

# 2 Samuel 15 Commentary

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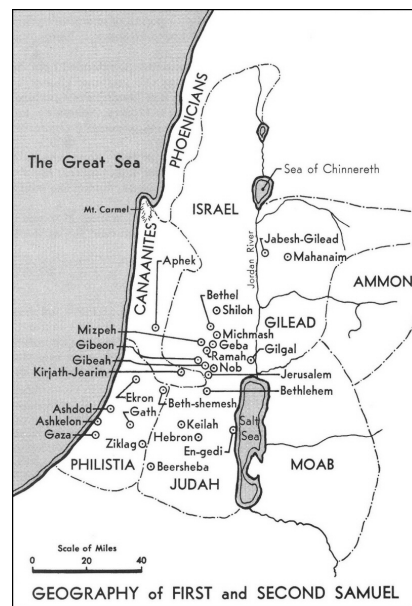
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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[2 Samuel Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

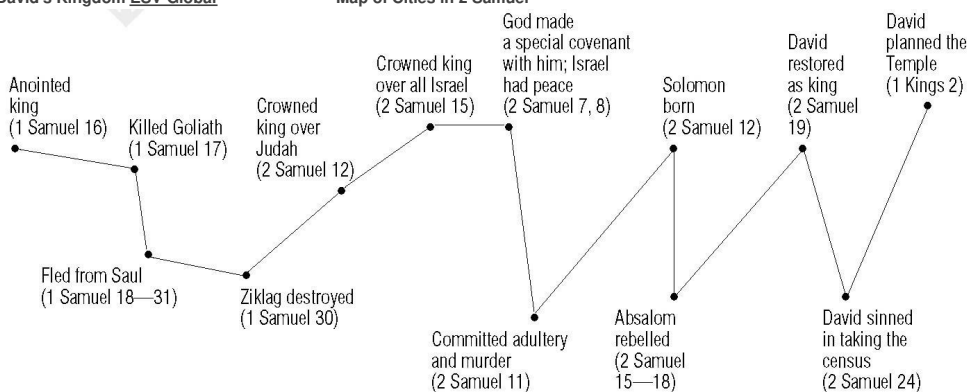
TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES						
1107	1011	971	931	853	722	586

1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings	
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25
1Chr 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36	

**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931 BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931 BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.



Map of David's Kingdom-ESV Global



HIGHS AND LOWS OF DAVID'S LIFE  
Source: [Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#)

**2 Samuel 15:1** Now it came about after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men as runners before him.

- **Absalom:** 2Sa 12:11 De 17:16 1Sa 8:11 1Ki 1:5,33 10:26-29 Ps 20:7 Pr 11:2 Pr 16:18 17:19 Jer 22:14-16
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Samuel 8:11 (SAMUEL'S PROPHECY WAS COMING TRUE) He said, "This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots.

Deuteronomy 17:16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'

## **ABSALOM'S VERSION OF A "PORSCHÉ"**

2 Samuel 15:1-6 gives us a crash course on a man can "steal a nation!" Absalom is the "crown prince" and theoretically next in line to the throne. However in contrast to his father who was willing to wait and never raise a hand against Saul, Absalom is not willing to wait and in fact is willing to raise a hand against his our father, King David!

**Now it came about after this** - After what? After the supposed reconciliation between David and Absalom which was more a facade than a firm covenant. David's halfhearted forgiveness leads to the full blown revolt of chapter 15. During the two years of separation from David, Absalom had grown bitter. This eventually erupted in rebellion, which forced David to flee Jerusalem when Absalom usurped the throne.

**That Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men as runners before him.** - Absalom drives his own Porsche and has a 50 man pit crew follow him and herald that he was coming. Such things were symbols of royalty. Why so many runners? Obviously they would not allow him to drive his "Porsche" fast, but that was not his purpose. His purpose was for show, not speed! Absalom was beginning to show his colors and act like a king in the streets of the city of David. One can hear the children crying out "Here comes Absalom's chariot and runners!" It was almost like a parade with his 50 runners accompanying him. In context he was clearly beginning to gather support for his future act of treason.

**Guzik** - This was Absalom the politician, sensing what the people wanted and knowing how to give them the image of it. Samuel – who anointed Absalom's father – never went around with horses and chariots and an entourage. Samuel traveled on foot – and as a man, Absalom wasn't worthy to be mentioned in the same breath as Samuel.

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**Profile of Absalom** - A father's mistakes are often reflected in the lives of his children. In Absalom, David saw a bitter replay and amplification of many of his own past sins. God had predicted that David's family would suffer because of his sins against Bathsheba and Uriah. David's heart was broken as he realized that God's predictions were coming true. God forgave David, but he did not cancel the consequences of his sin. David was horrified as he saw his son's strengths run wild without the controls God had built into his own life.

By most casual evaluations, Absalom would have made an excellent king, and the people loved him. But he lacked the inner character and control needed in a good leader. His appearance, skill, and position did not make up for his lack of personal integrity.

David's sins took him away from God, but repentance brought him back. In contrast, Absalom sinned and kept on sinning. Although he relied heavily on the advice of others, he was not wise enough to evaluate the counsel he received.

Can you identify with Absalom? Do you find yourself on a fast track toward self-destruction? Absalom wasn't able to say, "I was wrong. I need forgiveness." God offers forgiveness, but we will not experience that forgiveness until we genuinely admit our sins and confess them to God. Absalom rejected his father's love and ultimately God's love. How often do you miss entering back into God's love through the door of forgiveness?

### **Strengths and accomplishments**

- Was handsome and charismatic like his father, David
- Kindly comforted his sister, Tamar, after she had been raped and allowed her to live with him

### **Weaknesses and mistakes**

- Avenged the rape of his sister, Tamar, by killing his half brother Amnon
- Plotted against his father to take away the throne
- Consistently listened to the wrong advice

### **Lessons from his life**

- The sins of parents are often repeated and amplified in their children (**ED**: cf "wind" and "whirlwind/hurricane" in Hosea 8:17)
- A smart man gets a lot of advice; a wise man evaluates the advice he gets
- Actions against God's plans will fail, sooner or later ([Life Application Study Bible -- borrow](#))

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### **QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about sedition?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Sedition is any action or speech designed to incite people to rebel against their lawful governing authorities. Sedition is

usually the beginning of [anarchy](#). There has long been a legal debate in America over what counts as seditious speech and what is covered by the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech. History is replete with examples of Christians disobeying laws that prohibited preaching or teaching the gospel. Was this sedition, and, if so, is all sedition wrong?

In one sense, sedition was the first sin in recorded history when Lucifer ([Satan](#)) led a revolt against the Most High God in heaven and was thrown to the earth, along with [one third of the angels](#) (Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:12–18). Lucifer wanted to be worshiped and obeyed instead of God, and his pride led to sedition. This desire for prominence that incites public revolt is the common thread in most acts of sedition.

The first example of human sedition in the Bible is Numbers 16. God had appointed Moses and Aaron as His spokesmen, but Korah and several other men, moved by jealousy, led a revolt against them. God judged the rebels harshly, causing the ground beneath them to collapse and bury them alive (Numbers 16:31–33). A second wave of sedition came the next morning, when the rest of the Israelite camp grumbled that Moses and Aaron had killed godly men (verse 41). God was angry with His people and sent a plague among them that killed an additional 14,700 people (verses 46–50).

The Jews were (falsely) accused of sedition by those who opposed the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Ezra 4:6–24). The assassination of a king is always an act of sedition. Sometimes the assassination was condemned as a wicked thing, as in the case of the two men who murdered King Ish-Bosheth (2 Samuel 4:5–12); other times, the assassination was heralded as an act of divine deliverance, as in the case of [Ehud](#) the judge (Judges 3:15–30). Before he was king, David was very careful not to act seditiously against King Saul: "The LORD forbid that I should . . . lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the LORD" (1 Samuel 24:6).

**Another example of sedition in the Bible is when King David's son [Absalom](#) conspired to take the kingdom from his father (2 Samuel 15:1–4). Absalom used a cunning tactic in his sedition. He was subtle and won the loyalty of the Israelite people behind his father's back. Through perseverance and deception, Absalom led the people to drive David from the palace (2 Samuel 15:13–14). David fled for his life, hiding in caves, crying out to God, but never losing his love for his son. When Absalom was killed in battle, David grieved (2 Samuel 18:33), but he was restored to his rightful place as king.**

Under Roman rule, sedition was a serious crime. Once, the religious leaders sent spies to Jesus to try to catch Him in His words; their question to Jesus, "Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Luke 20:22), was meant to draw out a seditious statement and so give them occasion to "hand him over to the power and authority of the governor" (verse 20). Jesus did not fall into that trap, but, later, at Jesus' eventual trial before Pilate, the same religious leaders intimated that Jesus was guilty of sedition, shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar" (John 19:12). Ironically, [Barabbas](#), the man whom Pilate released instead of Jesus, was truly guilty of sedition—and murder (Mark 15:7).

The apostle Paul was considered to be a leader of sedition almost everywhere he went. It's true that riots sometimes broke out when he preached, and he suffered the consequences from leaders who believed they were quelling sedition (see Acts 17:5–6; 19:23–41; 21:38), but Paul never taught the overthrow of government. It was the message of the gospel of Christ that caused the turmoil. False charges of sedition were brought against Paul in his trial before Felix, as the Jews' smooth-tongued spokesman said, "We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect" (Acts 24:5). Paul refuted the charge of sedition: "My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. . . . There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance" (verses 12, 18).

We are commanded in Scripture to obey our [governing authorities](#) (Romans 13:1–7; Titus 3:1). Christians are to "if . . . possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18), a command that rules out sedition. To revolt or incite insurrection against the government disregards God's command. Of course, there are times when we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). When man's law contradicts God's law or oppresses the weak and defenseless, we are required to do what's right (Proverbs 24:11; Psalm 41:1; Isaiah 1:17), but outright rebellion against governing authorities is a last resort.

America is seeing an increase of sedition as angry mobs demand what they perceive to be their "rights." [Rioters](#) destroy property and cause harm to the innocent and then attempt to justify their own tyranny by claiming that the government, culture, law enforcement, or another race is oppressing them. Ironically, the very government they decry is protecting their right to speak out. Such sedition is not to be embraced by those who profess to follow Christ. Christians are to let love be the defining trait in all we do (1 Corinthians 13:1), and engaging in insurrection and mob action is not loving. [GotQuestions.org](#) (**Bolding** added)

**2 Samuel 15:2 Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate; and when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And he would say, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."**

- **rose up:** Job 24:14 Pr 4:16 Mt 27:1
- **came:** , Ex 18:14,16,26 1Ki 3:16-28
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ABSALOM BEGINS ACTING LIKE A JUDGE

**Absalom used to rise early** - Absalom was not lazy in his attempt to usurp the throne. To the contrary he was very determined. Notice that the beginnings of Absalom's rebellion were subtle and not easily seen as rebellion, but they would soon bear the rotten fruit of Absalom's fleshly desires. While David's heart would be broken is notable that he wrote several psalms ("exile psalms") during the days of Absalom's rebellion including Psalm 3<sup>±</sup>, Psalm 4<sup>±</sup>, Psalm 25<sup>±</sup>, Psalm 28<sup>±</sup>, Psalm 39<sup>±</sup>; Psalm 41<sup>±</sup>; Psalm 55<sup>±</sup>; Psalm 61<sup>±</sup>, and Psalm 63<sup>±</sup> and some would add Psalm 58<sup>±</sup>, and Psalm 109<sup>±</sup>.

**And stand beside the way to the gate; and when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And he would say, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."** - The gate was the place of judicial action was analogous to the custom in early Israelite history of conducting legal business at the gate of the city, which functioned like our modern city halls (Ru 4:1-11; Ge 23:10; Dt. 22:15; 25:7 Job 29:7). Absalom's choice of the city gate was perfect for two reasons: (1) It was the site of conducting governmental and business transactions because all transactions needed witnesses to be legitimate. (2) Anyone entering or leaving the city had to enter through the gate, so it was highly trafficked which would be great exposure for the handsome, charismatic Absalom, a consummate politician! As noted above Absalom worked hard at his political maneuvering, rising early and standing in the way that led to the gate for judgement. And since Absalom was engaging and personable he was able to easily engage and interact with the people who had lawsuits. Presumably David was aware of this but had no reservations, or at least none that he voiced. Was David being a "passive" father at this point? That is a very reasonable consideration. We know from the interaction with the woman at Tekoa who had a legal case (albeit fictitious), David was still involved in making judgments. Absalom would accost the litigants before they got to the actual gate and like a consummate politician promised them he would decide every suit in their favor. Who wouldn't want a king like that?! And as explained below, these interactions were Absalom's ploy to win over the hearts of the people of Israel.

**Guzik** on suits for the king's judgment - Ancient kings were more than the heads of government, they were also the "supreme court" of their kingdom. If someone believed that a local court did not give them justice, they then appealed to the court of the king, where the king or a representative of the king heard their case.

**Pulpit Commentary** - The gate would be that of the royal palace, where the king gave audience and administered justice. At the gate of the city the elders were the judges, and, though the higher authority of the king may have weakened the action of this citizen court.

**2 Samuel 15:3 Then Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king."**

- **See, your claims are good and right:** Nu 16:3,13,14 Ps 12:2 Da 11:21 2Pe 2:10
- **no man listens to you on the part of the king** 2Sa 8:15 Ex 20:12 21:17 Pr 30:11,17 Eze 22:7 Mt 15:4 Ac 23:5 1Pe 2:17
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ABSALOM INGRATIATES HIMSELF TO THE PEOPLE

**Then Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king"**  
**NLT** - "Then Absalom would say, "You've really got a strong case here! It's too bad the king doesn't have anyone to hear it." Absalom would take their side without any investigation, offering himself as the judge of their grievances, stirring up dissatisfaction with David's regime, criticizing the king's seemingly inadequate provisions for the administration of justice.

**Warren Wiersbe** - He agreed with all of them their complaints were right and should be settled in their favor by the king's court. It was gross flattery of the most despicable kind, but the people loved it. (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** - intercepting the suitors on their way, would ask their city and tribe, and listen to their complaint, and assure them of the goodness of their cause, and lament that, as the king could not hear all causes easily himself, he did not appoint others to aid him in his duties. It was delay and procrastination of which Absalom complained; and as many of the litigants had probably

come day after day, and not succeeded in getting a hearing, they were already in ill humour and prepared to find fault.

**2 Samuel 15:4 Moreover, Absalom would say, "Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me and I would give him justice."**

- **Oh that I:** Jdg 9:1-5,29 Pr 25:6 Lu 14:8-11
- **I would do:** Pr 27:2 2Pe 2:19
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ABSALOM PLOTTING TO OUST KING**

**Moreover, Absalom would say, "Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me and I would give him justice."** NLT - "I wish I were the judge. Then people could bring their problems to me, and I would give them justice!" Who was the supreme (human) judge in Israel? His father king David, so Absalom was indirectly criticizing his father of not properly meting out justice to the people. Like a crafty politician, Absalom made the people promises that he would provide justice. One might agree with Absalom, for David certainly did not seem to show proper justice to Tamar when her brother Amnon raped her! And who was it that administered justice for Tamar, but Absalom, for which he had to flee Israel!

**Wiersbe** - Ps 55 indicate that David was not well, and see Ps 61:6–7. If indeed David was ill, then he was unable to meet the people and hear their problems; and Absalom took advantage of this situation. (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

**2 Samuel 15:5 And when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.**

NLT - And when people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn't let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and embraced them.

- **take hold of him:** Ps 10:9,10 55:21 Pr 26:25
- **and kiss:** 2Sa 14:33
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ABSALOM KISSES UP TO THE PEOPLE**

When you kiss up to someone you are paying false flattery to them in order to get special attention or gain some advantage. Such a person is a hypocritical [sychophant](#).

**And when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him-**

NLT = "when people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn't let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and embraced them." He knew how to flatter people and make them feel good. Like many modern politicians, Absalom sought to show the people that he was one of them, lifting them up when they bowed down to him. Like a good politician he would embrace them and kiss them, continually seeking to portray his image as one of the people. Absalom's kisses remind us of the hypocritical kisses of Judas as he greeted Jesus the night of his betrayal (Mt. 26:47–50; Mk 14:45). He was like politicians who shake hands, hug folks and kiss babies.

**Wiersbe** proposes Absalom was a demagogue - "Newspaper editor H. L. Mencken's definition of a demagogue is rather extreme, but he gets the point across: "One who preaches doctrines he knows to be untrue to men he knows to be idiots." Novelist James Fenimore Cooper expressed it accurately: "One who advances his own interests by affecting a deep devotion to the interests of the people." (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

**2 Samuel 15:6 In this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.**



- **stole:** Pr 11:9 Ro 16:18 2Pe 2:3
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ABSALOM'S PLOY STEALS HEARTS OF ISRAELITES

**In this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel** - Absalom was a master "politician" and was especially effective in claiming to be the judge that they needed.

**Believer's Study Bible** - Absalom was handsome and charming, but also cruel and ambitious. David, even with his faults, was God's chosen leader for Israel, and certainly the greatest king Israel ever had. Absalom was treading on dangerous ground, therefore, when he attempted to undermine David's authority in this way, and it eventually cost him his life. This should be an example to those who would seek to displace God-called leaders from their positions. God can remove those in leadership, if it is needed, without human intervention.

**Pulpit Commentary** - By professing anxiety to devote himself to the hearing and deciding of the people's causes, by flattering each one with the assurance that his case was so good that it needed only a hearing to be decided in his favour, and by his affability, made the more charming and irresistible by his personal beauty, he won the love of the people almost without their knowing how devoted they had become to him.

**Wiersbe** - David had won the hearts of the people through sacrifice and service, but Absalom did it the easy way—and the modern way—by manufacturing an image of himself that the people couldn't resist. David was a hero; Absalom was only a celebrity. (Borrow [Be Restored](#))

**Adam Clarke** - "Absalom appeared to be the real and 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."

**Don Anderson** - This is the way a lot of people get elected to office these days. They have no qualifications other than the fact that they are good at hand shaking and back slapping. And we just love it. We fall for it every time. This is probably how the antichrist will gain his power. He'll be the greatest little back slapper that the world has ever seen.

**Rich Cathers** - Lesson - Watch out for Absalom. He's the one who criticizes the boss. He's the one pushing his own agenda. He's the flatterer. He's wrong.

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**Guzik** has a good summary of why Absalom was successful and why David's popularity was waning...

Absalom knew exactly how to do this.

- He carefully cultivated an exciting, enticing image (chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him).
- He worked hard (Absalom would rise early).
- He knew where to position himself (beside the way to the gate).
- He looked for troubled people (anyone who had a lawsuit).
- He reached out to troubled people (Absalom would call to him).
- He took a personal interest in the troubled person (What city are you from?).
- He sympathized with the person (your case is good and right).
- He never attacked David directly (no deputy of the king to hear you).
- He left the troubled person more troubled (no deputy of the king to hear you).
- Without directly attacking David, Absalom promised to do better. (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.)

Absalom's clever approach made him able to subvert and divide David's kingdom without saying any specific thing that could condemn him. If someone objected Absalom would simply say, "Tell me one specific thing that I have said or done." In fact, Absalom could do all this and say, "I'm helping David to deal with all this discontent" while Absalom was in fact promoting discontent.

David was Israel's greatest king – and Israel became dissatisfied with him and let a wicked, amoral man steal their hearts. There are many reasons why this happened.

- David was getting older.
- David's sins diminished his standing.
- People like change and Absalom was exciting.

- Absalom was very skilled and cunning.
- David had to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, and be rejected like the Son of David would later be rejected.

**2 Samuel 15:7 Now it came about at the end of forty (four) years that Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron.**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:7 καὶ γένητο πάλιν τεσσαρὶς κονταὶ τὴν καὶ ἔπεν Ἀβессαλωμ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ πορεύσομαι ὅτι καὶ ποτε ὥς ἐχθροῦ ἐξημνήτη κύριον Χεβρών

LXE 2 Samuel 15:7 And it came to pass after **forty years**, that Abessalom said to his father, I will go now, and pay my vows, which I vowed to the Lord in Chebron.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:7 And it came to pass after **forty years**, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.

NET 2 Samuel 15:7 After **four years** Absalom said to the king, "Let me go and repay my vow that I made to the LORD while I was in Hebron.

CSB 2 Samuel 15:7 When **four years** had passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron to fulfill a vow I made to the LORD.

ESV 2 Samuel 15:7 And at the end of **four years** Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron.

NIV 2 Samuel 15:7 At the end of **four years**, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD.

NLT 2 Samuel 15:7 After **four years**, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron to offer a sacrifice to the LORD and fulfill a vow I made to him.

NRS 2 Samuel 15:7 At the end of **four years** Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron and pay the vow that I have made to the LORD.

NJB 2 Samuel 15:7 When **four years** had gone by, Absalom said to the king, 'Allow me to go to Hebron and fulfil the vow which I have made to Yahweh;

NAB 2 Samuel 15:7 After a period of four years, Absalom said to the king: "Allow me to go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD.

YLT 2 Samuel 15:7 And it cometh to pass, at the end **offorty years**, that Absalom saith unto the king, 'Let me go, I pray thee, and I complete my vow, that I vowed to Jehovah in Hebron,

GWN 2 Samuel 15:7 **Four years** later Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and keep the vow I made to the LORD.

BBE 2 Samuel 15:7 Now at the end of **four years**, Absalom said to the king, Let me go to Hebron and give effect to the oath which I made to the Lord:

RSV 2 Samuel 15:7 And at the end of **four years** Absalom said to the king, "Pray let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron.

NKJ 2 Samuel 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.

NIRV 2 Samuel 15:7 After Absalom had lived in Jerusalem for **four years**, he went and spoke to the king. He said, "Let me go to Hebron. I want to keep a promise I made to the LORD.

- **four**: 2Sa 13:38 1Sa 16:1,13
- **let me go**: 2Sa 13:24-27
- **pay**: 1Sa 16:2 Pr 21:27 Isa 58:4 Mt 2:8 23:14
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**ABSALOM'S REQUEST TO  
GO TO HEBRON**



**Now it came about at the end of forty** (four) **years that Absalom said to the king** - NLT - "After four years." This reading is clearly corrupted because David himself only reigned 40 years! The original text probably read "four" rather than "forty," The LXX, Syriac, and writings of Josephus (Antiq. 7.9.1) support four years, a period which fits more realistically in the account. Absalom's publicity campaign has been going on for 4 years and he knows that now he has the people's hearts. He then begins the next move of his plan to usurp King David. It has been eleven years since the rape of Tamar. Nine years since the murder of Amnon, six years since he returned to Jerusalem, and four years since he saw the face of David for the first time after being unable to do so for five years. The rebellion now begins.

**TECHNICAL NOTE - NET NOTE** - The [Masoretic Text](#) has here "forty," but this is presumably a scribal error for "four." The context will not tolerate a period of forty years prior to the rebellion of Absalom. The Lucianic Greek recension (τέσσαρα τη, tessara ete), the Syriac Peshitta ('arba' sanin), and Vulgate (post quattuor autem annos) in fact have the expected reading "four years." Most English translations follow the versions in reading "four" here, although some (e.g. KJV, ASV, NASB, NKJV), following the [Masoretic Text](#), read "forty."

**Please let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron** - What a hypocritical assumption of piety. His words may have been to make David think Absalom was "getting religion." He uses the LORD to help set David's mind at ease, for surely David has seen that Absalom is topping the "popularity charts" in the Daily Jerusalem Post! And Hebron was a good place for Absalom to go because it was his birthplace (2Sa 3:2, 3) where he could be assured of a sympathetic ear. As the story unfolds, clearly Absalom is lying to David and instead of paying vows to Yahweh, sends out spies throughout Israel (2Sa 15:10)! **Hebron** ironically was a city of refuge, but only provided refuge for accidental deaths, not the premeditated murder with Absalom committed.

**Wycliffe Bible Commentary** on why Hebron was "ripe" for Absalom to pick - Hebron still bore a grudge against David because he had removed the seat of government to Jerusalem. Also, the allied clans of the Negev, through whose good offices David first mounted the throne, were jealous of the northern tribes—now the dominant partner in the united kingdom—because of their power and influence with the king.

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#### **QUESTION:** [What is the significance of Hebron in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER:** The ancient city of Hebron, today called Al-Khalil in Arabic, was located approximately 20 miles south of present-day Jerusalem in the Judean valley. Hebron is significant in the Bible for a couple of reasons. Hebron is first mentioned in Genesis 13:18 as a place where [Abram](#) (later known as Abraham) traveled after parting company with his nephew [Lot](#). At Hebron the Lord first showed Abram the land that would belong to him and his offspring (Genesis 13:14–17). Later, after the death of King Saul, God told David to go to Hebron, and it became the city where David ruled over Judah for seven years because at that time the Jebusites controlled Jerusalem (2 Samuel 2:1–4, 5:3).

After his wife, Sarah, died, Abraham still lived in Hebron, which belonged to the Hittites (Genesis 23). He wanted to bury Sarah there, so he approached a man named Ephron and asked to buy a cave for a burial site. Abraham was so well-respected among the [Hittites](#) that they offered to give him any cave he desired. But Abraham insisted on paying full price, and he selected an area called Machpelah, owned by a man named Ephron. Again, Ephron tried to give Abraham the cave, but Abraham insisted on paying full price. "So Ephron's field in Machpelah near Mamre—both the field and the cave in it, and all the trees within the borders of the field—was deeded to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city. Afterward, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan. So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site" ([Genesis 23:17–20](#)).

This cave in Hebron is also called Kiriath-Arba, and, later, Abraham was also buried there (Genesis 25:10); and Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob (Genesis 47:29–30), and Leah (Genesis 49:30–32). The cave of Machpelah in Hebron is considered by the Jews to be the second holiest site in all Israel. Today it is under Palestinian control and is known to Jewish inhabitants as the Cave (or Tomb) of the Patriarchs. Muslims refer to it as the Sanctuary of Abraham.

The land around Hebron was part of the allotment Joshua gave to [Caleb](#) when Israel took the Promised Land (Joshua 14:13). Hebron was a reward for Caleb's faithful service and loyalty to the Lord. Caleb probably desired Hebron because it may have contained the "valley of Eschol" from which the spies had brought great clusters of grapes as proof of the land's bounty (Numbers 13:23). Hebron was later designated as a [city of refuge](#) (Joshua 20:1–7).

**Hebron became the capital of Judah, and from there David reigned for seven-and-a-half years. During David's reign in Hebron, Abner, the former commander of Saul's army, took Saul's son Ish-Bosheth across the Jordan River and set him up as king of Israel. Eventually, however, Abner defected to David's side and vowed to bring all of Israel under David's control (2 Samuel 3:8–12). When Joab, David's commander learned of this, he was certain Abner was only spying for Ish-Bosheth (2 Samuel 3:24–25). He also hated Abner for killing his brother Asahel at the battle of Gibeon, so he set out for revenge.**

Joab met Abner in Hebron and pulled him aside under the pretext of having a private conversation. When they were alone, Joab stabbed Abner in the stomach and killed him (2 Samuel 3:27). David was grieved at the news of Abner's death and pronounced a curse on Joab (2 Samuel 3:28–29).

After Ish-Bosheth was assassinated, David meted out justice against the assassins in Hebron; in this way, David's integrity became known throughout all Israel (2 Samuel 4). David was eventually declared Israel's rightful king, and he moved his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:1–5).

David's son [Absalom](#) made Hebron his headquarters while he plotted to steal his father's kingdom (2 Samuel 15:7–9). Absalom had spent time cultivating loyalty from Israel's people, then moved his nefarious plot out from under his father's eye in Jerusalem. He appointed himself king in Hebron, striking fear in David's heart (2 Samuel 15:10, 14). David fled as Absalom moved from Hebron to Jerusalem to take control of the capital. He may have wrongly thought that, since it had worked for David to begin his reign in Hebron, it would also work for him.

Absalom forgot an important truth: David had been anointed by God to rule Israel; Absalom had not. As significant as Hebron was to his ancestors, a cave full of ancestral bones could not replace that anointing. Absalom's brief stint as a self-appointed king of Hebron did not lead to future success, and he died in disgrace (2 Samuel 18:9–14). Regardless of a city or nation's great history, unless God's presence and blessing are on it, it holds no power to bless its inhabitants. [Got Questions](#) (Bolding added)

2 Samuel 15:8 "For your servant vowed a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the LORD shall indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.'"

- **servant:** Ge 28:20,21 1Sa 1:11 16:2 Ps 56:12 Ec 5:4
- **Geshur:** 2Sa 13:37,38 14:23,32
- **I will serve:** Jos 24:15 Isa 28:15 Jer 9:3-5 42:20
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### ABSALOM LIES ABOUT MAKING A VOW

For your servant vowed a vow while I was living at Geshur(map) in Aram, saying, 'If the LORD shall indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD NLT - For while I was at Geshur, I promised to sacrifice to him in Hebron if he would bring me back to Jerusalem.' Absalom is using YHWH's name in a lie! Woe! He is breaking Ex 20:7+ which in effect brought God's curse on him "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for **the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.**" Absalom plays the religious card with King David by recounting that he had made a vow to the Lord that he would worship Yahweh in Hebron if the Lord would take him back to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 15:9 The king said to him, "**Go** in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron.

- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 3:2-3+ **Sons were born to David at Hebron:** his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; 3 and his second, Chileab (HE APPARENTLY DIED YOUNG), by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, **Absalom** the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

### A "GO IN PEACE" THAT WOULD RESULT IN WAR!

The king said to him, "**Go** in peace ([shalom](#))."- The irony of David's command to go in peace is that this would be the last words he spoke to Absalom before he in effect declared war against his father! So much for [shalom](#) in Israel!

So he arose and went to Hebron - This was [music in his ears](#)! Absalom gladly obeyed his father's parting command. His plot was

now fully afoot unbeknownst to somewhat naive David! The Hebronites would surely welcome him with signs like "Welcome home! Hometown boy makes it big!" They would soon see just how big Absalom planned to make it!!!

**2 Samuel 15:10 But 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 is king in Hebron.'"**

- **spies:** 2Sa 13:28 14:30
- **Absalom is king:** 2Sa 19:10 Job 20:5-29 Ps 73:18,19
- **Hebron:** 2Sa 2:1,11 2Sa 3:2,3 2Sa 5:5 1Ch 11:3 12:23,38
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **A KEY VERSE: ABSALOM'S TRUMPET CALL FOR COUP**

A **coup** is a sudden, violent, and unlawful seizure of power from a government. Had Absalom known the Davidic Covenant in 2Sa 7:12-16+, he would have known that his flesh inspired plans were the antithesis of God's inspired plans, and that is a battle which God ALWAYS wins beloved!

**But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel,** These were more than spies for their role was to announce Absalom had become king. Note that Absalom was not just announcing he was king over Judah (location of Hebron) but of all 12 tribes. The fact that David had begun in this region (Hebron in the tribe of Judah) suggests he would have had strong support here. If Absalom received no resistance to his coup here, he knew he would likely be successful in dethroning David.

**saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet ([shophar](#)), then you shall say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron** - Absalom was preparing to forcefully take the throne from David. How ironic that Hebron was the first place his father had been proclaimed as king (2Sa 5:3-5)! Absalom calls for the sounding of the ram's horn which was used for religious and military purposes, and in this case the proclamation of a new king as with Solomon who would be the true king of Israel

1 Kings 1:34 "Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel, and **blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'**

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**Trumpet** (horn, ram's horn)([07782](#)) [shophar/shopar/sopar](#) is masculine noun referring to a trumpet or a ram's horn and is made out of a curved ram's horn. The ram's horn was softened in hot water and then bent and flattened to produce its distinctive shape. The shofar is capable of a variety of tones but cannot play a tune so is used primarily for signals.

At Mt Sinai the trumpet was the signal that Israel could approach the awesome site (Ex 19:16; 19; 20:18). It was used to signal the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:9). Seven trumpets were to be carried before the Ark of the Covenant as the priests and blown on the seventh day after marching around the city seven times (Josh 6:4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 16, 20). The trumpet was used by Gideon and his men to route the enemy (Jdg 7:8, 16, 18-20, 22). In short, these first three uses of the shophar were all associated with miraculous events! The shophar was sounded to announce a new king in Israel (1 Ki. 1:34, 39, 41; 2 Ki. 9:13). The trumpet was sounded at the celebration of God as King over all the earth (Ps. 47:5). The trumpet sound was used to warn of approaching danger (Hos. 5:8; 8:1), and here in Joel, to warn of the dread Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1, 15).

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#### **[SPECIAL TOPIC: HORNS USED BY ISRAEL](#) There are four words in Hebrew associated with horns/trumpets:**

**1. "the ram's horn"** – used as a wind instrument, cf. Jos. 6:5. This same word is used for the ram caught by his horns which Abraham will substitute for Isaac in Gen. 22:13.

**2. "trumpet"** – from Assyrian term for wild sheep (ibex). This is the horn that was used in Exod 19:16,19 at Mt. Sinai/Horeb. #1 and #2 are parallel in Jos. 6:5. It was used to communicate

- a. times to worship (cf. Lev. 25:9)
- b. times to fight (i.e., Jericho was both, cf. Jos. 6:4; Jdgs. 3:27; 6:34; 1 Sam. 13:3; Jer. 4:5; Hos. 5:8)
- c. times for anointing a new king, 1 Kgs. 1:34,39
- d. blown by God, Zech. 9:14

**3. "ram's horn"** – from Phoenician word for ram (cf. Jos. 6:4,6,8,13). It also stands for the Year of Jubilee (cf. Lev.

25:13,28,40,50,52,54; 7:17,18,23,24).

All of these first three seem interchangeable with no distinction intended. The Mishnah (RH 3.2) allowed animal horns from sheep, goats, or antelope, but not from a cow.

4. **"trumpets"** – possibly from the verb "stretch out," implying a straight bone (not curved as the animal horns). These were made of silver (after the shape and form of Egypt). These are used:

- a. with worship rites (cf. Num. 10:2,8,10; Ezra 3:10; Neh. 12:35,41)
- b. for military purposes (cf. Num. 10:9; 31:6; Hosea 5:8)
- c. for royal purposes (cf. 2 Kgs. 11:14)

One of these metal horns is depicted on the Arch of Titus in Rome; also Josephus describes them in Antiq. 3.12.6.

**2 Samuel 15:11 Then two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem, who were invited and went innocently, and they did not know anything.**

- **invited:** 1Sa 9:13 16:3-5
- **went innocently** Ge 20:5 1Sa 22:15 Pr 14:15 22:3 Mt 10:16 Ro 16:18,19
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **ABSALOM TAKES JERUSALEM MEN TO HEBRON**

**Then two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem, who were invited and went innocently, and they did not know anything** - Hebrew literally reads *"being invited and going naively and they did not know anything."* **NLT** = "He took two hundred men from Jerusalem with him as guests, but they knew nothing of his intentions." Why take 200 men from Jerusalem to Hebron all of whom were ignorant of his intentions to overthrow King David? These men were likely leading men in Jerusalem, not just paupers, and their presence would lend credibility to his coming revolt. Absalom was a clever schemer.

**Utlley** - These 200 men did not know what Absalom had planned (i.e., possibly an inauguration dinner). Notice the next phrase, "they did not know anything." These men were innocent of rebellion.

**2 Samuel 15:12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom.**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:12 καὶ πᾶς ἐπεμύνην Ἀβессαλωμ καὶ κλέσεν τὴν Ἀχιτοφελ τὴν Γελωνάων τὴν σμβούλον Δαυιδ καὶ τὴν πλεωσάτο κ Γωλα ν τ θυσι ζειν α τ ν κα γ νετο σ στρεμμα σχυρ ν κα λα ς πορευ μενος κα πολ ς μετ Ἀβессαλωμ

LXE 2 Samuel 15:12 And Abessalom sent to Achitophel the Theconite, the counsellor of David, from his city, from Gola, where he was sacrificing: and there was a strong conspiracy; and the people with Abessalom were increasingly numerous.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

NET 2 Samuel 15:12 While he was offering sacrifices, Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's adviser, to come from his city, Giloh. The conspiracy was gaining momentum, and the people were starting to side with Absalom.

CSB 2 Samuel 15:12 While he was offering the sacrifices, Absalom sent for David's adviser Ahithophel the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh. So the conspiracy grew strong, and the people supporting Absalom continued to increase.

ESV 2 Samuel 15:12 And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept

increasing.

NIV 2 Samuel 15:12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

NLT 2 Samuel 15:12 While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, one of David's counselors who lived in Giloh. Soon many others also joined Absalom, and the conspiracy gained momentum.

NRS 2 Samuel 15:12 While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. The conspiracy grew in strength, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

NJB 2 Samuel 15:12 Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from Giloh his town, and had him with him while offering the sacrifices. The conspiracy grew in strength, since Absalom's supporters grew in number.

NAB 2 Samuel 15:12 Absalom also sent to Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, an invitation to come from his town, Giloh, for the sacrifices he was about to offer. So the conspiracy gained strength, and the people with Absalom increased in numbers.

YLT 2 Samuel 15:12 and Absalom sendeth Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counsellor of David, out of his city, out of Giloh, in his sacrificing sacrifices; and the conspiracy is strong, and the people are going and increasing with Absalom.

GWN 2 Samuel 15:12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, David's adviser, to come from his home in Giloh. Meanwhile, the conspiracy grew stronger, and the number of people siding with Absalom kept getting larger.

BBE 2 Samuel 15:12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, one of David's helpers, from Giloh his town, while he was making the offerings. And the design against David became strong, for more and more people were joined to Absalom.

- **Ahithophel:** 2Sa 15:31 16:20-23 17:14,23
- **David's:** Ps 41:9 55:12-14 Mic 7:5,6 Joh 13:18
- **Giloh:** Jos 15:51
- **while he was offering:** Nu 23:1,14,30 1Ki 21:9,12 Ps 50:16-21 Pr 21:27 Isa 1:10-16 Tit 1:16
- **the people:** Ps 3:1,2 Ps 43:1,2
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Psalm 3:1; 2+ A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me. 2 Many are saying of my soul, "There is no deliverance for him in God." Selah.

Psalm 41:9+ Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

Psalm 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 myself from him. 13 But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; 14 We who had sweet fellowship together Walked in the house of God in the throng.

## ABSALOM SHORES UP THE CONSPIRACY

**And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor** (adviser), **from his city Giloh**, while he was offering the **sacrifices**. Ahithophel defected from being David's counselor, probably because of David's adultery with Bathsheba, his granddaughter (2Sa 11:3; 23:34).

**Utley** - It is uncertain who is **offering sacrifices**. Absalom in some type of a sacrificial inauguration ritual (NRSV, TEV, NET) Ahithophel the counselor; it would be surprising for a non-priest to offer sacrifices (REB)

**NET NOTE** - Heb "Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, the adviser of David, from his city, from Giloh, while he was sacrificing." It is not entirely clear who (Absalom or Ahithophel) was offering the sacrifices.

**David** points out, "The right hand man and advisor of Absalom was Ahithophel a Gilonite. This man had been David's counselor for some years but he evidently had never really supported the throne genuinely, and this is understandable in the light of his relationship to Bathsheba. A comparison of 2 Samuel 11:3 and 2 Samuel 23:34 indicates that Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba. It is not impossible that ever since the violent death of Uriah, Ahithophel had been looking for an opportunity for revenge. With the rebellion of David's son Absalom, his opportunity had arrived."

**And the conspiracy was (grew) strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom - NET** - "The conspiracy was gaining momentum, and the people were starting to side with Absalom." **NIV** = "And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing." This is paralleled in Ps 3:1+ "O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me."

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**Conspiracy** (07195) (**qesher** from **qashar** = to bind, league together, conspire) means conspiracy a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful. Absalom's conspiracy to take the kingdom from his father, David (2Sa 15:12); the conspiracy of the servants of Joash (2Ki. 12:20) and others (2Ki. 14:19; 15:15; 2Ch 25:27). The Israelites had made a conspiracy to sin against the Lord (Jer. 11:9), and the prophets were part of it as well (Ezek 22:25). Qesher refers to the treason of Zimri against Elah (1Ki 16:20). The treason of Jehoiada the priest that overthrew evil Athaliah (2Ki 11:14; 2Ch 23:13). Isa. 8:12, refers to "a conspiracy with treasonable intent". Qesher is translated in 2Sa 15:12 with **sustremma** in the Septuagint, a noun which means anything twisted up together, a body of men, a crowd, a band, a conspiracy.

**Qesher** - conspiracy(10), treason(4) 2 Sam. 15:12; 1 Ki. 16:20; 2 Ki. 11:14; 2 Ki. 12:20; 2 Ki. 15:15; 2 Ki. 15:30; 2 Ki. 17:4; 2 Chr. 23:13; Isa. 8:12; Jer. 11:9; Ezek. 22:25

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**Ahithophel** - Name means "brother of insipidity or impiety," or "my brother is folly") was a man greatly renowned for his sagacity among the Jews. At the time of Absalom's revolt he deserted David (Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14) and espoused the cause of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:12). David sent his old friend Hushai back to Absalom, in order that he might counteract the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Sam. 15:31-37). This end was so far gained that Ahithophel saw he had no longer any influence, and accordingly he at once left the camp of Absalom and returned to Giloh, his native place, where, after arranging his worldly affairs, he hanged himself, and was buried in the sepulchre of his fathers (2Sa 17:1-23). He was the type of Judas (Ps. 41:9). **Utley** adds "This name seems to have been altered by later scribes, who substituted the vowels for bosheth (shame) into the original name. He was a well known wise man. His support for Absalom would give credence to Absalom's rebellion."

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**2 Samuel 15:13 Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."**

- **The hearts:** 2Sa 15:6 3:36 Jdg 9:3 Ps 62:9 Mt 21:9 27:22
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID RECEIVES WORD OF THE CONSPIRACY

**Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom-** Remember that Absalom was very regal in appearance, had been riding his impressive chariot through town and had been serving for at least 4 years as a "surrogate" judge at the city gates, encouraging the people to consider him to be appointed judge over the land (2Sa 15:2-6,4+). In a word, Absalom had **stolen the hearts** of the people. David was nearing 60 and likely was not as "politically motivated" as he was in his younger days (I'm 77 and can identify with that decrement in energy with aging).

**Utley** is probably correct that "David's lack of attention to his position as judge gave Absalom the opportunity to pull the hearts of the common Israelites away from loyalty to David."

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### Beloved Betrayer

2 Samuel 15:13-14 And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee; or else 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."

Betrayal is difficult to accept. Benedict Arnold betrayed his friend George Washington and his country during the Revolutionary War.



As a result, many lives were lost and his name has been synonymous with betrayal ever since. No matter how many noble deeds he accomplished during his life, he will always be remembered as a traitor to his country.

To be betrayed by a friend is hurtful; to be betrayed by a close family member is tragic. Yet that was the situation with David. Of all David's sons, Absalom seemed to have the most going for him. He was a handsome man with long, flowing hair. He was a gifted communicator and a natural born leader (2 Sam. 15:1-6). In addition, he was a man of patience who was able to control himself until the opportune moment (2Sa 13:23; 15:7). But he also allowed bitterness to fester in his heart until he turned against his father. In the end, he not only lost his life but also broke his father's heart (2Sa 18:33).

Everyone has trusts. They may involve our job, our church or our friends. We may disappoint people or even anger them when we betray our responsibilities to these institutions or individuals. But the greatest trusts we bear are those within our family. When we break our commitments to those who are our own flesh and blood, we create wounds that are extremely difficult to heal.

Keep your commitments to your family. Treat them as your commitments to God. If someone in your family feels you have betrayed him, go to that person and ask for forgiveness. ([Back to the Bible](#))

**If commitments are not kept, they should not be made.**

**2 Samuel 15:14 David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, for otherwise none of us will escape from Absalom. Go in haste, or he will overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:14 κα ε πεν Δαυιδ π σιν το ς παις ν α το το ς μετ α το το ς ν Ιερουσαλημ ν στητε κα φ γωμεν τι ο κ σιν μ ν σωτηρ α π προσ που Αβεσσαλωμ ταχ νατε το πορευθ ναι να μ ταχ ν κα καταλ β μ ς κα ξ σ φ μ ς τ ν κακ αν κα πατ ξ τ ν π λιν στ ματι μαχα ρης

LXE 2 Samuel 15:14 And David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, Rise, and let us flee, for we have no refuge from Abessalom: make haste and go, lest he overtake us speedily, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

NET 2 Samuel 15:14 So David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come on! Let's escape! Otherwise no one will be delivered from Absalom! Go immediately, or else he will quickly overtake us and bring disaster on us and kill the city's residents with the sword."

CSB 2 Samuel 15:14 David said to all the servants with him in Jerusalem, "Get up. We have to flee, or we will not escape from Absalom! Leave quickly, or he will soon overtake us, heap disaster on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

ESV 2 Samuel 15:14 Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

NIV 2 Samuel 15:14 Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin upon us and put the city to the sword."

NLT 2 Samuel 15:14 "Then we must flee at once, or it will be too late!" David urged his men. "Hurry! If we get out of the city before Absalom arrives, both we and the city of Jerusalem will be spared from disaster."

NRS 2 Samuel 15:14 Then David said to all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem, "Get up! Let us flee, or there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Hurry, or he will soon overtake us, and bring disaster down upon us, and attack the city with the edge of the sword."

NJB 2 Samuel 15:14 David said to all his retinue then with him in Jerusalem, 'Up, let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom! Leave as quickly as you can, in case he mounts a sudden attack, overcomes us and puts the city to the sword.'

NAB 2 Samuel 15:14 At this, David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem: "Up! Let us take



flight, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Leave quickly, lest he hurry and overtake us, then visit disaster upon us and put the city to the sword."

YLT 2 Samuel 15:14 And David saith to all his servants who are with him in Jerusalem, 'Rise, and we flee, for we have no escape from the face of Absalom; haste to go, lest he hasten, and have overtaken us, and forced on us evil, and smitten the city by the mouth of the sword.'

GWN 2 Samuel 15:14 David told all his men who were with him in Jerusalem, "Let's flee immediately, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Let's leave right away, or he'll catch up to us and bring disaster on us when he massacres the city."

BBE 2 Samuel 15:14 And David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Come, let us go in flight, or not one of us will be safe from Absalom: let us go without loss of time, or he will overtake us quickly and send evil on us, and put the town to the sword.

- **Arise:** 2Sa 19:9 Ps 3:1
- **bring:** , Eze 46:18 Mt 11:12 \*marg: Lu 10:15
- **and strike:** 2Sa 23:16,17 Ps 51:18 55:3-11 137:5,6
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Psalm 3:1-commentary A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me.

### DAVID CALLS FOR SERVANTS TO FLEE

David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "**Arise** and let us flee, for otherwise none of us will escape from Absalom. **Go in haste**, or he will overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword." David didn't inquire of the Lord or ask to bring the ephod. He recognized the danger and immediately commanded his officials, "*Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin upon us and put the city to the sword.*" David fled for his life and for fear of an attack on Jerusalem if he remained at the city. Perhaps he was seeking to avert civil war and bloodshed and destruction of his beloved city. But note that David must have expected to return to Jerusalem, for he left 10 of his concubines to be sweeping the house (2Sa 15:16), but they would end up "sleeping" on the house! (see 2Sa 16:22+ which fulfilled the LORD'S prophecy in 2Sa 12:11+!)

**Bruce Barton** - Why couldn't David just crush this rebellion? There were several reasons he chose to flee: (1) The rebellion was widespread (15:10–13) and would not have been easily suppressed; (2) David did not want the city of Jerusalem to be destroyed; (3) David still cared for his son and did not want to hurt him. We know that David expected to return to Jerusalem soon because he left 10 of his concubines to take care of the palace (15:16). (Borrow [Life Application Study Bible](#))

**Don Anderson** - It is possible that David might not have needed to leave Jerusalem. He might have mustered his men and defended his kingdom at this time. Why do you think he left? I think he had a desire to spare the city because he loved Jerusalem and to spare the innocent who would have suffered the most in warfare. David believed his own sins were the root cause of this trouble, and he looked upon Absalom's rebellion as God's chastening. I think he didn't want to press the issue with Absalom, for it was in David's heart to spare the life of his own son. He did not want harm to come to him. Absalom and his men are only 18 miles south of Jerusalem, so David recognizes that he does not have a lot of time

**THOUGHT-** Had David not escaped from Jerusalem, the ensuing fight might have destroyed both him and the innocent inhabitants of the city. Some fights that we think are necessary may be costly and destructive to those around us. In such cases, it may be wise to back down and save the fight for another day—even if doing so hurts our pride. It takes courage to stand and fight, but it also takes courage to back down when you must for the sake of others. (Borrow [Student's Life Application Bible Notes](#))

2 Samuel 15:15 Then the king's servants said to the king, "**Behold**, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king chooses."

- **Behold:** Pr 18:24 Lu 22:28,29 Joh 6:66-69 15:14

- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID'S SERVANTS REMAIN LOYAL

Then the king's servants said to the king, "**Behold**, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king chooses. Once again you have the loyalty of David's administrative staff. They are ready to do whatever the king chooses.

**2 Samuel 15:16** So the king went out and all his household with him. But the king left ten concubines to keep the house.

- the king: Ps 3:1
- went out and all his household with him Jdg 4:10 1Sa 25:27,42 \*marg:
- ten concubines: 2Sa 12:11 2Sa 16:21,22 20:3 Ro 12:2
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID FLEES BUT LEAVES CONCUBINES

So the king went out and all his household with him. But the king left ten concubines to keep the house- Clearly David expected to return to his palace since he left the concubines to clean house!

**2 Samuel 15:17** The king went out and all the people with him, and they stopped at the last house.

- went : Ps 3:1 \*title Ps 3:2 66:12 Ec 10:7
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Psalm 3:1 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me.

## DAVID LEAVES THE CITY OF DAVID!

The king went out and all the people with him, and they stopped at the last house- **NET** - "pausing at a spot some distance away." **NIV** = "they halted at a place some distance away." The NAB says "they halted opposite the ascent of the Mount of Olives, at a distance." David leaves the city he had conquered and had named after himself.

**Don Anderson** - This leaving of Jerusalem is one of the saddest episodes in the whole Bible, one of the most tragic moments in David's life. His very own son was causing him to run away. Probably the most pathetic thing of all was that deep down in his heart he was conscious that he deserved what he got.

**MacArthur** - Because he wanted to preserve the city he had beautified, and not have a war there, and since he felt that he could find greater support in the country, David left the city with all his household and personal guards.

**2 Samuel 15:18** Now all his servants passed on beside him, all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had come with him from Gath, passed on before the king.

BGT 2 Samuel 15:18 καὶ πῦντες ὁ παῖδες αὐτοῦ ἔρχονται παρὰ γονὸς καὶ πρὸς Χεττι καὶ πρὸς Φελεθι καὶ στησαν πρὸς λαὸς ντὲρ μὲ καὶ πρὸς λαὸς παρεπορε ἐτοχμενος αὐτοῦ καὶ πῦντες ὁ περὶ αὐτὸν καὶ πῦντες ὁ ὄρο καὶ πῦντες ὁ μαχητὰ ἑκατοῖς νῦντες καὶ παρῶσαν πρὸς ἑρχονται καὶ πρὸς Φελεθι καὶ πῦντες ὁ Γεθθαοὶ ἑκατοῖς νῦντες ὁ λθῶντες τοὺς ποσσὶν αὐτῶν κτλ πορευόμενοι πρὸς σωπὸν τοῦ βασιλῆως

LXE 2 Samuel 15:18 And all his servants passed on by his side, and every Chelethite, and every Phelethite, and they stood by the olive tree in the wilderness: and all the people marched near him, and all his court, and all the men of might, and all the men of war, six hundred: and they were present at his side: and every Chelethite, and every Phelethite, and all the six hundred Gittites that came on foot out of Geth, and they went on before the king.

- **Cherethites:** 2Sa 8:18 20:7,23 1Sa 30:14 1Ki 1:38 1Ch 18:17
- **Gittites:** 2Sa 15:19-22 6:10 18:2 1Sa 27:3
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Samuel 27:2+ So David arose and crossed over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath.

### DAVID'S MERCENARY SOLDIERS WENT ALONE

**Now all his servants passed on beside him, all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had come with him from Gath, passed on before the king** - It is notable that many non-Israelites remained loyal to David. The Kerethites were the people responsible for executions in the kingdom. The Pelethites were the royal couriers who carried the mandates of the king to the distance point of the kingdom. The **Gittites** from the Philistine city of Gath were apparently friends David had acquired while hiding from Saul.

**Barton** points out that "Although Israel was supposed to destroy wicked enemies, the nation was to welcome foreigners who came on friendly terms (Ex 23:9+; Dt 10:19+) and to try to show them the importance of obeying God. (Borrow [Life Application Study Bible](#))

The **NLT** translates **Cherethites...Pelethites...Gittites** as "the king's bodyguard" which is fascinating as all these men were from Philistine territory.

**Utley** - This refers to David's mercenary army of his younger days (cf. 1Sa 23:13+; 1Sa 30:9+). These were probably foreign mercenaries and Israeli malcontents who followed David when he settled in Gath of the Philistines. This would be the core of his loyal bodyguard (see note below)

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**CHERETHITES** were a Philistine tribe, which adhered to David, and with the Pelethites **formed his bodyguard** (1Sa 30:14, 16; 2Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7, 23; 1 Ki 1:38, 44; 1 Chr. 18:17; Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5. They were Solomon's escort at his coronation (1Ki 1:38).

**ISBE says CHERETHITES** - ker'-e-thits (kerethim, ha-kerethi; Chelethi "**executioners**," "life-guardsmen"): A people in South Palestine whose territory bordered upon that of Judah (1Sa 30:14). In 1Sa 30:16 this land is apparently identical with that of the Philistines. In Ezek 25:16 the Philistines and the Cherethites are threatened together; while in Zeph 2:5 the Cherethites are evidently the dwellers in "the land of the Philistines," "the inhabitants of the seacoast." It may be taken as certain that the **Cherethites** were a Philistine clan. In conjunction with the Pelethites they are frequently named as forming the guard of David (2Sa 8:18, etc.). It was the custom of many ancient monarchs to have a guard of foreign mercenaries.

**Pelethites** mentioned always along with the Cherethites, and only in the time of David. The word probably means "runners" or "**couriers**," and may denote that while forming part of David's bodyguard, they were also sometimes employed as couriers (2Sa 8:18; 20:7, 23; 1Ki 1:38, 44; 1Ch 18:17). Some, however, think that these are the names simply of two Philistine tribes from which David selected his body-guard. They are mentioned along with the Gittites (2Sa 15:18), another body of foreign troops whom David gathered round him.

**ISBE says GITTITES** - git'-its (gittim, plural of gittiy) were inhabitants of **Gath**. They are mentioned along with the inhabitants of the other chief Philistine cities in Josh 13:3. It would seem that numbers of them emigrated to Judah, for we find **600 of them acting as a bodyguard to David with Ittai at their head** (2Sa 15:18ff; 2Sa 18:2). Obed-edom, to whom David entrusted the ark when he was frustrated in bringing it into the city of David, was a Gittite (2Sa 6:11 f; 1Ch 13:13). The Gittites seem to have been remarkable for their great stature (2Sa 21:19; 1Ch 20:5 ff).

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**QUESTION - [Who were the Cherethites in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Cherethites are mentioned ten times in the Old Testament. (The NIV uses the spelling *Kerethite*, and one time the KJV uses the term *Cherethims* while using *Cherethites* the other times.)

Based on 1 Samuel 30:14, "We had made a raid against the Negeb of the Cherethites and against that which belongs to Judah and against the Negeb of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire" (ESV), it seems that *Cherethites* is another name for the Philistines. It could also be that the Cherethites were a sub-group of Philistines or a people closely associated with the Philistines. Ezekiel 25:16 and Zephaniah 2:5 make the same connection.

The other times that the Cherethites are mentioned are in association with [King David](#). There were people from the surrounding lands who were loyal to David, and he had squads of soldiers/mercenaries who appear to have been organized by nationality. For instance, 2 Samuel 15:18 tells us, "And all his servants passed by him, and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king" (ESV).

So, the Cherethites were a defined group within or closely associated with the Philistines. The Old Testament does not intend to say that all of the Cherethites were loyal to David, but that there were some Cherethites who were loyal to him. Beyond that, the Old Testament simply does not give any more information on the Cherethites. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### Related Resource:

- [What is the significance of Gath in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 15:19** Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why will you also go with us? Return and remain with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile; return to your own place.

- **Ittai:** 2Sa 18:2 Ru 1:11-13
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### DAVID TRIES TO DISSUADE ITTAI FROM FLEEING

**Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why will you also go with us? Return and remain with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile; return to your own place.** David encouraged Ittai to remain with whomever God should appoint king. It is worth noting that clearly David reached out to non-Israelites and Ittai was one of his military leaders. Notice David's blessing on him in 2Sa 15:20.

**Ittai** - A Gittite or native of Gath, one of David's chief captains and most faithful friends during the rebellion of Absalom (2Sa 15:11-22; 2Sa 18:2,4,12). The narrative reveals David's chivalrous and unselfish spirit in time of trouble, as well as the most self-sacrificing loyalty on the part of Ittai. He seems to have but recently left his native city and joined David's army through personal attachment to the king. David rapidly promoted him. Hearing of Absalom's rebellion and approach to Jerusalem, he flees with David. The latter remonstrates, urges him to go back and join Absalom, as he is a foreigner and in exile. His interests are in the capital and with the king; there is no reason why he should be a fugitive and perhaps suffer the loss of everything; it would be better for him, with his band of men, to put himself and them at the service of Absalom, the new king. "Mercy and truth be with thee," says David in his magnanimity. Ittai, with a double oath, absolutely refuses to go back, but will stand by David until the last. Remonstrance being useless, the monarch orders him across the river, doubtless glad that he had such a doughty warrior and faithful friend by his side. On mustering his hosts to meet Absalom, David makes Ittai a chief captain with the intrepid Joab and Abishai. He doubtless did his part in the battle, and as nothing more is said of him it is possible that he fell in the fight.

**2 Samuel 15:20** "You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander with us, while I go where I will? Return and take back your brothers; mercy and truth be with you."

BGT 2 Samuel 15:20 ε χθ ς παραχ γονας κα σ μερον κιν σω σε μεθ μ ν κα γε μεταναστ σεις τ ν τ πον σου  
χθ ς ξ λευς ς σου κα σ μερον μετακιν σω σε μεθ μ ν το πορευθ ναι κα γ πορε σομαι ο ν γ πορευθ  
πιστρ φου κα π στρεψον το ς δελφο ς σου μετ σο κα κ ριος ποι σει μετ σο λεος κα λ θειαν

LXE 2 Samuel 15:20 Whereas thou camest yesterday, shall I to-day cause thee to travel with us, and shalt

thou thus change thy place? thou didst come forth yesterday, and to-day shall I set thee in motion to go along with us? I indeed will go whithersoever I may go: return then, and cause thy brethren to return with thee, and may the Lord deal mercifully and truly with thee.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:20 Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee.

NET 2 Samuel 15:20 It seems like you arrived just yesterday. Today should I make you wander around by going with us? I go where I must go. But as for you, go back and take your men with you. May genuine loyal love protect you!"

CSB 2 Samuel 15:20 Besides, you only arrived yesterday; should I make you wander around with us today while I go wherever I can? Go back and take your brothers with you. May the LORD show you kindness and faithfulness."

ESV 2 Samuel 15:20 You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, since I go I know not where? Go back and take your brothers with you, and may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you."

NIV 2 Samuel 15:20 You came only yesterday. And today shall I make you wander about with us, when I do not know where I am going? Go back, and take your countrymen. May kindness and faithfulness be with you."

NLT 2 Samuel 15:20 You arrived only recently, and should I force you today to wander with us? I don't even know where we will go. Go on back and take your kinsmen with you, and may the LORD show you his unfailing love and faithfulness. "

NRS 2 Samuel 15:20 You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, while I go wherever I can? Go back, and take your kinsfolk with you; and may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you."

NJB 2 Samuel 15:20 You arrived only yesterday; should I take you wandering with us today, when I do not know myself where I am going? Go back, take your fellow countrymen with you, and may Yahweh show you mercy and faithful love!"

NAB 2 Samuel 15:20 You came only yesterday, and shall I have you wander about with us today, wherever I have to go? Return and take your brothers with you, and may the LORD be kind and faithful to you."

YLT 2 Samuel 15:20 Yesterday is thy coming in, and to-day I move thee to go with us, and I am going on that which I am going! -- turn back, and take back thy brethren with thee, -- kindness and truth.'

GWN 2 Samuel 15:20 You came to us just yesterday. Should I make you wander around with me when I don't even know where I'm going? Go back, and take your countrymen with you. May the LORD always show you kindness."

BBE 2 Samuel 15:20 It was only yesterday you came to us; why then am I to make you go up and down with us? for I have to go where I may; go back then, and take your countrymen with you, and may the Lord's mercy and good faith be with you.

RSV 2 Samuel 15:20 You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, seeing I go I know not where? Go back, and take your brethren with you; and may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you."

NKJ 2 Samuel 15:20 "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."

ASV 2 Samuel 15:20 Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us, seeing I go whither I may? return thou, and take back thy brethren; mercy and truth be with thee.

- go up and down: Heb. wander in going, Ps 56:8 59:15 Am 8:12 Heb 11:37,38
- seeing: 1Sa 23:13
- mercy: 2Sa 2:6 Ps 25:10 57:3 61:7 85:10 89:14 Pr 14:22 Joh 1:17 2Ti 1:16-18
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**DAVID BLESSES ITTAI  
A PHILISTINE**

**You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander with us, while I go where I will? Return and take back your brothers** "Shall I make you wander just as I did in the days of King Saul, when I do not know where I am going?"

**Mercy** ([hesed](#)) and **truth** (['emeth](#)) **be with you** - David blesses **Ittai** the **ESV** rendering it "may the LORD show steadfast love ("love-in-kindness") and faithfulness to you."

**Mercy** (02617) [hesed/chesed/heced](#) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, 20-see note, Is 54:5, Je 31:32] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's hesed His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8 trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21). Hesed expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises.

**Truth** (faithfulness, faithfully) (0571) ['emeth](#) from the verb aman = to confirm, support, believe, be faithful) is a feminine noun meaning truth, faithfulness, that which gives complete reliability. It is frequently connected with lovingkindness (Pr 3:3; Hos 4:1, 40:11, 61:7, 69:13, 85:10, 86:14, 89:14, 108:4) and occasionally with other terms such as peace (2Ki 20:19); righteousness (Isa. 48:1); and justice (Ps. 111:7). To walk in truth is to conduct oneself according to God's holy standards (1Ki 2:4; 3:6; Ps. 86:11; Isa. 38:3). Truth was a measure of one's word (1Ki 22:16; Da 11:2) and actions (Ge 24:49; Josh. 2:14). God is the God of truth (Ps 31:5, Ps 57:3, 10, 69:13 = "saving truth"; Ps 71:22, Ps 111:7, 115:1) See God's attribute of [Truth](#). The Lxx often uses [aletheia](#) (or cognates like [alethinos](#)) to translate ['emeth](#). The first use fittingly describes Jehovah's faithfulness (Ge 24:27, cp Ge 32:10, Ps 30:9, Neh 9:33, Ps 54:5, Ps 91:4) Who is described as the "God of truth" (Ps 31:5)

**2 Samuel 15:21 But Ittai answered the king and said, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be."**

- As the Lord: 1Sa 20:3 25:26 2Ki 2:2,4,6 4:30
- surely: Ru 1:16,17 Pr 17:17 18:24 Mt 8:19,20 Joh 6:66-69 Ac 11:23 Ac 21:13 2Co 7:3
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ITTAI'S DOUBLE OATH OF LOYALTY

**But** - Term of contrast. Ittai counters David's blessing to depart.

**Ittai answered the king and said, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be** - Here is a Philistine giving an oath to David **as the LORD lives** which strongly suggesting that he has rejected Dagon and received Yahweh as his LORD, surely a reflection of the impact of David's witness (imperfect as it was) as a man after God's own heart!

**Ittai** the Philistine reminds us of Ruth the Moabitess who said "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. "Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me." (Ru 1:16-17+). David found out who his real faithful friends were in this time of crisis.

**THOUGHT** - Times of personal crisis are when we often discover who our true and faithful friends really are. But these times in the lives of others also show who we are - fair weather friends or faithful friends. Which are you, beloved?

**2 Samuel 15:22 Therefore David said to Ittai, "Go and pass over." So Ittai the Gittite passed over with all his men and all the little ones who were with him.**

- **and all the little ones who were with him.** Sir John Chardin informs us, in a MS. note on this place, that it is usual with the greatest part of the eastern people, especially the Arabs, to carry their whole family with them when they go to war. 2Sa 15:22
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## Related Passage:

Proverbs 18:24NLT There are "friends" who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.)

## DAVID ACQUIESCES TO ITTAI'S OATH TO STAY

**Therefore David said to Ittai, "Go and pass over."** - David changed his mind upon hearing Ittai's loyal oath with a life and death commitment. We need people in our lives that will stay with us when the chips are down like Ittai stayed with David. But even *more important*, we need to be like Ittai, standing with those who need us.

**So Ittai the Gittite passed over with all his men and all the little ones who were with him** - Ittai is so faithful he brings his entire family, his servants, and his army to go with David, even though at this point it looked as if David might be defeated by his son and even die.

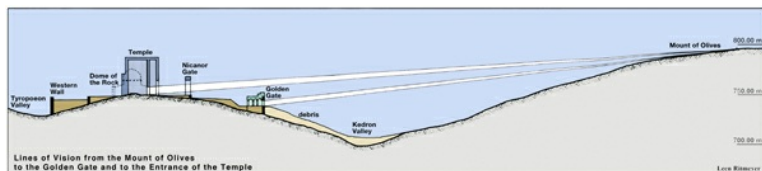
**Alan Redpath** points out, "This little band of foreign men whose hearts had felt the warmth of David's presence, who had seen his patience in the time of suffering, who had walked with him in the days of his rejection, these men who were close to David loved him. Living so close to him made them conscious of his greatness, and his love broke up hardness of their hearts. So in the day of crisis, while other people who were what you might call fairweather followers, were deserting him, this group of men followed him and shared the fellowship of his sufferings." (PDF - [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Illustration** - Stu Weber, pastor of Good Shepherd Community Church in Boring, Oregon, writes,

1967. We were at war with Vietnam. And there I was, at the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was brutal. I can still hear the raspy voice of the sergeant: "We are here to save your lives. We're going to see to it that you overcome all your natural fears. We're going to show you just how much incredible stress the human mind and body can endure. And when we're finished with you, you will be the U.S. Army's best!" Then, before he dismissed the formation, he announced our first assignment. We'd steeled ourselves for something really tough—like running 10 miles in full battle gear or rappelling down a sheer cliff. Instead, he told us to—find a buddy. "Find yourself a Ranger buddy," he growled. "You will stick together. You will never leave each other. You will encourage each other, and, as necessary, you will carry each other." It was the army's way of saying, "Difficult assignments require a friend. Together is better." - Men of Integrity, Vol. 1, no. 1.

**2 Samuel 15:23 While all the country was weeping with a loud voice, all the people passed over. The king also passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness.**

- **all the country:** Ro 12:15
- **Kidron:** 1Ki 2:37 Joh 18:1, Cedron
- **the wilderness:** 2Sa 16:2 Mt 3:1,3 Lu 1:80
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



City of David on left, KIDRON VALLEY in middle, and Mount of Olives on Right

## A SAD DEPARTURE FROM THE CITY OF DAVID

**While all the country was weeping with a loud voice, all the people passed over.** The whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. It is a very sad and tearful procession that leaves the city of Jerusalem and heads for the desert.

**Krummacher** points out, "Soon enough the king was made aware of what was in progress and how in Absalom he had only nourished a serpent in his bosom. The tidings of what he was doing threatened utterly to crush him to the ground; and so much the



more did it oppress him, as in this calamity he was constrained to recognize a new chastisement measured out to him by the Almighty. For this reason, the state of mind into which he was brought by the dreadful tidings was not so much one of anger and revenge, as rather of humiliation and contrition of heart. This grief piercing his heart as with a poisoned sting, David might perhaps have had in recollection, when, at a later period, by the inward operation of the Holy Spirit, he wrote that Messianic psalm, which forms, as it were, a program of the crucifixion of Christ, where he breaks out in these words, "I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

**The king also passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness** In Judea, between Jerusalem and the Jordan River.

**Utley** - "the way of the wilderness" This designation could refer to several roads. From 2 Sam. 17:24,27; 19:32 we know David fled across the Jordan close to Jericho and went to Mahanaim, a city on the [Jabbock River](#) close to the large north-south trans-Jordan highway known as "the [King's Highway](#) ([map](#); [another map showing all major highways through ancient Israel](#))."

**TSK Note** - The brook Kidron, which is but a few paces broad, runs along the valley of Jehoshaphat, east of Jerusalem, to the south-west corner of the city, and then, turning to the south-east, empties itself into the Dead Sea. Like the Ilissus, it is dry at least nine months in the year, being only furnished with water in the winter, and after heavy rains: its bed is narrow and deep, which indicates that it must formerly have been the channel for waters which have found some other, and probably subterraneous course.

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#### Related Resource:

- [What is the Kidron Valley in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Samuel 15:24** Now **behold**, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar came up until all the people had finished passing from the city.

- **Zadok**: 2Sa 15:27,35 8:17 20:25 1Ki 1:8 2:35 4:2-4 1Ch 6:8-12 Eze 48:11
- **bearing**: 2Sa 6:13 Nu 4:15 7:9 Jos 3:3,6,15-17 4:16-18 6:4,6 1Sa 4:3-5,11 1Ch 15:2
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Poles for Carrying Ark on Shoulders

### ZADOK FLEES WITH ARK

Now **behold**, [Zadok](#) also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and [Abiathar](#) came up until all the people had finished passing from the city- It seems the Ark was leading the people out because it was set down until the people had passed it. Note from [the map above](#), the lowpoint is the Kidron Valley which would mark the beginning of the ascent up the Mount of Olives (2Sa 15:30+). Note the phrase they set down the Ark of God indicating now the Levites (Kohathites) were transporting it using the poles on their shoulders! David had learned his lesson with the death of Uzzah!

**Utley** - "Zadok" His name means "just" or "righteous." He is first mentioned in 2Sa 8:17. Here in 2Sa 15:24-29 he and Abiathar (last priest of Eli's line, who was not killed at the slaughter of Nob, cf. 1Sa 22) were both priests and custodians of the ark of the covenant. Both are told to return the ark to the Temple in Jerusalem. "**Abiathar**" The text is uncertain but apparently he stayed behind in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices or a time of prayer for David in the Temple before joining David and Zadok on the route out of town.

#### Related Resource:

- [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ARK OF THE COVENANT](#)

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**Zadok** (means "righteous") Son of Ahitub and one of the two chief priests in the time of David, Abiathar being the other. Zadok was

of the house of Eleazar the son of Aaron, (1Ch 24:3) and eleventh in descent from Aaron. (1Ch 12:28) He joined David at Hebron after Saul's death, (1Ch 12:28) and thenceforth his fidelity to David was inviolable. When Absalom revolted and David fled from Jerusalem, Zadok and all the Levites bearing the ark accompanied him. When Absalom was dead, Zadok and Abiathar were the persons who persuaded the elders of Judah to invite David to return. (2Sa 19:11) When Adonijah, in David's old age, set up for king, and had persuaded Joab, and Abiathar the priest, to join his party, Zadok was unmoved, and was employed by David to anoint Solomon to be king in his room. (1Ki 1:34) For this fidelity he was rewarded by Solomon who "thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord," and "put in Zadok the priest" in his room. (1Ki 2:27,35) From this time, however, we hear little of him. Zadok and Abiathar were of nearly equal dignity. (2Sa 15:35,36; 19:11) The duties of the office were divided, Zadok ministered before the tabernacle at Gibeon, (1Ch 16:39) Abiathar had the care of the ark at Jerusalem.

**Abiathar** (means "father of abundance, or my father excels") was the son of Ahimelech the high priest. He was the tenth high priest, and the fourth in descent from Eli. When his father was slain with the priests of Nob, he escaped, and bearing with him the ephod, he joined David, who was then in the cave of Adullam (1Sa 22:20-23; 23:6). He remained with David, and became priest of the party of which he was the leader (1Sa 30:7). When David ascended the throne of Judah, Abiathar was appointed high priest (1Ch 15:11; 1Ki 2:26) and the "king's companion" (1Ch 27:34). Meanwhile Zadok, of the house of Eleazar, had been made high priest. These appointments continued in force till the end of David's reign (1Ki 4:4). Abiathar was deposed (the sole historical instance of the deposition of a high priest) and banished to his home at Anathoth by Solomon, because he took part in the attempt to raise Adonijah to the throne. The priesthood thus passed from the house of Ithamar (1Sa 2:30-36; 1Ki 1:19; 2:26, 27). Zadok now became sole high priest

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Abiathar in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Along with [Zadok](#), Abiathar served as one of the chief priests during David's reign as king. Abiathar's name means "father of excellence" or "father of abundance" in Hebrew.

Abiathar was the son of Ahimelech, who served as a priest at Nob (1 Samuel 21:1; Mark 2:26) until he and the other priests were murdered by King Saul (1 Samuel 21:1–19). Being the only son of Ahimelech to escape the massacre at Nob, Abiathar fled to David and was promised protection by the future king (1 Samuel 21:20–23).

Because Abiathar served David and acted as priest for all of David's men in hiding, he was made high priest along with Zadok once David began his reign as king (1 Chronicles 15:11). This was a natural role for him to take on, as he had kept the ephod and administered the [Urim and Thummin](#) when David sought direction from the Lord (1 Samuel 23:6; 30:7).

When [Absalom](#) rebelled against his father and attempted to usurp the throne, Abiathar remained loyal to David. Abiathar was among those who fled the capital city with David (2 Samuel 15:24). Zadok and the Levites carried the ark of the covenant, "and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving the city" (2 Samuel 15:24). Although David admired the loyalty and faithfulness of the priests, he ordered them to return to the city with the ark. This proved helpful because they were then able to send word to David about Absalom's plans (2 Samuel 15:27–29; 17:15–16). David was restored to his throne and Abiathar to his priestly office.

Things changed as David's son [Solomon](#) took the throne. Abiathar was not loyal to the new king. [Adonijah](#), another one of David's sons, put himself forward as king with the help of [Joab](#) (one of David's nephews) and Abiathar (1 Kings 1:5, 7). Once the threat from Adonijah was neutralized, King Solomon dealt with the conspirators. One of Solomon's actions was to remove Abiathar from the priestly office. This fulfilled the Lord's word of judgment over [Eli](#) and his descendants, which impacted Abiathar since he was related to Eli (1 Samuel 3:12–14; 1 Kings 2:27). It was only because of the priest's loyal service to David that Solomon did not kill him. Solomon told Abiathar, "Go back to your fields in Anathoth. You deserve to die, but I will not put you to death now, because you carried the ark of the Sovereign LORD before my father David and shared all my father's hardships" (1 Kings 2:26). Zadok replaced Abiathar as priest under Solomon (1 Kings 2:35).

Abiathar lived most of his life in faithful service to the Lord, but he did not finish well. Instead of siding with the rightful king of Israel (2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Kings 1:17), Abiathar assisted one of David's rebellious sons who desired to rule. He allowed earthly matters to become his focus, which cost him the priestly office. Like Abiathar, we can easily get caught up in worldly schemes and lose sight of God's plan. Rather than seeking our own way or chasing what seems politically expedient, we should seek to faithfully follow God. Then, when our time on earth is done, we can state with the apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful" (2 Timothy 4:7NLT). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**2 Samuel 15:25** The king said to [Zadok](#), "**Return** the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the sight of the LORD, then He will bring me back again and show me both it and His habitation.

BGT 2 Samuel 15:25 κα ε πεν βασιλε ς τ Σαδωκ π στρεψον τ ν κιβωτ ν το θεο ε ς τ ν π λιν ν ε ρω χ ριν ν φθαλμο ς κυρ ου κα πιστρ ψει με κα δε ξει μοι α τ ν κα τ ν ε πρ πειαν α τ ς

LXE 2 Samuel 15:25 And the king said to Sadoc, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I should find favour in the eyes of the Lord, then will he bring me back, and he will shew me it and its beauty.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation:

NET 2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's sight he will bring me back and enable me to see both it and his dwelling place again.

CSB 2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king instructed Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, He will bring me back and allow me to see both it and its dwelling place.

ESV 2 Samuel 15:25 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 let me see both it and his dwelling place.

NIV 2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again.

NLT 2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king instructed Zadok to take the Ark of God back into the city. "If the LORD sees fit," David said, "he will bring me back to see the Ark and the Tabernacle again.

NRS 2 Samuel 15:25 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 let me see both it and the place where it stays.

NJB 2 Samuel 15:25 The king then said to Zadok, 'Take the ark of God back into the city. Should I win Yahweh's favour, he will bring me back and allow me to see it and its tent once more.

NAB 2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king said to Zadok: "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find favor with the LORD, he will bring me back and permit me to see it and its lodging.

YLT 2 Samuel 15:25 And the king saith to Zadok, 'Take back the ark of God to the city; if I find grace in the eyes of Jehovah, then He hath brought me back, and shewn me it and His habitation;

GWN 2 Samuel 15:25 The king told Zadok, "Take God's ark back to the city. If the LORD looks favorably on me, he will allow me to come back and see both it and its dwelling place again.

BBE 2 Samuel 15:25 And the king said to Zadok, Take the ark of God back into the town: if I have grace in the eyes of the Lord, he will let me come back and see it and his House again:

- **Return:** 2Sa 12:10,11 1Sa 4:3-11 Jer 7:4
- **He will bring:** Ps 26:8 Ps 27:4,5 Ps 42:1,2 Ps 43:3,4 Ps 63:1,2 Ps 84:1-3,10 Ps 122:1,9 Isa 38:22
- **habitation:** 2Sa 6:17 7:2
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Genesis 6:8 But Noah **found favor** in the eyes of the LORD.

Psalms 26:8 O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house And the place where Your glory dwells.

### DAVID SENDS ARK BACK & TRUSTS IN LORD'S FAVOR

The king said to [Zadok](#), "**Return** the ark of God to the city. King David may have remembered the attempt during the days of Samuel to use the ark as a fetish to force God's intervention (1Sa 4:3). It would seem that the ark is left in Jerusalem for political reasons in order to provide Zadok and Abiathar with their credentials as spies in David's service, their sons providing lines of communication.

If I find favor ([chen](#); Lxx - [charis](#)) in the sight of the LORD, then He will bring me back again and show me both it and His habitation. NET - "If I find favor in the LORD's sight he will bring me back and enable me to see both it and his dwelling place again." David ultimately recognized that the bestowal of God's grace controlled his future. He choose to trust in the LORD and not

lean on his own understanding (Pr 3:5-6+) and specifically not to trust in the the Ark as if it were some divine "rabbit's foot" (as Israel had done in 1Sa 4:3-4+). David is showing us here why he is a man after God's own heart, rightly recognizing that his success was based on finding **favor in the eyes of God**.

**Paul Jorden** points out, "In his depths of despair, David still recognized God was in control of his life. His confidence was in God."

**Walton on if I find favor in the sight of the LORD**- Israelites believed that God's favor or disfavor was evidenced in the good or evil that came into a person's life. David's expulsion from Jerusalem is therefore described almost as a trial by ordeal. The king's speech suggests that he is resigned to leave the course of events in God's hands. Remembering the pronouncement of judgment by Nathan, recorded in 12:10-12, David cannot be certain that these tragic events are not punishment for his crimes (See page 344 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

**Alexander Maclaren** says, "The psalms which probably belong to the period of Absalom's rebellion correspond well with the impression of his spirit gathered from the historical books. Confidence in God, submission to his will, are strongly expressed in them. And we may almost discern a progress in the former respect as the rebellion grows. The flame brighter and brighter in the deepening darkness. We may allocate with a fair amount of likelihood the following psalms to this period: Ps 3, Ps 4, Ps 25, Ps 28, Ps 58, Ps 61, Ps 62, Ps 63, Ps 109, Ps 143.

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**Favor** (grace) ([02580](#)) [chen/hen](#) from verb **chanan** = to favor) means favor (acts which display one's fondness or compassion for another), grace (acts of kindness displaying one's pleasure with an object, which benefit the object of pleasure), acceptance. The idea is that a person finds favor in the sight of another person or acceptance by the person. This word plays a major role in helping us understand God's relationship with sinful men as shown in the first use in Genesis 6:8 with those wonderful words "**And Noah found favor (grace) in the eyes of the Lord.**" The result of this favor was that he was delivered by God from His judgment of the world through the Flood. In a similar vein, the nation of Israel was granted by God to receive "favor in the sight of the Egyptians." (Ex 3:21, 11:3, 12:36). Meanings include - Favor, grace, charm, graciousness, kindness, beauty, pleasantness, attractiveness, loveliness, affectionate regard. **Chen** is translated in the [Septuagint](#) by the Greek word [charis](#) which is usually translated **grace** in the NT.

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Zadok in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Zadok son of Ahitub was a Levite priest during the time of [King David](#). For a long time, he was co-high priest with [Abiathar](#). Zadok was a descendant of Aaron and a leader over his family of Levites (1 Chronicles 27:17).

When [Absalom](#) conspired against his father, David, David was forced to flee from Jerusalem (2 Samuel 15:13–14). Zadok and his son Ahimaaz, and his co-priest Abiathar and his son Jonathan accompanied David, with Zadok leading a procession of Levites who carried the ark of the covenant. As the people exited the city, Zadok's Levites set down the ark, and Abiathar offered sacrifices (verse 24). Once the people had vacated Jerusalem, David ordered Zadok and Abiathar, along with their sons, to return with the ark to Jerusalem (verse 25). Zadok was to send word to David with any news of what was happening in the kingdom under Absalom.

David had also sent his friend Hushai back to Jerusalem to listen in on Absalom's plans, and it was through him that Zadok and Abiathar heard that Absalom planned to seek out David and destroy him and the people who were with him. Hushai, Zadok, and Abiathar sent Ahimaaz and Jonathan to find David. After hiding in a well from Absalom's men, Ahimaaz and Jonathan were able to escape the city and bring the message to David: "Do not spend the night at the fords in the wilderness; cross over without fail, or the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up" (2 Samuel 17:16). David escaped, and it wasn't much longer before David's commander, Joab, killed Absalom (2 Samuel 18:1–15). Heartbroken at the death of his son, David returned to Jerusalem.

Years later, when King David was very old, his son Adonijah set himself up as king, even though David's other son [Solomon](#) was to take the throne at David's death (1 Kings 1:5). Adonijah had some supporters, including Abiathar the priest, but Zadok, Nathan the prophet, and several other important men supported David's choice and opposed Adonijah (verse 8). Nathan told David's wife Bathsheba what Adonijah was planning and advised her to apprise King David of the situation. She did so, and David ordered that Zadok and Nathan immediately take Solomon to Gihon and anoint him as king (verses 32–34).

When Zadok the priest anointed Solomon's head with oil at Gihon, a trumpet was sounded, and all the people assembled began to shout and rejoice (1 Kings 1:39–40). The noise was so great that Adonijah, who was feasting nearby, heard it and wondered what was happening. At that moment, Abiathar's son Jonathan arrived and told Adonijah that Solomon had been anointed king (verses 41–45). Adonijah fled to the temple and grabbed the horns of the altar, begging Solomon to spare his life (verses 50–51). Solomon did so, but Adonijah later renewed his designs on the throne, forcing Solomon to execute him (1 Kings 2:13–25).

Even though Abiathar had spurned King David's wishes and supported Adonijah, Zadok stayed true to David and supported Solomon. Abiathar lost his priesthood as a result, but Zadok was rewarded with a position as one of Solomon's chief officials (1

Kings 4:4) as well as being recognized as the sole high priest.

There are several other men named Zadok in the Bible, but they are only mentioned in one or two verses apiece. They can be found in 1 Chronicles 6:12 (Zadok the descendant of Zadok the priest), 1 Chronicles 9:11 and Nehemiah 11:11 (Zadok the Levite), 2 Kings 15:33 and 2 Chronicles 27:1 (Zadok the father of Jerusha), Nehemiah 3:4 (Zadok the son of Baana), Nehemiah 3:29 (Zadok the son of Immer), Nehemiah 10:21 (Zadok the Israelite leader), Nehemiah 13:13 (Zadok the scribe), and Matthew 1:14 (Zadok, an ancestor of Jesus Christ). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**2 Samuel 15:26 "But if He should say thus, 'I have no delight in you,' behold, here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him."**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:26 καὶ ἐπεὶ οὕτως οὐκ ἠγάπα νου σοῦ ὅτι ἐμὶ ποιεῖτω μοι κατὰ τὸ γὰρ νου φθαλμοῦ σου

LXE 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he should say thus, I have no pleasure in thee; behold, here I am, let him do to me according to that which is good in his eyes.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

NET 2 Samuel 15:26 However, if he should say, 'I do not take pleasure in you,' then he will deal with me in a way that he considers appropriate."

CSB 2 Samuel 15:26 However, if He should say, 'I do not delight in you,' then here I am-- He can do with me whatever pleases Him."

ESV 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."

NIV 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him."

NLT 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he is through with me, then let him do what seems best to him."

NRS 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he says, 'I take no pleasure in you,' here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."

NJB 2 Samuel 15:26 But should he say, "You displease me," here I am: let him treat me as he sees fit."

NAB 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he should say, 'I am not pleased with you,' I am ready; let him do to me as he sees fit."

YLT 2 Samuel 15:26 and if thus He say, I have not delighted in thee; here am I, He doth to me as is good in His eyes.'

GWN 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he says, 'I'm not pleased with you,' let him do to me what he considers right."

BBE 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he says, I have no delight in you: then, here I am; let him do to me what seems good to him.

RSV 2 Samuel 15:26 but if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."

NKJ 2 Samuel 15:26 "But if He says thus: 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him."

ASV 2 Samuel 15:26 but if he say thus, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

- **I have no**, 2Sa 22:20 Nu 14:8 1Ki 10:9 2Ch 9:8 Isa 42:1 62:4 Jer 22:28 32:41 Mt 1:10
- **let**: Jdg 10:15 1Sa 3:18 Job 1:20,21 Ps 39:9
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**DAVID PLACES HIMSELF**

## IN GOD'S HANDS

**But** - Term of contrast. David had just said the LORD may show him favor, but he is not about to be presumptuous. Is this not another mark of a man after God's own heart?

**Utley** makes a good point that "David trusted YHWH's care and purpose. It is so important not to let immediate circumstances distort one's view of God or His character."

**if He should say thus, 'I have no delight in you,' behold, here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him** - NET - "However, if he should say, 'I do not take pleasure in you,' then he will deal with me in a way that he considers appropriate." The **NLT** paraphrases it "But if he is through with me, then let him do what seems best to him." David in essences is saying (praying?) "not my will be done but Thy will be done." He is wholly entrusting his fate into the hands of the LORD.

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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 2 Samuel 15:26 Here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him.**

There is the patience of hope. We love to gird ourselves in the vehemence of our self-will, to go where we choose, to rule the lives of others; but as the years pass and our pride is humbled, the sinews of our strength slackened, and the radiance of early prospects overcast, we are willing to hand ourselves over to our Father, saying, "Behold, here am I; let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him."

It was thus that Isaac was passive in the hands of Abraham. It was thus that Jesus spoke to His Father, "I come to do thy will, O my God." It was thus that the maiden who was blessed above women, answered the angel's message. It was thus that Paul, when urged not to go up to Jerusalem, avowed his willingness to live or die, as the Lord might choose.

God is ever working upon us through circumstances; and, as in the present case, sometimes He overrules the plottings of wicked men to fulfill His Divine purpose. His will is sometimes brought to us in a cup which a Judas holds to our lips. How blessed to be able to say, as we go forth to meet our Father's will, Behold, here am I! and to look beyond the plottings and machinations of our enemies to One who loves us infinitely. Whatever He permits must be good. Good, if driven as an exile from our home; good, if exposed to the revilings of a Shimei; good, if the heart breaks in bitter tears. All must be good which the good Lord permits or appoints. Many were the afflictions of David, but out of them all he was delivered. When he had learned the lesson, the rod was stayed. God did not take away His mercy from him. Thou too art in His hands, and He will certainly bring thee again, and show thee the city and His habitation.

**2 Samuel 15:27 The king said also to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace and your two sons with you, your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:27 κα ε πεν βασιλε ς τ Σαδωκ τ ερε δετε σ πιστρ φεις ε ς τ ν π λιν ν ε ρ ν κα Αχιμαας υ ς σου κα Ιωναθαν υ ς Αβιαθα ρ ο δ ο υ ο μ ν μεθ μ ν

LXE 2 Samuel 15:27 And the king said to Sadoc the priest, Behold, thou shalt return to the city in peace, and Achimaas thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons with you.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

NET 2 Samuel 15:27 The king said to Zadok the priest, "Are you a seer? Go back to the city in peace! Your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan may go with you and Abiathar.

CSB 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Look, return to the city in peace and your two sons with you: your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

ESV 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Go back to the city in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

NIV 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Aren't you a seer? Go back to the city in peace, with your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan son of Abiathar. You and Abiathar take your two sons with you.

NLT 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also told Zadok the priest, "Look, here is my plan. You and Abiathar should return quietly to the city with your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

NRS 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also said to the priest Zadok, "Look, go back to the city in peace, you and



Abiathar, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar.

NJB 2 Samuel 15:27 The king said to Zadok the priest, 'Look, you and Abiathar go back quietly into the city, with your two sons, your own son Ahimaaz and Jonathan son of Abiathar.

NAB 2 Samuel 15:27 The king also said to the priest Zadok: "See to it that you and Abiathar return to the city in peace, and both your sons with you, your own son Ahimaaz, and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

YLT 2 Samuel 15:27 And the king saith unto Zadok the priest, 'Art thou a seer? turn back to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar, your two sons with you;

GWN 2 Samuel 15:27 "Aren't you a seer?" the king asked Zadok the priest. "Go back to the city peacefully, and take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan with you.

BBE 2 Samuel 15:27 The king said further to Zadok the priest, See, you and Abiathar are to go back to the town in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz, your son, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar.

- **a seer:** 2Sa 24:11 1Sa 9:9 1Ch 25:5
- **return:** 2Sa 15:34,36 17:17
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DAVID COMMANDS ZADOK TO RETURN

The king said also to [Zadok](#) the priest, "**Are you not a seer?**" - Some versions see this as a question (NASB, ESV, NIV), with the implication is that Zadok is in fact a "**seer**" a synonym for a prophet, but that may not be the actual intended meaning. Other versions see it as a declaration or even a command - **CSB** = ""**Look**, return to the city in peace."**NLT** = ""**Look**, here is my plan."**NRSV** = ""**Look**, go back to the city in peace."**NJB** = ""**Look**, you and Abiathar go back quietly into the city"

**TECHNICAL NET NOTE** - The Greek tradition understands the Hebrew word as an imperative ("see"). Most Greek manuscripts have δετε (idete); the Lucianic recension has βλέπε (blepe). It could just as well be taken as a question: "Don't you see what is happening?" The present translation takes the word as a question, with the implication that Zadok is a priest and not a prophet (i.e., "seer") and therefore unable to know what the future holds.

**Return to the city in peace** ([shalom](#)) and **your two sons with you, your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar - David has a purpose for these sons to convey the message from his spies in Absalom's court as to what Absalom was planning to do.**

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**Seer** ([07203](#))(**roeh** from **raah** - to see with the eyes) means a seer, an authoritative person who receives and communicates a message from God, perhaps with emphasis on the visual nature of the message.

**Gilbrant** - The meaning of rō'eh is divided into two categories. Once, it refers to a "vision" or "hallucination," apparently induced by drunkenness (Isa. 28:7). All other uses of rō'eh refer to a "seer." Rō'eh, or "seer," was the original title used for a nāvi' (HED # 5204), "prophet" (1 Sam. 9:9, 11). Samuel (1 Sam. 9:18; 1 Chr. 9:22; 26:28) and Hanani (2 Chr. 16:7, 10) were both called "seers." Another synonym for "seer" is chōzeh, and Gad is called both nāvi' and chōzeh (2 Sam. 24:11). In fact, 1 Chr. 29:29 uses all three terms, referring to Samuel the "seer" (rō'eh), Nathan the prophet (nāvi') and Gad the seer (chōzeh) ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

### [SPECIAL TOPIC: PROPHET \(the different Hebrew terms\)](#)

**Robert Culver** - **Seer** (synonym of [nabi](#) "prophet," properly a Qal participle of the verb rā'â, "seeing or one who sees." It is used many times in this general sense. It is used twelve times in the OT, however, **as an alternate for nabi "prophet."** It is always rendered "seer." **Inasmuch as the nābī', spokesman for God, received his message by seeing visions this name was appropriately employed.** It is always used with the article (hārō'eh) except once at II Sam 15:27 where the sense requires the anarthrous form; sometimes it has the holem full, (rō'eh), sometimes defective (rō'eh). Often this name designates a prophet whose name also is given: Samuel, Zadok, Hanani. The name alternates with ḥōzeh, used sixteen times, a word of almost the same meaning. Apparently rō'eh is the earliest name, "For he that is now called a prophet (nābī') was beforetime called a seer (rō'eh, I Sam 9:9). Gad was both nābī' and ḥōzeh (II Sam 24:11). These three terms are used for the OT prophet in a single passage, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the history of Samuel the seer (rō'eh), and in the history of Nathan the prophet (nābī'), and in the



history of Gad the seer (ḥōzeh, I Chr 29:29). “Since, quite obviously, the same individual can be designated by the three terms, what if any, is the distinction between them? ... The word nābī’ ... stressed the objective or active work of the messenger of the Lord in speaking forth God’s Word. The terms rō’eh and ḥōzeh, translated seer on the other hand emphasized the subjective element, namely the receiving of divine revelation by seeing. In Isa 30:10 the rebellious Israelites say to the seers, “See not.” The term prophet emphasized the prophet’s utterances, rō’eh and bos’h indicated his method of receiving divine communication” (Hobart E. Freeman, An Introduction to the OT Prophets, Moody, 1968, pp. 40–41). See also **Man of God** (Deut 33:1; II Kgs 4:9, etc.) and “**servant**” of the Lord (I Kgs 14:18; II Kgs 9:7; 17:13, etc.) and “messenger” of the Lord (Hag 1:13; Mal 1:1). Lexicons list one occurrence (Isa 28:7) of the form rō’eh II, as a noun meaning prophetic vision. Inasmuch as Hebrew participles may be used as nouns and indeed partake of many noun characteristics (Gesenius, Hebrew Grammar, p. 116) it might be best to regard this single occurrence as a present active participle of rā’â meaning here the act of seeing, somewhat as the same form earlier in the chapter (v. 4) means the “one who sees.” (See [TWOT](#))

**Roeh** - 12x/11v - seer(10), seer's(1), seers(1). 1 Sam. 9:9; 1 Sam. 9:11; 1 Sam. 9:18; 1 Sam. 9:19; 2 Sam. 15:27; 1 Chr. 9:22; 1 Chr. 26:28; 1 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 16:7; 2 Chr. 16:10; Isa. 30:10. The related word "roeh" is used in Isa 28:7 "visions."

**2 Samuel 15:28 "See, I am going to wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."**

- 2Sa 15:23 2Sa 16:2 2Sa 17:1,15-16
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 17:15-16+ Then Hushai (**DAVID'S SPY IN ABSALOM'S COURT IN JERUSALEM**) said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, “This is what Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this is what I have counseled. 16 “Now therefore, send quickly (**THEY WOULD SEND WORD VIA THEIR SONS**) and tell David, saying, ‘**Do not spend the night at the fords of the wilderness** but by all means cross over, or else the king and all the people who are with him will be destroyed.’”

Source: Life Application Study Bible - borrow

### DAVID WOULD WAIT FOR SPY'S WARNING TO CROSS JORDAN

**See, I am going to wait at the fords of the wilderness** - NLT= "I will stop at the shallows of the Jordan River" The fords or points for easily crossing the Jordan was where David would first wait and from which they could retreat across the Jordan, if necessary! And it would soon prove necessary!

**Until word comes from you** (pronoun plural referring to Zadok & Abiathar, their sons serving as couriers) **to inform me** - NLT = "Let me know what happens in Jerusalem before I disappear into the wilderness." And word did come from Zadok and Abiathar! We learn in chapter 17 that David would cross the Jordan (and go to [Mahanaim](#) - see map above) when he was warned by Hushai that Absalom was coming to destroy him (2Sa 17:15-16+).

**Walton** - The “**for ds in the desert**” is a reference to the **for ds** near Jericho, about a day’s journey from Jerusalem. Rather than taking the symbolic step of leaving his kingdom entirely, David plans to encamp on the west bank of the Jordan River, about four miles from the mouth of the river as it empties into the Dead Sea. He would rest here and await news of the developments in Jerusalem (see 2Sa 17:16+). (See page 345 in [IVP Background Commentary - OT](#))

**2 Samuel 15:29 Therefore Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and remained there.**

- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### ARK RETURNS

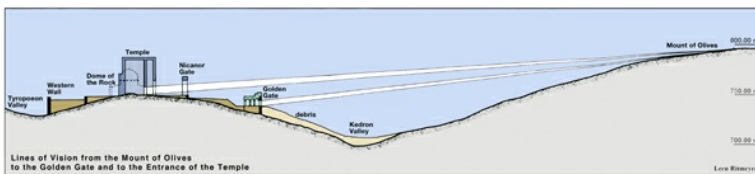
## TO JERUSALEM

**Therefore** - The priests obey their king. Note Absalom has one of David's counselors (Ahithophel) but he has no spiritual advisers in the form of priests.

**Zadok and Abiathar** returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and remained there - Zadok and Abiathar would not be spiritual advisers to Absalom when he set up his throne in Jerusalem, because they remained loyal to King David.

**2 Samuel 15:30** And David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went, and his head was covered and he walked barefoot. Then all the people who were with him each covered his head and went up weeping as they went.

- **the ascent:** Zec 14:4 Lu 19:29,37 21:37 22:39 Ac 1:12
- **Mount of Olives:** Ps 42:3-11 43:1,2,5 Lu 19:41
- **his head was covered:** 2Sa 19:4 Es 6:12 Jer 14:3,4
- **barefoot:** Isa 20:2,4 Eze 24:17,23
- **weeping:** Ps 126:5,6 Mt 5:4 Ro 12:15 1Co 12:26
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



City of David on left, Mount of Olives on Right

## DAVID LEAVES HIS BELOVED CITY WEeping

**And David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went, and his head was covered and he walked barefoot. Then all the people who were with him each covered his head and went up weeping as they went** - David's demeanor (wept...head...covered...barefoot) all spoke of his deep mourning at having to depart the city he loved. The people mourned like their king.

**Utley** - There are several terms and phrases used to describe "mourning." (1) wept, (2) head covered, (3) barefoot, (4) coat torn, (5) dust on the head. See [SPECIAL TOPIC: GRIEVING RITES](#)

**Gehrke** points out, "Once the review of the entire company has been completed, the group begins to climb the Mount of Olives, procession of penitence and deep sorrow and lamentation. The king himself leading the way with feet bare, head covered, and robbed of all his royal glory. Thus stripped of all proud claims, he dares to hope that the Lord will have mercy on him. David's thoughts become clear when he hears the unnerving report that his wisest statesman Ahithophel has gone over to Absalom's side, thus assuring Absalom of the very best advice and increasing the gravity of the situation. David responds to that news with an appeal to the Lord to turn the wisdom of the traitor into foolishness." (See page 301 in his [Commentary on 1-2 Samuel](#))

**TSK** - Mount Olivet, so called from its abounding with olive trees, is situated east of Jerusalem, being separated from it only by the valley of Jehoshaphat and the brook Kidron. Josephus says it is five stadia, i.e., 625 geometrical paces from Jerusalem; and St. Luke (Ac 1:12) says it is a Sabbath day's journey, or about eight stadia distant, i.e., to the summit. It forms part of a ridge of limestone hills, extending from north to south for about a mile; and it is described as having three, or, according to others, four summits; the central and highest of which overlooks the whole of the city, over whose streets and walls the eye roves as if in the survey of a model.

**TSK - head was covered and he walked barefoot** - This custom was only practised by persons in great distress, or when convicted of great crimes. Thus Darius, when informed by Tyrites, the eunuch, that his queen was dead, and that she had suffered no violence from Alexander, covered his head, and wept a long time; then throwing off the garment that covered him, he thanked the gods for Alexander's moderation and justice.

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**QUESTION** - [What happened on the Mount of Olives?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Mount of Olives, sometimes referred to as "Olivet" in the KJV (2 Samuel 15:30; Acts 1:12) or "the mount facing

Jerusalem" (1 Kings 11:7), is a ridge running along the east side of Jerusalem, separated from the city walls by a ravine and the Brook Kidron. The Mount of Olives was the site of many events in the Bible and will be the site of a yet-future fulfillment of prophecy.

In the Old Testament, the Mount of Olives is mentioned once in relation to King David. When David's son Absalom wrested control of Jerusalem, David and his loyal followers fled the city via an eastern route: "David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up" (2 Samuel 15:30). Later, King Solomon used the Mount of Olives for idol worship: "On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites" (1 Kings 11:7). In one of Ezekiel's visions, the prophet sees the glory of the Lord depart from Jerusalem and come to rest "above the mountain east of it" (Ezekiel 11:23).

Jesus made many visits to the Mount of Olives (Luke 21:37). In fact, it was "usual" for Him to go there when in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Luke 22:39). Every time Jesus visited Lazarus and Mary and Martha, He was on the Mount of Olives, for their village of Bethany was situated on the eastern slope. The road from Bethany to Jerusalem lay over Olivet.

The Bible records Jesus' visiting the Mount of Olives three times in the last week of His earthly life, and each time something of significance happened. The first visit is what we call the [triumphal entry](#). The donkey Jesus rode that day was found in the area of Bethany and Bethphage, on the east side of the Mount of Olives (Luke 19:29–30). Then, "when he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen" (verse 37). While still on the Mount of Olives, Jesus looked at the vista in front of Him, wept over the city, and pronounced a judgment against it (verses 41–44).

Jesus' second visit was to deliver what has come to be known as the [Olivet Discourse](#), recorded in Matthew 24:1 —25:46. Parallel passages are found in Mark 13:1–37 and Luke 21:5–36. The content of the Olivet Discourse is Jesus' response to His disciples' question "When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24–25 primarily concerns the coming destruction of Jerusalem, the future tribulation period, and the second coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation. The Discourse includes parables about those who wait for the Master's coming—the wise and faithful servant (Matthew 24:45–51), the five wise virgins (Matthew 25:1–13), and the good servant who uses his resources wisely (Matthew 25:14–30).

Jesus' third visit during the week of [His passion](#) was on the night He was betrayed. That evening began with the Last Supper in Jerusalem and ended in the [Garden of Gethsemane](#) on the Mount of Olives. During that last Passover meal, Jesus washed His disciples' feet and then revealed Judas as the betrayer (John 13:1–30). At the conclusion of the meal, Jesus established the New Covenant and instituted the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26–29; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26). Then He took His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane (literally, "Garden of the Oil-press") located on the western slope of the Mount of Olives. There Jesus prayed in agony as He contemplated the day to come. So overcome by the horror of what He was to experience in the crucifixion the following day, His sweat was "like drops of blood" (Luke 22:44) and God sent an angel from heaven to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43).

After Jesus prayed, Judas Iscariot arrived with a multitude of soldiers, high priests, Pharisees, and servants to arrest Jesus. Judas identified Jesus by the prearranged signal of a kiss, which he gave to Jesus. Trying to protect Jesus, Peter drew a sword and attacked a man named Malchus, the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Jesus rebuked Peter and healed the man's ear, displaying the miraculous power of God (Luke 22:51). Nevertheless, the mob arrested Jesus and took Him to face trial, while the disciples scattered in fear for their lives.

After the trials, crucifixion, and resurrection, Jesus once again stood on the Mount of Olives. During His final post-resurrection appearance, Jesus led His disciples "out to the vicinity of Bethany, [and] he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:50–52). Acts 1:12 specifies that "the vicinity of Bethany" was indeed the Mount of Olives.

Immediately following Jesus' ascension, two angels told the disciples on the Mount of Olives that "this same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). According to the prophet Zechariah, Jesus will return not only in the same way, but to the same *place*. In a prophecy related to the end times, Zechariah declares, "On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south" (Zechariah 14:4). The very location where David wept in defeat and where Jesus was betrayed and rejected will be the place where Jesus returns in triumph over all His enemies. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**G Campbell Morgan - Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#)**

And David went up by the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up.-2 Sam. 15:30.

These were days of poignant sorrow to David. He had brought Absalom back, but had not given him full pardon, and had not allowed him to see his face for two years. Then he had re-admitted him to favour, without any sign of repentance on the part of Absalom. Now at last open rebellion had broken out, and David for the moment was exiled from his city, and from his home. It is indeed a tragic picture, this, of David, Yet in it all, his greatness is manifested. Stanley says of this day in the life of the king that "There is none that combines so many of David's characteristics—his patience, his high-spirited religion, his generosity, his calculation; we miss only his courage. Was it crushed for the moment by the weight of mental grief, or of bitter remorse?" In the 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-centred regrets. For Absalom there was no excuse, but David carried in his own heart ceaselessly the sense of his own past sin. To know more of what was passing in the mind of David in those days, some of the Psalms he then wrote may be consulted. Those which are by common consent connected with the period, are Ps 3, Ps 4, Ps 26, Ps 27, Ps 28, Ps 62, Ps 63. They all breathe the spirit of perfect trust in God, and unbroken confidence in ultimate deliverance, even though they reveal the sense of his suffering. The soul-experience revealed is that which Fred. W. H. Myers expressed in his St. Paul:

*Yes, Thou forgivest, - but with all forgiving  
Canst not renew mine innocence again;  
Make Thou, O Christ, a dying of my living,  
Purge from the sin, but never from the pain!*

**2 Samuel 15:31 Now someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, I pray, make the counsel of Ahithophel foolishness."**

BGT 2 Samuel 15:31 καὶ νηγγλὴ Δαυὶδ λήγοντες καὶ Ἀχιτοφελὶν τοῖς συστρεφομένοις μετὰ Ἀβессαλὼμ καὶ ἐπὶ Δαυὶδ διὰ τὸν δόσον δὲ τὴν βουλὴν Ἀχιτοφελὶ κριεθεῖς σου

LXE 2 Samuel 15:31 And it was reported to David, saying, Achitophel also is among the conspirators with Abessalom. And David said, O Lord my God, disconcert, I pray thee, the counsel of Achitophel.

KJV 2 Samuel 15:31 And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

NET 2 Samuel 15:31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel has sided with the conspirators who are with Absalom. So David prayed, "Make the advice of Ahithophel foolish, O LORD!"

CSB 2 Samuel 15:31 Then someone reported to David: "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." "LORD," David pleaded, "please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!"

ESV 2 Samuel 15:31 And it was told David, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

NIV 2 Samuel 15:31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."

NLT 2 Samuel 15:31 When someone told David that his adviser Ahithophel was now backing Absalom, David prayed, "O LORD, let Ahithophel give Absalom foolish advice!"

NRS 2 Samuel 15:31 David was told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, "O LORD, I pray you, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

NJB 2 Samuel 15:31 David was then informed that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. David said, 'I beg you, Yahweh, turn Ahithophel's advice to folly.'

NAB 2 Samuel 15:31 When David was informed that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom, he said, "O LORD, turn the counsel of Ahithophel to folly!"

YLT 2 Samuel 15:31 and David declared, saying, 'Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom;' and David saith, 'Make foolish, I pray Thee, the counsel of Ahithophel, O Jehovah.'

GWN 2 Samuel 15:31 Then David was told, "Ahithophel is among those conspiring with Absalom." So David prayed, "LORD, make Ahithophel's advice foolish."

BBE 2 Samuel 15:31 And word came to David, saying, Ahithophel is among those who are joined to Absalom. And David said, O Lord, let the wisdom of Ahithophel be made foolish.

- **Ahithophel:** 2Sa 15:12 Ps 3:1 41:9 55:12,14 Mt 26:14,15 Joh 13:18
- **O Lord:** Ps 55:15 109:3
- **make the counsel of Ahithophel foolishness:** 2Sa 16:23 2Sa 17:14,23 Job 5:12 12:16-20 Isa 19:3,11-25 Jer 8:8,9 1Co 1:20 3:18-20 Jas 3:15
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AHITHOPHEL DEFECTS DAVID PRAYS AGAINST HIM

**Now someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom."** - This is a message brought by the sons of Zadok and Abiathar to tell David to continue his flight to safety (2Sa 15:28-29; 2Sa 17:17) This trusted advisor's defection would have been a devastating blow to David, for Ahithophel had been his close counselor and now he would give wisdom to Absalom!

**Gulston** points out, "It was on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, just after he had crossed the Kidron Brook, that David learned of Ahithophel's treachery. Here, many years later, Judas was to betray Jesus." (Borrow [David - Shepherd and King](#))

**And David said, "O LORD, I pray, make the counsel of Ahithophel foolishness-** God answered David's prayer thwarting Ahithophel's counsel in 2 Samuel 17:14+ recording that

"Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The **counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.**" For the LORD had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring calamity on Absalom."

One might also say that David's prayer was answered with Ahithophel's suicide as recorded in 2 Samuel 17:23+

Now when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and arose and went to his home, to his city, and set his house in order, and strangled himself; thus he died and was buried in the grave of his father. (See [SPECIAL TOPIC: SUICIDE](#))

### QUESTION: [Who was Ahithophel in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER:** Ahithophel was originally the counselor of [King David](#), but he later betrayed David, aiding [Absalom](#) in his rebellion to overthrow David's kingship. Ahithophel was well-known for his advice, so much so that "Absalom followed Ahithophel's advice, just as David had done. For every word Ahithophel spoke seemed as wise as though it had come directly from the mouth of God" (2 Samuel 16:23, NLT). Ahithophel had the gift of wisdom.

After Absalom captured Jerusalem, Ahithophel's first piece of advice to him was that he sleep with all his father's concubines—in a public manner—so as to become a "stench in your father's nostrils," and to strengthen his following (2 Samuel 16:21–22). In those days, taking possession of a king's [concubines](#) was a declaration of one's right to the throne. This fulfilled God's word to David after his adultery with Bathsheba: "This is what the Lord says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel'" (2 Samuel 12:11–12). Absalom followed the advice of Ahithophel and performed this wicked act on the top of the palace roof for all Israel to see (2 Samuel 16:22).

When Absalom began his rebellion, King David knew that Ahithophel's advice would be dangerous in the hands of his son. During his escape up the Mount of Olives, David prayed to the Lord that Ahithophel's counsel would be turned into foolishness (2 Samuel 15:31). In answer to David's prayer, when David reached the summit of the Mount of Olives, he met Hushai the Arkite. David sent Hushai back to Absalom in Jerusalem as a secret agent to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:32–37). In Jerusalem Hushai pledged his loyalty to Absalom but began to give advice to work to David's benefit (2 Samuel 17:14).

Absalom asked his counsellors what next step he should take. Ahithophel said to pursue David immediately with an army of twelve thousand men and "attack him while he is weary and weak" (2 Samuel 17:1). Hushai, however, counselled Absalom to delay the attack, form a larger force, and totally annihilate David and his men (verses 7–13). Absalom chose to follow the advice of Hushai and reject Ahithophel's counsel. This was of God, since "the Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom" (verse 14).

When Absalom rejected his advice, Ahithophel's pride was injured, and "he put his house in order and then hanged himself" (2 Samuel 17:23). In following Hushai's advice, Absalom was defeated and received the punishment due his rebellion (2 Samuel 18:6–15).

Because of Ahithophel's betrayal of David, many scholars see him as a type of [Judas Iscariot](#). Just as David's counselor betrayed him, so also did Jesus' disciple Judas betray Him. Similarities between Ahithophel and Judas include the following:

- they both were trusted friends who betrayed their friend (2 Samuel 15:31; Matthew 26:14–16).
- they both sided with the enemy to plot their king's death (2 Samuel 17:1–4; Luke 22:2–6).
- they both hanged themselves once the betrayal was complete (2 Samuel 17:23; Matthew 27:5).

In Psalm 41:9 David laments, "Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me." This is, most immediately, a reference to the treachery of Ahithophel. But it is also a prophetic reference to Judas, as Jesus points out in John 13:18, where He quotes Psalm 41:9. Like Judas, Ahithophel will forever be remembered as a traitor. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about backstabbing?](#)

**ANSWER** - Backstabbing is a betrayal, often verbal, by one posing as a friend. The word is self-explanatory, creating an image of a person who is pleasant to your face but, when your back is turned, stabs you. Backstabbing is cowardly. It lacks the courage of honest confrontation and resorts to slander or passive-aggressive revenge without revealing its motives.

Psalm 55 is David's cry of anguish due to a backstabbing friend. He had enemies enough, but this betrayal hurt the most because it was done by someone he had been close to: "If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were rising against me, I could hide. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship" (Psalm 55:12–13). Many scholars believe David is referring to Ahithophel, David's counselor who turned traitor and joined Absalom's revolt (2 Samuel 15:31; 16:23; 17:23). Whomever David means, the man betrayed him, lied about him, and deserted him when David needed him.

Backstabbers do not walk in love as God commands us to walk (Ephesians 5:2; 2 John 1:6). They look out only for themselves (Philippians 2:4). Backstabbing is hypocrisy in action because the backstabber pretends loyalty to a person while secretly destroying him or his reputation. Backstabbing goes hand-in-hand with slander, gossip, and discord—all of which are condemned in Scripture (Colossians 3:8; 1 Peter 2:1; Romans 1:29; Proverbs 17:4; 2 Corinthians 12:20).

The Bible condemns backstabbing and all it entails. Proverbs 10:18 says, "Whoever conceals hatred with lying lips and spreads slander is a fool." Backstabbers are fools because they are rejecting honesty, love, reconciliation, and kindness. They are defying Jesus' [Golden Rule](#): "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Matthew 7:12). Those with a tendency to backstab others need to closely evaluate their motives and attitudes in light of Scripture's commands. We cannot earn the trust of other people or fully speak into their lives when we are known for backstabbing. [Got Questions](#)

**2 Samuel 15:32 It happened as David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped, that behold, Hushai the Archite met him with his coat torn and dust on his head.**

- **as David was coming to the summit** 2Sa 15:30 1Ki 11:7 Lu 19:29
- **worshipped:** 1Ki 8:44,45 Job 1:20,21 Ps 3:3-5,7 4:1-3 50:15 91:15
- **Hushai:** 2Sa 16:16-19
- **Archite:** Jos 16:2
- **coat rent:** 2Sa 1:2 13:19
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Kings 11:7 (THIS IS AN AMAZING AND TRAGIC VERSE) Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem (MOUNT OF OLIVES), and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon.

### DAVID ON MT OLIVET MEETS HUSHAI

**It happened as David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped - NLT-** "As they reached the spot at the top of the Mount of Olives where people worshiped God, David found Hushai the Arkite waiting for him." **The summit, where God was worshiped** refers to a local high place on the Mount of Olives and thus appears to be orthodox, in contrast to the worship on Mt



Olivet in Solomon's morally declining days (1Ki 11:7 above).

**That [behold](#), [Hushai](#) the Archite met him with his coat torn and dust on his head**

**Gehrke** comments that "The Lord responds almost immediately to David's prayer (in 2Sa 15:31) by sending another helper, [Hushai](#), an elderly court official with the title "The King's Friend" (1Ch 27:33). David urges him to return to thwart the sagacity of Ahithophel, thus planting a spy inside Absalom's council of war. (See page 301 in his [Commentary on 1-2 Samuel](#))

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[Hushai](#) means "quick." He was called "the Archite," [Utle](#) on "[the Archite](#)" This ADJECTIVE cf. 2Sa 15:32; 16:16; 17:5,14; 1Ch 27:33) is used in Josh. 16:2 for a city or region near Bethel in Benjamin. Hushai is called "the king's friend (confidant)" (1Ch 27:33) and proved to be one of David's most faithful and wise counselors (and most successful spies!) When David fled from Jerusalem, on account of the rebellion of Absalom, and had reached the summit of Olivet, he there met Hushai, whom he sent back to Jerusalem for the purpose of counteracting the influence of Ahithophel, who had joined the ranks of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:32, 37; 16:16-18). He was to spy on Absalom and whatever decided on, Hushai was to send word to David through two young men, sons of the priests Zadok and Abiathar (2Sa 15:34-36). Based on Hushai's advice Absalom refrained from immediately pursuing David and because of this delay the cause of Absalom was ruined, for it gave David time to make his escape that night across the Jordan. (2Sa 16:16-17:14) The result was the suicide of Ahithophel and the ultimate defeat and death of Absalom.

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#### QUESTION -[Who was Hushai in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Hushai first appears in the Bible in 2 Samuel 15:32 as part of the story of [Absalom's](#) coup and [David's](#) departure from Jerusalem. Absalom, David's son, had started a rebellion against his father and "stole the hearts of the people of Israel" (2 Samuel 15:6). David and his officials in Jerusalem fled the city for fear of their lives (2 Samuel 15:14). They climbed the Mount of Olives, "weeping as they went" (verse 30). Then, "when David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head" (verse 32).

The [tearing of one's robe](#) was an ancient way of showing mourning, grief, and loss. The dust on Hushai's head added to the expression of grief. It was a day of tragedy, and Hushai mourned on behalf of his king and his nation. Hushai is described as "the king's friend" in 1 Chronicles 27:33 (ESV).

When Hushai met David on [Mt. Olivet](#), the king had an idea. David told Hushai to return to Jerusalem and to work against Absalom on David's behalf. David gave Hushai the words to say to Absalom: "Your Majesty, I will be your servant; I was your father's servant in the past, but now I will be your servant" (2 Samuel 15:34). If Hushai could ingratiate himself, then he could sabotage Absalom's plans.

The ploy to use Hushai as a secret agent was necessary because [Ahithophel](#), one of David's respected counselors, had defected and joined forces with Absalom (2 Samuel 15:31). Ahithophel had double-crossed his king and was giving David's son advice on how to defeat David. When David heard this news, he prayed that God would "turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness" (verse 31). Hushai was the instrument of God through which that prayer would be answered.

Hushai obeyed David's order and returned to Jerusalem, arriving there just as Absalom was entering the city (2 Samuel 15:37). Unbeknownst to Absalom, other men loyal to David were also in the city: the priests [Zadok](#) and [Abiathar](#) were there to act as spies, and the priests' sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, would relay the intel the priests gathered to David (2 Samuel 15:35-36).

When Hushai met Absalom in the capital city, Hushai greeted him with "Long live the king! Long live the king!" (2 Samuel 16:16). Absalom was suspicious at first: "This is the love you show your friend [David]? If he's your friend, why didn't you go with him?" he asked (verse 17). Hushai responded by pouring on the praise, calling Absalom "the one chosen by the Lord, by these people, and by all the men of Israel" (verse 18). Then he told Absalom what David had instructed him to say: "Just as I served your father, so I will serve you" (verse 19). Absalom was satisfied that Hushai meant what he said.

Later, as Absalom was considering the best strategy to defeat his father, he asked the advice of both Ahithophel and Hushai. Ahithophel said, "Choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David. I would attack him while he is weary and weak. I would strike him with terror, and then all the people with him will flee. I would strike down only the king and bring all the people back to you" (2 Samuel 17:1-3). This was actually a sound strategy, but then Hushai was given a chance to thwart the plan.

Hushai presented a different strategy meant to frustrate the wisdom of Ahithophel (see 2 Samuel 15:34). Hushai said that Absalom needed a bigger force to deal with David and his desperate men. Also, Absalom should not focus on killing David but on wiping out David's entire army: "Let all Israel . . . be gathered to you, with you yourself leading them into battle. Then we will attack him wherever he may be found. . . . Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive" (2 Samuel 17:11-12).



Hushai also reminded Absalom that David was well acquainted with the lay of the land and that he was an expert in avoiding capture. If Absalom were to come at him, per Ahithophel's counsel, David would escape. That would place David in a position to strike first, causing Absalom's men to lose heart (2 Samuel 17:7–10).

After hearing both plans, Absalom and his advisors believed that Hushai's counsel was better than Ahithophel's (2 Samuel 17:14). Hushai's advice certainly was better—better for David! Hushai's advice was meant to cause Absalom to delay deploying his army. That delay would provide David the opportunity to strategize and prepare. God was in all of this. Absalom chose the advice of Hushai because “the Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom” (verse 14).

Ahithophel did not take rejection well. “When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself” (2 Samuel 17:23). Meanwhile, Hushai sent word of the battle plan to David through the priestly spies. Hushai's advice to David was, “Do not spend the night at the fords in the wilderness; cross over without fail” (2 Samuel 17:16).

The battle between the forces of David and Absalom took place “in the forest of Ephraim” (2 Samuel 18:6). The forces of Absalom were routed, and the battle “spread out over the whole countryside” (verse 8). Absalom himself was killed by Joab, one of David's commanders (2 Samuel 18:14). The coup was ended.

Through Hushai, God answered David's prayer and preserved David's throne. Absalom made his choices, but God was sovereign all the while. “We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps” (Proverbs 16:9, NLT). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**2 Samuel 15:33 David said to him, "If you pass over with me, then you will be a burden to me.**

- **If you pass over with me:** 2Sa 19:35
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### DAVID'S ADVICE TO HUSHAI

**David said to him, "If you pass over with me, then you will be a burden to me** - The text and context does not explain exactly why David said [Hushai](#) would be a burden to him. The commentaries are very conjectural. We'll ask David in Heaven! This does not seem to be anything personal because clearly he trusts and relies on Hushai, as indicated by the delicate and dangerous task he assigns him in the next verse

**2 Samuel 15:34 "But if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so I will now be your servant,' then you can thwart the counsel of Ahithophel for me.**

- **return:** 2Sa 15:20 Jos 8:2 Mt 10:16
- **as I have been:** 2Sa 16:16-19
- **then you can thwart** 2Sa 17:5-14
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### DAVID'S PLAN TO USE HUSHAI TO CONFUSE COUNSEL

**But** - Term of contrast. Instead of a burden, David will explain how [Hushai](#) could t be a "blessing" to him.

**if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so I will now be your servant,' then you can thwart the counsel of Ahithophel for me.** - David instructs Hushai to return to Jerusalem and ingratiate himself to Absalom, deceptively declaring he would be Absalom's adviser just as he had been David's adviser. Once he had insinuated himself in Absalom's good graces, he would be able to **thwart the counsel of Ahithophel**. This is interesting because in 2Sa 15:31 David petitioned God to frustrate Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom, but now he is sending Hushai who would be a major component in the accomplishment of David's petition. 2 Samuel 17:14 leaves no doubt that Yahweh personally answered David's petition for the text says Absalom declared that “The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the

counsel of Ahithophel." **For the LORD had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel**, so that the LORD might bring calamity on Absalom." Recall Exodus 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain."

**2 Samuel 15:35 "Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? So it shall be that whatever you hear from the king's house, you shall report to Zadok and Abiathar the priests."**

- **you shall report:** 2Sa 17:15,16
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **HUSHAI WOULD SPY AND PASS ON TO THE PRIESTS**

**Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there?** David explains that [Hushai](#) was not alone in carrying out counter espionage in Absalom's court.

**NET NOTE** - Hebrew literally reads "Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be there with you?" The rhetorical question draws attention to the fact that Hushai will not be alone.

**So it shall be that whatever you hear from the king's house, you shall report to Zadok and Abiathar the priests-** Hushai would relay inside information to the priests. Why the priests? Hushai could approach the priests under the guise of spiritual assistance. Presumably by the time Absalom took Jerusalem, **Zadok and Abiathar** and the Ark of God were back in Jerusalem (they had not even crossed the Kidron Valley so were very close and could easily return without suspicion), so Absalom did not know they had initially left with David. Absalom would be [none the wiser](#).

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#### **Related Resource:**

- [What does the Bible say about keeping secrets? - Got Questions](#) ("Scripture does not pronounce any moral judgments for or against the keeping of those secrets e.g., 2 Samuel 15:35–36).

**2 Samuel 15:36 "Behold their two sons are with them there, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them you shall send me everything that you hear."**

- **their two sons:** 2Sa 15:27 17:17 18:19-33
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DAVID SETS UP SPY COURIERS**

**Behold their two sons are with them there, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them you shall send me everything that you hear** - Hebrew = "and you must send by their hand to me every word which you hear." David orchestrates the chain of communication for his spy network and Absalom and his counselors would not be able to "break the code!" This would give David a major military advantage in any confrontation with Absalom's forces.

[Don Anderson](#) points out that "There was a whole line of communications that led to the overthrow of Absalom. Hushai, Zadok, Abiathar, an unknown girl who took a message, Jonathan, Ahimaaz, an unknown woman who his two messengers is a disguised well, and finally the errand boy who ran the message to David."

**2 Samuel 15:37 So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.**

- **friend:** 2Sa 16:16 1Ch 27:33
- **Absalom:** 2Sa 16:15
- [2 Samuel 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **HUSHAI AND ABSALOM BOTH COME TO JERUSALEM**

**So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem-** The order of this passage is important because Hushai was back in place in the royal court when Absalom usurped David's throne, so no suspicions would have been aroused. However, this writer still finds it somewhat surprising that neither Absalom or his counselors who came the 20 miles from Hebron were not the least bit suspicious of Hushai.