed.

David repented and God forgave him.

However, David still had to deal with the consequences of his sin.

And for the past couple of weeks, we have seen some of those consequences.

You see, David had a very dysfunctional family.

David's oldest son – the crown prince – Amnon, who like David couldn't control his lustful desires he had toward his half-sister, Tamar. Amnon knew that his desires went against the word of God, but he still proceeded to rape her.

Absalom, Tamar's brother then waits for the perfect opportunity and then murders Amnon – not because he wanted to avenge what Amnon did to Tamar – but because he saw it as an opportunity to position himself as the next king of Israel.

Absalom flees for three years – David finally agrees to allow him to return – even though Absalom has shown no remorse for killing his half-brother and he has shown no gratitude toward his him for allowing him to return.

**[2Sa 15:1-37 NKJV] 1 After this it happened that Absalom provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.**

Absalom is living in the palace again – he has been restored to David's good graces –

So he begins to act like the crown prince.

He has his limo – he has his secret service going wherever he goes –

All of these things he provided for himself – David did not provide them for him.

He wanted to look the part – he wanted the people to believe that he was the next heir.

Keep in mind, that it was not Absalom's place to choose the next king – it was David's place to choose the next king.

Now, contrast Absalom's behavior here to David.

David was anointed by God to be the next king at a young age.

However, he never raised a hand against Saul to overthrow him.

He simply waited until his time came.

**2 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." 4 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.**

The city gate is the place where all of the business was carried out in the city as well as the place where all the court proceedings took place.

So what Absalom was doing – he was going the city gates early in the morning and would then start to undermine his father's authority.

He would start to bad mouth the way his father ruled over the people and would say things like ,”If I was in charge, things would go so much smoother and you guys would all be much happier”

Like a politician running for office.

And the people started to buy into what Absalom was telling them.

In the previous chapter, it mentioned that Absalom was a very handsome guy with long hair – remember that the Israelites chose Saul as their first king based on his looks –

David is getting older now – people are always looking for change.

**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. 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.' " 9 And the king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron.**

Many bible scholars believe that the forty years that is spoken of here in verse 7 refers to the age of Absalom at this time.

It is hard to imagine Absalom undermining David for forty years.

So Absalom goes to David and tells him I have to leave because I am going to Hebron to pay my vow to the Lord.

Absalom is pretending to be spiritual in an effort to leave the city so that he can initiate his plan to overthrow his father.

And I asked you to make a note of David's response – "Go in peace" and the reason is that these are the last words that David will speak to Absalom.

**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!' " 11 And with Absalom went two hundred men invited from Jerusalem, and they went along innocently and did not know anything.**

Absalom is so cunning that he recruits men to come along and join his rebellion without them even realizing what he is about to do.

**12 Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city--from Giloh--while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.**

I asked you to make a note of the name Ahithophel

Ahitophel was not only David's counselor – he was also Bathsheba's grandfather.

And I believe that he was greatly offended with David – how he committed adultery with his granddaughter and also how he killed Uriah.

So Ahithophel grew bitter and bitter against David – and when Absalom came and told him what he was about to do, it didn't take much for him to change alliances.

And because Ahithophel went to Absalom's side, more people started to join the rebellion.

**13 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." 15 And the king's servants said to the king, "We [are] your servants, [ready to do] whatever my lord the king commands." 16 Then the king went out with all his household after him. But the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house.**

With the forces of Absalom gathered outside the city, David desires to spare Jerusalem from destruction, so he gathers his household and splits – leaving behind 10 concubines to take care of the house and feed the dogs,

A concubine was like a legal mistress and we know that David at this time had at least 6-7 wives. So we see that David was still someone who indulged his passions instead of restraining them in a godly way.

So again, we see the consequences of his sins –

**17 And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts. 18 Then all his servants passed before him; and all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed before the king.**

These 600 men are the same ones that followed David as he was fleeing Saul.

We see here that they still show their loyalty toward even as he is retreating.

**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. 20 "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."**

As David is fleeing Jerusalem, he sees this foreigner among the group that is fleeing with his group

And David tells him – “What are you doing?” You are going to get killed by showing loyalty to me.

Don’t get caught up in all of this – return to Jerusalem and serve whoever is king there

Notice how David is not clinging to the throne – he is leaving it all in God’s hands.

So Ittai responds by telling David that his loyalty is directed toward him.

No matter what the consequences might be.

I see a perfect application for the believer here in the life of Ittai.

No matter what the consequences, he was going to remain faithful to David.

Just like we are to remain faithful to the Lord – the problem that we face today is that we want to jump ship as soon as we see trouble in the horizon –

Our response should be, “Lord – wherever You lead and whatever it means, I am with You”

Turn with me to John 6,

There was a point in Jesus' ministry where people didn't like what Jesus was saying and many of the people that were following Him stopped following Him.

So Jesus question the loyalty of His disciples -

**[Jhn 6:66-69 NKJV] 66 From that [time] many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

**22 So David said to Ittai, "Go, and cross over." Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who [were] with him crossed over. 23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron, and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness.**

East of Jerusalem lies a small valley called the Kidron Valley. And in the middle of this valley runs a small stream that primarily carried the waste of the city.

So in order to flee Jerusalem and go up the Mount of Olives, one would have to cross this stream.

Now, Jesus when he went to pray at the Garden of Gethsemane the night He was betrayed, He too also crossed the Brook Kidron.

But because it was Passover and the Temple was slaughtering thousands of lambs that night, Jesus would have crossed a blood-red river, symbolic of what He was about to endure the next day on the cross.

**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 David is fleeing, the priests show up – and they are carrying the Ark of the Covenant with them and David orders them to return.

And the reason, he is going to leave everything to the Lord.

He is demonstrating complete surrender to Him.

"If God wants me to survive and He brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will once again see the Ark of the Covenant, but if He chooses to destroy me – so be it."

Church, I want to stress that David isn't giving up on life here – he is not going away to die.

And also, he is not playing the victim card here – he is not assuming that he's blameless through this difficulty.

In fact, we get to see David's heart in Psalm 3,

**[Psa 3:1-8 NKJV] 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**

David is simply putting his life in God's hands.

**27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "[Are] you [not] a seer? 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." 29 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. 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!"**

Here in verse 31, David gets word that Ahithophel has betrayed him and is now advising Absalom.

So David prays that their Lord will make Ahithophel give Absalom bad advice.

Turn with me to Psalm 41 – we have another Psalm that David wrote during this time.

**[Psa 41:9 NKJV] 9 Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up [his] heel against me.**

Now, David as he wrote this was speaking prophetically of the betrayal of Jesus Christ by one of His disciples – by Judas.

However, at the same time – he attributes these words to Ahithophel

Because his closest confidant has betrayed him in the same way that Judas betrayed Jesus.

**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.**

As David climbs the Mt of Olives, he can get a panoramic view of all Jerusalem – he has lost everything – so what does he do?

Does he blame God?

No, he proceeds to worship God during one of the darkest periods in his life.

It is easy to worship God when everything seems to be going smoothly – but one of the things we have to ask ourselves is, how is our worship of God affected when we go through troubled times.

Do we stop worshipping because we are so consumed with our problems?

I can't worship God because I am too busy trying to take care of this one thing or

I can't worship God because I am really hurting right now

Or do we turn to God and worship Him because we know that He has everything under control – just like David

**33 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. 35 "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.**

Hushai – was another individual who was loyal to David.

He wanted to follow David but David told him to return so that he can serve under Absalom and by doing so, he would be able to get insight into the council that Ahithophel was going to be giving Absalom and he could then counter that council with bad council.

And that is exactly what is going to happen in the next two chapters.

David had just prayed that the Lord would turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness – and here we have his prayer answered.

Absalom had the people behind him, he had the army and their weapons – but David had prayer.

**Let's pray...**