

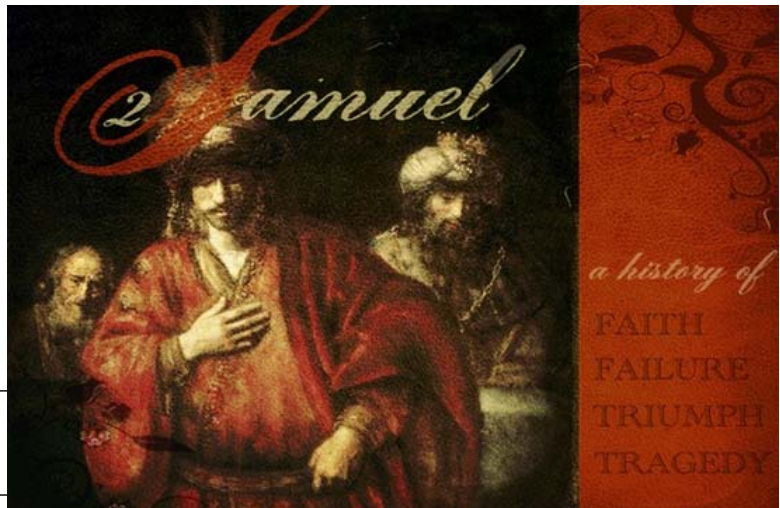
2 Samuel 15:7-37
Richard Cimino
Monday at Metro
August 10, 2009

2 Samuel 15:7-37

Related Topics: David; Absalom; Pride; Rebellion; Pride and Selfishness of Man; Recipe for Division; Ittai; Loyalty; Grace; Conformed to Jesus

We left off at verse 6 of 2 Samuel 15

2 Sam 15:6 So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.



Rising early, everyday, Absalom met the people at the gate of the city. With extreme skill and subtlety he was able to subvert and steal the hearts of David's subjects without saying any specific thing that could condemn him. If accused he could say, "Tell me one specific thing that I have said or done." He was so brilliant that if any accused him he could say, "I'm just helping king David to deal with all this discontent." While in reality Absalom was promoting discontent.

Now that he has stolen the hearts of the people he launches his rebellion.

2 Sam 15:7 7And at the end of four years Absalom said to the king,

Some translations read FORTY years. This may be Absalom's age at the time. It is most likely a minor corruption of the text. Based on the readings in Syriac and Arabic translations, along with Josephus, and some Hebrew manuscripts, it should read four years. Meaning that it is now four years since his return to Jerusalem after three years of exile in Geshur.

Remember, during the first two years David would not see Absalom. Finally, Absalom came before the king and bowed in pretend humility and submission before his father. For the next two years, Absalom pretended submission to king David. While pretending submission he went every day for two years to the city gate where he quietly, patiently and diligently undermined his dad's rule and stole the hearts of the people.

Then this man who pretended submission to God's anointed king pretends to be a worshiper.

2 Sam 15:7 ".....please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron.

Radical – Absalom committed treason under the guise of worship. He knew that the appearance of spirituality could work in his favor.

We don't want to miss this, divisive people almost never see themselves as divisive. They actually see themselves as doing God's work, setting things right for God, and often believe that God's hand is upon them.

PROBLEM:

Many people will only look at the spiritual pretense and image the Absalom sets forth and miss the divisive agenda behind the persons actions.

2 Sam 15:8-9 8For your servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the Lord will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will offer worship to the Lord.' " 9The king said to him, "Go in peace."

A COUPLE OF SAD THINGS HERE:

1. These are David's last words to Absalom — I'm sure he never dreamed these would be his last words to his son. With his last words he wished peace to to a man who had no intentions of peace.
2. Upon hearing his dad say GO IN PEACE Absalom went to carry on the plot to overthrow David's kingdom

2 Sam 15:9 9....So he arose and went to Hebron.

Hebron was the chief city of Judah. David ruled from Hebron as king of Judah (2:3-4). Absalom was born in Hebron(3:2-3). Hebron was far enough to be out of David's immediate observation, but within walking distance for an army.

2 Sam 15:10-11 10But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom is king at Hebron!'" 11With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem who were invited guests, and they went in their innocence and knew nothing.

Notice how clever Absalom is in establishing the appearance of legitimacy! First, Absalom was hoping that most of Israel would see this as succession to the throne, not treason. Second, in order to further the appearance of legitimacy he needed to get others to endorse or appear to endorse his government.

These 200 guys know nothing and he counted on these 200 guys, who were not against David, to at least be silent and give the impression that they were for Absalom.

LESSON:

When the innocent and unknowing are amongst the divisive, their silence is always received as agreement and endorsement.

2 Sam 15:12 12And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh.

WOW! No doubt the offering of sacrifices was for the sake of image, but it would appear that he offered the sacrifices because he was deceived enough to think that God wanted to bless him.

"While he was involved in offering sacrifices."

In our New Testament context it would say, *"While he was going to church and raising his hands and giving tithes."*

While looking and acting spiritual, he sent for the man who would be his top advisor in the stealing of his father's throne.

Ahithophel — Ahithophel was renowned for his wisdom and wise counsel

2 Samuel 16:23 Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

TWO THINGS HERE:

1.) Even wise men can be led into siding with divisive leaders. Listen, the adversary of our Savior and King is always looking for a good recruit to divide the Kingdom of Jesus. And he knows way in advance how to prime you to be one. A perceived wrong (because it was seen through the lens of insecurities) or a legitimate wrong done to you left unforgiven leads to bitterness.

Hebrews 12:15 See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;

You might be carrying on as normal in every other area of your life for years until your adversary the devil needs to push that button and in that moment you will be ready to join the first person who wants to hurt the person who hurt you. And you will be glad to use your gifts and talents in it. And even think you are doing the work of God because obviously God has to be against the man or woman who wronged you!

BY THE WAY — In Ahithophel, David is reaping what he had sown in his sin with Bathsheba. But you see that possibility was not even a consideration at the time of David's sin. David never once thought that the gratifying of his sexual desires would result in an unwanted pregnancy, the murder of a trusted friend (Uriah), a dead baby, and a civil war led by one of his sons (Absalom) who would be counseled by David's own counselor Ahithophel — a grandfather with an axe to grind.

2 Sam 15:12 And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

Once some started coming to Absalom's side, others were encouraged to come. There was an ungodly, demonic synergy at work.

We have the advantage of hindsight (20-20) and we know that all of these people were rallying to the wrong man and the wrong cause. We need to remember that these people are just acting like people. Here's the recipe for division and rebellion.

- Take one Absalom, a master of manipulation and was driven to employ his every skill to achieve his self-serving / self-advancing agenda.
- Add one Ahithophel, a bright, but bitter man
- Add People, who are by nature forgetful and fickle (Hosanna >>> Crucify Him)
- And voila! — you have a divided kingdom!

David's Escape:

2 Sam 15:13-18 13And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom." 14Then 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." 15And the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides." 16So the king went out, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. 17And the king went out, and all the people after him. And they halted at the last house. 18And 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.

KEY OBSERVATION:

The Holy Spirit uses the phrase "the king('s)" six times in this passage, because He wants us to see David as

the legitimate king and Absalom as a treacherous traitor.

Notice in verse 14 how David knew that Absalom was a ruthless man who valued power over principle and power over people.

Absalom had no concern for casualties or carnage. His only concern was for a crown.

By contrast, David never sought a crown, he was a shepherd king who was concerned for the people. He didn't want the city of Jerusalem to become a battleground, so he fled the city.

2 Sam 15:18 18...all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites

These men were David's personal bodyguard.

and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath,

The Gittites had faithfully followed David from the time David lived among the Philistines. These men were faithful to David before he became king. Now they are faithful to him when his throne seemed to be lost. It is remarkable that in this defining moment foreigners rallied around David.

It is tragic that his own countrymen and his own family are nowhere to be found.

passed on before the king.

We can not begin to imagine the pain and grief as he watched this procession pass before him.

Psalm 3:1-6 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. 1 O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; 2 many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God. Selah 3 But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. 4 I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah 5 I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. 6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

2 Sam 15:19 19Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your home.

CRUCIAL OBSERVATION:

David calls Absalom king! Is David being a coward here? One might call David a number of other things, but he would be hard pressed to find any grounds to think that David is surrendering because he was a coward.

What we see here is consistent throughout the life of David in regards to the throne. He never saw the throne and the crown as being his to take. He knew that Israel was the people of God and it was God's to place men on the throne over Israel. It was God's business to remove king Saul. As long as God permitted Saul to sit on the throne and wear the crown David respected Saul as king!

At this moment it seemed that Absalom would succeed, so David called him the king and left it to the LORD.

2 Sam 15:20-21 20You 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." 21But Ittai answered the king, "As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be."

This is great, David told Ittai, "Remain with the king." Ittai answered back, "That's exactly what I intend to do. I'm staying with the king, that would be you."

2Sam 15:21 21...wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be.

QUOTE: Blaikie — The Second Book of Samuel (Klock and Klock) p.232

BIG STUFF HERE:

Ittai was loyal to David when it looked to cost him something. True loyalty isn't demonstrated until it looks like it will cost us to be loyal. Ittai was loyal to David when it looked to cost him something.

CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION:

Regarding friendships — Loyalty is a lost commodity in our culture.

HERE'S THE BIG PICTURE:

I think David stands here as a foreshadowing of Christ, making this about much more than friendships. It's about loyalty to Jesus.

QUOTE: Alexandar Maclaren

"Remember, the more rebels there are, the more need for us to be conspicuously loyal to our King."

Today a huge amount of professing Christians are not loyal to the Jesus of Scripture. They have rejected their loyalties to Jesus because the world has mocked them, accused them of being narrow minded in their Biblical views of morality and sin, accused them of being ignorant for thinking that Jesus actually healed the sick and raised the dead, died for the sins of the world and three days later rose bodily from the grave, has ascended into heaven, that he saves sinners today, is coming again to judge the world and establish an everlasting Kingdom. They are no longer loyal to that Jesus. They have exchanged that Jesus for a make believe, personalized version of Jesus. They have exchanged the Jesus of the Bible for a Jesus that they can feel good about because the world is comfortable with their new Jesus.

As Ittai was to David we ought to be with Jesus. Ittai was loyal when David was down. Ittai acted decisively to stand with David. Ittai acted voluntarily. Ittai was loyal having only come to David days earlier. Ittai acted publicly in his loyalty to David. Ittai was loyal to David knowing that David's fate would become his own fate.

QUOTE: Spurgeon

"If Ittai — so taken by with David's person and character — felt that he could enlist beneath David's banner for life — and declared that he would do so there and then — how much more may you and I, if we know what Christ has done for us, and who He is and what He deserves at our hands — at this good hour vow to Him, 'As the Lord liveth, surely in whatsoever place my Lord and Savior shall be, whether in death or life, even there also shall His servant be.' "

We must determine that wherever Jesus is, we will be also.

He lives in the heavenlies, so will we be. He is with His church, so will we be. He is busy in His work, so will we be.

ONCE AGAIN — It's ALL ABOUT JESUS!

2 Sam 15:22-23 22And David said to Ittai, "Go then, pass on." So Ittai the Gittite passed on with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. 23And all the land wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness.

Several decades before this David left the safety of Saul's palace to live as a fugitive. (1 Samuel 20) Those years in the wilderness prepared David to be king, but getting David on the throne was not the end of the work of God in and through David. God sends David out into the wilderness to continue the same work in his life.

QUOTE: Spurgeon

"Ah! We do not like going over Kedron. When it comes to the pinch, how we struggle against suffering, and especially against dishonor and slander! How many there were who would have gone on pilgrimage, but that Mr. Shame proved too much for them; they could not bear to go over the black brook Kedron, could not endure to be made nothing of for the sake of the Lord of glory, but they even turned back."

We can't determine His direction for our lives on the basis of — This is so exciting — this is going to be so gratifying. We need to learn to process God's direction for our lives on HIS terms, in light of his purposes.

Rom. 8:29 those whom He did foreknow He did also predestine to be conformed to the image of His Son

Why is God's anointed king on the run from treacherous traitorous son? On the human side we have seen the ingredients for this.

- Absalom
- Ahithophel
- Fickle and forgetful men and women.

But there is a divine side over ruling all. Because David had to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings and be rejected like the Son of David would later be rejected.

2 Sam 15:24-26 24And Abiathar came up, and behold, Zadok came also with all the Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God until the people had all passed out of the city. 25Then 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. 26But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."

Unlike Absalom, David would not use God or the things of God to his own ends or advantage.

*QUOTE: Blaikie
The Second Book of Samuel (Klock and Klock) p.233*

David submitted to God. His submission was an active submission, not a passive one. He actively submits by not using the Ark of God. He actively submits by seeking to hear from the Lord.

2 Sam 15:27-30 27The 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. 28See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." 29So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there. 30But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who

were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went.

Amazing, when Jesus went from the Last Supper to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, He essentially traced David's steps.

CRUCIAL:

This wasn't a pity-party or soreness merely over the consequences of sin.

QUOTE: G. Campbell-Morgan

"In light of all the facts it is almost certain that the tears David shed as he climbed Olivet, were rather those of humiliation and penitence, than those of self-centered regret. For Absalom there was no excuse, but David carried in his own heart ceaselessly the sense of his own past sin."

There are many who do not understand how grace and mercy work in the heart of those redeemed by faith in Jesus. They look at a man like David and think that God let David off easy, that he deserved the death penalty for adultery and murder. They think that if God forgave and spared David that penalty, surely David would just do it again.

CRUCIAL:

That is not how the unmerited and undeserved love of God works. David's sin was ever before him (Ps. 51:3)

A genuine and deep understanding of the horror of his sin was mingled with a profound sense of gratitude over God's mercy and as a result David never sinned like that again!

God's unmerited and undeserved love (grace) had taught David well!

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

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

David knew that Ahithophel was a brilliant advisor, but he prayed that the counsel he gave to Absalom would be foolish.

This is a great O.T. illustration of the New testament truth found in 2 Cor. 10:3

2 Cor 10:3-4 3For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

QUOTE: John Trapp (English Anglican Bishop 1600's)

"This was done accordingly: great is the power of faithful prayer. The queen-mother of Scotland was heard to say, that she more feared the prayers of John Knox than an army of fighting men." (Trapp)

2 Sam 15:32-37 32While David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and dirt on his head. 33David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. 34But 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 now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. 35Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. 36Behold, their two sons are with them there, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son, and by them you shall send to me everything you hear." 37So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

David came into Jerusalem as a brave, noble conqueror (2 Samuel 5:6-7). Absalom now comes into Jerusalem

as a treacherous, wicked rebel. Just over 1,000 years later Jesus will come into Jerusalem as a servant-king (Matthew 21:4-10) to lay down His life for the sins of the World.

19: 2Sam 15:21

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