

2 Samuel Chapter 15

Verses 1-6: "Stole the hearts": Public hearings were always conducted early in the morning in a court held outside by the city gates. Absalom positioned himself there to win favor. Because King David was busy with other matters or with wars, and was also aging, many matters were left unresolved, building a deep feeling of resentment among the people. Absalom used that situation to undermine his father, by gratifying all he could with a favorable settlement and showing them all warm cordiality. Thus, he won the people to himself, without them knowing his wicked ambition.

In the vacuum created by David's family problems, his declining health, and the fractures within the kingdom, a prideful Absalom exalted himself, unlike David, who waited to be exalted by God. And Absalom stole "the hearts of the men of Israel," ingratiating himself to the people.

2 Samuel 15:1 "And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him."

"Chariots and horses, and fifty men": After the reconciliation, Absalom possessed the symbols of royalty (see 1 Sam. 8:11).

The Chariots and horses were probably for himself, and the men with him ran beside him. These fifty men that ran before him showed his position as prince, and he hoped soon to be king.

2 Samuel 15:2 "And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was [so], that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city [art] thou? And he said, Thy servant [is] of one of the tribes of Israel."

Business and judicial proceedings were carried out at the city "gate" (see the note on Ruth 4:1).

We know that David judged at the palace. It was even said of him, that he was a just judge. The gate spoken of here is the entrance to the palace. Absalom was stopping them before they made it to David for judgment. Absalom was convincing them that David was not doing a good job as judge.

2 Samuel 15:3 "And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters [are] good and right; but [there is] no man [deputed] of the king to hear thee."

There is no official hearer appointed. It was impossible for the king to hear every case in detail; certain persons were therefore appointed to hear causes and report the facts to the king, who thereupon pronounced his judgment. Absalom uses the same arts which have been used by the demagogue in all ages. He does not accuse the king himself of wrong, but insinuates that the system of government is defective, and expresses his own earnest wish to set things right.

Absalom was siding with whoever he was speaking to at the time, to win favor with them. He was blaming his father for his negligence in hearing these cases more rapidly.

2 Samuel 15:4 "Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!"

To flatter each man by pronouncing a favorable verdict in his case, to excite a sense of grievance and discontent by censuring the king for remissness in trying the causes brought before him by his subjects, and to suggest a sure and easy remedy for all such grievances, namely, to make Absalom king. All this, coupled with great affability and courtesy, which his personal beauty and high rank made all the more effective, were the arts by which Absalom worked his way into favor with the people, who were light and fickle as himself.

This is the first indication that Absalom would like to overthrow David, and be king himself. He is making friends with all who came in, and trying to win their loyalty to him.

2 Samuel 15:5 "And it was [so], that when any man came nigh [to him] to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him."

To pay his respects, and bow to him, as being the king's son, a prince of the blood, and heir to the crown, as was supposed.

"He put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him": He put out his hand and shook hands with him, or took him about the neck and kissed him, and by this free, familiar, affable, and courteous manner, strangely won upon and gained the affections of the people, as follows. Fortunatus Schacchus thinks he put forth his hand to be kissed by them, and then kissed them, which was more than was usual.

Absalom was kissing them, when they offered to bow to him. He wanted them to feel that he was their friend.

2 Samuel 15:6 "And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

Anger over David's previous snubbing doubtless continued to smolder under the surface of Absalom's seeming civic concern.

"Absalom" could be patient in gaining his revenge (13:20-29). Moreover, although he was an ambitious man, he was also resourceful and cunning (14:28-33), so his sinister ends could easily go undetected (verses 7-12).

This sort of treatment won the people over to Absalom, because he had shown himself to be on their side.

Verses 7-9 "Hebron": The city of Absalom's birth (3:2-3), and the place where David was first anointed king over Judah (2:4), and over all Israel (5:3). Absalom said he had made a vow while in Geshur (see note on 13:34, 37), that if he was restored to Jerusalem, he would offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving in Hebron, where sacrifices were often made before the temple was built. David, who always encouraged such religious devotion, gave his consent.

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."

"Forty years": The better reading is "four" because the number "forty" could refer neither to the age of Absalom since he was born at Hebron after David had begun to rule (3:2-5), nor that time of David's reign, since he ruled only 40 years total (5:4-5). The 4 year period began either with Absalom's return from Geshur (14:23), or with his reconciliation with David (14:33).

Forty was apparently miscopied and should read four "years," as read by the Septuagint and Syriac versions, and as given by Josephus.

Hebron was the home town of Absalom. We know that all the bitterness David had felt against Absalom was gone. Perhaps this means when Absalom was forty years old. It could also, be speaking of 40 years after they came to Jerusalem the first time. This time really does not make a difference for what we are studying.

2 Samuel 15:8 "For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD."

Meaning worship him by the offering of sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, for restoring me to the place of his presence and service, and to my father's favor. But why should not this service have been performed at Zion, or at Gibeon? Here was some ground of suspicion; but God blinded David's eyes, that he might bring upon David and upon Absalom the judgments which they deserved and he designed.

This is a very dangerous thing to do. He is telling a lie. He is going to win support to himself against David.

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

He gave him leave to go, and wished happiness and prosperity might attend him.

"So he arose and went to Hebron": With a company of men, whose number is after mentioned.

David had no idea what Absalom was doing, so he sent him away in peace.

Verses 10-12: Absalom formed a conspiracy, which included taking some of the leading men to create the impression that the king supported this action, and was in his old age sharing the kingdom. All of this was a subtle disguise so Absalom could have freedom to plan his revolution. Absalom was able to do this against his father not merely because of his cleverness, but also because of the laxness of his father (see 1 Kings 1:6).

2 Samuel 15:10 "But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron."

Absalom sent from Hebron; or, had sent from Jerusalem; that when he went to Hebron, they should go into the several tribes to sift the people, and to dispose them to Absalom's party, and acquaint them with his success.

"As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet": Which I shall take care to have sounded in several parts by other persons. And when that is done, you shall inform them of the reason of it. Or, as soon as you understand that the trumpet was sounded at Hebron; partly to call the people together for my assistance; and partly to celebrate my inauguration to the kingdom, which you shall speedily know by messengers whom I shall send to you to that end.

We know that Absalom had been building himself up in the eyes of the Israelites, while he was tearing his father down. These spies were not to bring information back. They were to work themselves in among the people, and when the trumpet blew, they were to shout "Absalom reigneth in Hebron". They are hoping their shouting would start the people shouting the same thing.

2 Samuel 15:11 "And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, [that were] called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing."

The two hundred guests, whom Absalom had invited to take part with him in his sacrifices, were doubtless prominent and influential citizens of Jerusalem. That they were entirely ignorant of Absalom's purposes, which shows the extreme secrecy for which the affair had been managed. Absalom, no doubt, hoped when he once had them at Hebron, to secure them for his side, or, failing this, forcibly to prevent their opposition. In any case it would appear to the people that they were with him, and he would thus secure additional prestige.

The simplicity, spoken of here, was the fact that they did not know they were part of an army to come against David. Absalom had made friends with them, and when he called for someone to go with him, they went willingly, not knowing the purpose of this trip.

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

"Ahithophel": A counselor of David who was considered a man who "inquired of the word of God" (16:23). This man was the father of Eliam (23:34) and the grandfather of Bath-sheba (11:3); 23:24-39), who may have been looking for revenge on David.

“Giloh”: A town in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:48, 51), probably located a few miles south of Hebron.

The “sacrifices” Absalom offered were part of his own coronation ceremony. Absalom was once again tricking people into doing what he wanted.

Ahithophel was Bath-sheba's grandfather. Ahithophel had been a counselor for David. He was thought to speak as an oracle of God. We can see why Absalom would want him. He advised Absalom to take the harem of David. David found out what was going on, and sent another counselor. They believed the one David sent and Ahithophel went home and hanged himself. It appears, in the verse above, that more and more people were believing and following Absalom.

Verses 15:13 – 16:14: Psalm 3 was written in response to this event.

Verses 13-17: David's escape from Absalom is remembered (in Psalm Chapter 3). 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 15:13 "And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom."

Perhaps one of the two hundred men that went with Absalom and were ignorant of his plans; which, when discovered, he disapproved of, and got away from him, and came to David, and informed him how things were.

"Saying, the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom": To make him king.

Verses 14-16: Although “David” sensed the danger to his life, he was concerned more about a general massacre of the populace and with a need for time to assess and regroup his forces. He left “ten” of his “concubines” behind to keep the palace (16:21-22), doubtless with every intention of returning.

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."

His courtiers and ministers of state and the officers of his household; as many of them as were with him in the city. For some of them very probably were in the country; as Ahithophel was, and some might be along with Absalom, whom he had invited to his peace offerings.

"Arise, and let us flee": It is much that a man of such courage and valor as David should be so intimidated at once as to make a flight as soon as he heard of a conspiracy forming against him.

"For we shall not else escape from Absalom": His fears ran so high, that he fancied he would be upon them presently.

"Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly": Which still more clearly shows the panic he was in.

"And bring evil upon us": Kill them, or make them prisoners.

"And smite the city with the edge of the sword": The inhabitants of it, should they make resistance.

David still had a few loyal men, and he and the men fled for safety. It appears that Absalom had become very strong to run his daddy out of the palace.

2 Samuel 15:15 "And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants [are ready to do] whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint."

In answer to him, and to show that they were quite conformable to his pleasure.

"Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shalt appoint": Or "choose", whether to prepare to fight, and defend him and the city, or to depart and make their escape.

2 Samuel 15:16 "And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, [which were] concubines, to keep the house."

Which determined the case.

"And all his household after him family and his court": They followed his example, and attended him in his flight.

"And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house": Not to defend it, which they were unable to do, but to look after the household goods and furniture, that they were not damaged by the conspirators. Though one would think they could be of little service, and may wonder what he should leave them behind for. But this seems to be ordered by the overruling providence of God, to bring about what was threatened him (2 Sam. 12:11). And it is much he had not thought of it; but it was hid from his eyes, that it might be fulfilled.

The king's servants were speaking again, of those high ranking officers with David. We know that David took his wives and children with him, and left ten concubines to keep the house. David would go into hiding with his family.

2 Samuel 15:17 "And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off."

David's kind nature induced him to spare Jerusalem the horrors of a siege, and the risk of being taken by assault. He had no standing army with which to resist this sudden attack from so unexpected a quarter. Possibly too he remembered Nathan's prophecy (2 Sam. 12:10-12).

2 Samuel 15:18 "And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king."

"Cherethites ... Pelethites": Foreign mercenary soldiers of King David (see note on 1 Sam. 30:14).

"Gittites" Mercenary soldiers from Gath, i.e., Philistines.

This was not enough men to form an army. These were more like a guard for the king. It is interesting that David had 600 men with him, when he had run from Saul earlier. This could possibly be made up of the same mighty men he had then. These were not Philistines, which Gath would indicate, but they were Israelites like David.

Verses 19-22: "Ittai": The commander of the Gittites, who had only recently joined David. In spite of David's words, he displayed his loyalty by going into exile with him. Ittai's later appointment as commander of one-third of the army (18:2, 5, 12), was David's way of expressing appreciation for his loyalty.

2 Samuel 15:19 "Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou [art] a stranger, and also an exile."

Who was over the band of Gittites, the six hundred men (2 Sam. 15:22).

"Wherefore goest thou also with us?" one should think the king should not have discouraged any from joining and following him, when his numbers were not very large, and they in such fear on account of Absalom.

"Return to this place": To Jerusalem, where his station was.

"And abide with the king": With Absalom, who set himself up for king, and whom the people perhaps had proclaimed as such in Hebron, where the conspiracy began.

"For thou art a stranger, and also an exile": Not a native of Israel, but of another nation. And at a distance from it, and therefore not altogether under the same obligations to attend David in his troubles as others were. And by this it seems that he was a Gittite by nation. Whatever the six hundred men were, and rather favors the first sense given of them (in 2 Samuel 15:18).

Ittai was a Philistine, who had given his loyalty to David. David was telling him that he was not expected to fight, since he was not an Israelite.

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."

From Gath or from an expedition he and his men had been on.

"Should I this day make thee, go up and down with us?" Wander up and down from place to place with David, when he was but just come off a journey, weary and fatigued.

"Seeing I go whither I may": Where it will be most safe for me, I know not where; may be obliged to flee here and there, which would be very inconvenient to Ittai in his circumstances.

"Return thou, and take back thy brethren": The six hundred men under him, and whom David could ill spare at this time. And yet, consulting their ease, advises to return to Jerusalem with them.

"Mercy and truth be with thee": The Lord show mercy and kindness to thee, in that thou hast shown favor and respect to me, and make good all his promises to thee, who hast been true and faithful to me.

David was, in a sense, giving him permission to go home if he wanted to, and not risk the lives of his people in an Israelite affair. David also speaks a blessing on him for offering to help.

David will not hold it against him if he goes home.

2 Samuel 15:21 "And Ittai answered the king, and said, [As] the LORD liveth, and [as] my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be."

With an oath, as follows.

"As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth": Which he took to confirm what he after says, and to put an end to the debate between them.

"Surely, in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be": Signifying that he would attend him wherever he went, hazard his life in his cause, and live and die with him.

His loyalty was to David the king. He had no intentions of leaving in this time of trouble. He has made his mind up to follow David even to death, if necessary.

2 Samuel 15:22 "And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that [were] with him."

It being his resolution to abide with him, he urged him no more to depart, but bid him pass over the brook Kidron before him.

"And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men": The six hundred Gittites that were under his command.

"And all the little ones that were with him": That belonged to him and his men, and no doubt their wives also.

This brave Philistine went first, to make sure there was no danger in crossing the Kidron. They would hide in the wilderness.

Verses 23-28: Psalm 63 has this occasion in view or possibly (1 Sam. 23:14).

2 Samuel 15:23 "And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness."

"Brook Kidron": This familiar valley, running north/south along the eastern side of Jerusalem, separates the city from the Mt. of Olives.

This was a sad time, for the people loved David. David and his family and servants passed over the brook of Kidron.

Verses 24-29: Zadok ... Abiathar" (see notes on 8:17). They brought the Ark to comfort David with assurance of God's blessing, but he saw that as placing more confidence in the symbol that in God and sent it back. David knew the possession of the Ark did not guarantee God's blessing (1 Sam. 4:3).

David was convinced that the "Ark of God" belonged in Jerusalem. So he sent "Zadok" (the high priest) and the "Levites" back with the Ark. Although he hoped to return to Jerusalem and his throne, he would leave the final result to God.

2 Samuel 15:24 "And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites [were] with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city."

Zadok appears here as in charge of the Ark, and David (2 Sam. 15:27), addresses him exclusively, while Abiathar is merely mentioned. This gives no indication of the relations existing between the two, but merely shows how matters went on this day of hurry and confusion. The language is obscure, but probably means that Zadok and the Levites brought the Ark out of the city, and set it down while the multitude were assembling. Meantime Abiathar led the multitude forward up the Mount of Olives until they had all come out of the city.

It appears that the Ark was carried part of the way by the Levites. The Ark was there until David and all of his people were out of the city.

Verses 25-26: David did not treat the Ark as a mascot (1 Sam. 4:3, 21), but instead selflessly returned it to Jerusalem so that God's presence could rest with His people. He acknowledged that he had no claim to the throne except if God chose to give it to him.

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

The reason of which is not easy to account for, since being carried back it would fall into the hands of the conspirators. And now the priests were with it to take care of it, and there might be occasion to inquire at it before the Lord. But David thought it being a sacred thing would not be violated by Absalom and his men, and that it would be safest in its own habitation or tabernacle, which David had built for it. For that the reason of it should be, what Procopius Gazaeus suggests, cannot be given into, that he could not bear to carry about him the law, which accused of adulteries and murders.

"If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord": If he will appear for me, be on my side, and deliver me from those who have risen up against me.

"He will bring me again": To Jerusalem, and to his palace there.

"And show me both it and his habitation": The Ark and the tabernacle he had erected for it (2 Sam. 6:17).

David and the priests had brought the Ark into Jerusalem with much rejoicing. He would not, now take it with him. He tells Zadok to carry it back to the tabernacle and set it up. He will see it again, if the LORD favors him and lets him remain king. The proper place for the Ark is in Jerusalem.

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."

David recognizes that he is suffering under the punishment pronounced by Nathan for his sin, and he seeks to throw himself entirely into the hands of God, trusting in His mercy. (Compare 2 Sam. 24:14). He is therefore, unwilling to have the ark carried with him lest he should seem to undertake to compel the Divine presence and blessing. He feels sure that if God so will, he shall be brought again in peace; but if not, yet he will perfectly submit himself to God's ordering.

David is willing for the LORD to judge him. He will accept whatever the LORD decides is right.

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."

A prophet, as well as a priest (see 1 Sam. 9:9). Or a seeing, knowing man, and one that can penetrate into men and things, and so might be of more service to David at Jerusalem than with him; wherefore he said to him.

"Return into the city in peace": To the city of Jerusalem with peace, quietness, and satisfaction of mind; where he doubted not. Or at least hoped and wished he would be in safety and prosperity, being one of the Lord's priests.

"And your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar": The one was of the line of Eleazar, and the other of the line of Ithamar.

A "seer" is a prophet. He is not a priest. In this case, he is both high priest and seer. It appears he sends two back with him. Ahimaaz was a priest, the son of Zadok, who would follow him as high priest. Jonathan was a priest as well.

2 Samuel 15:28 "See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me."

"Plain of the wilderness": Probably the region along the western bank of the Jordan River (see 17:16; Joshua 5:10).

David will remain in the wilderness until he receives word to come back to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 15:29 "Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there."

That is, ordered it to be carried, and took care that it was carried, by the Kohathite Levites, and they themselves attended it.

"And they tarried there; at Jerusalem": Though their two sons that went with them entered not into the city, but stayed at a place called En-rogel, at some little distance from it (2 Sam. 17:17).

The Ark must be handled by the priests, who are anointed for this.

2 Samuel 15:30 "And David went up by the ascent of [mount] Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that [was] with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up."

"Mount Olivet": The hill to the east of the city of Jerusalem was the location for David's contrition and remorse over his sins and their results. This was the location from which Jesus ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9-12).

The Mount of Olives is just a few miles out of Jerusalem. In fact, it is on a hill overlooking the old city. The fact that his head was covered showed the grief that David was feeling. He was barefoot, which showed his humbleness before God (take off your shoes, for this is holy ground). The weeping was showing their grief as well.

Verses 31-37: God answered David's prayer for Ahithophel's advice to be foolishness by sending Hushai, who could act as a spy. Sometimes our prayers are answered quickly through God sending other people to help us.

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."

That came either from Hebron or from Jerusalem.

"Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom": Absalom sent for him, and it seems he came to him, and continued with him (see 2 Sam. 15:12).

"And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness": Either suffer him to give foolish counsel, or confound the schemes projected by him, and let them not be carried into execution. For God can, and sometimes does, disappoint crafty counsellors, that they cannot perform what they devise. But they are taken in their own craftiness, and their counsel is carried headlong, Job 5:12; this prayer was answered (2 Sam. 17:14).

Since it is the LORD who gives the counselor his ability, the LORD could confuse the counsel he gives and make it unacceptable.

2 Samuel 15:32 "And it came to pass, that [when] David was come to the top [of the mount], where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:"

"Top": This was the place from which David could look toward the city and the temple to the west.

"Hushai the Archite": Hushai was the clan of the Archites who lived in Ephraim on the border with Manasseh (Joshua 16:2), and served as an official counselor to David (verse 37); 1 Chron. 27:33). David persuaded Hushai to return to Jerusalem and attach himself to Absalom as a counselor. His mission was to contradict the advice of Ahithophel (17:5-14), and to communicate Absalom's plans to David (17:21; 18:19).

"Hushai" came to meet David with the traditional symbols of grief (see the note on 1:2).

The rent clothes and the earth upon his head indicated great sorrow. He was a dear old friend of David's, and would do whatever he could to help.

Verses 33-37: "David," too, could be cunning. Knowing that he could count on Hushai's loyalty, he sent him back to Jerusalem" to serve as his informant and to act as a counterforce to Ahithophel (Chapter 17). "Hushai" would also have the help of "Zadok" (verses 27-29).

2 Samuel 15:33 "Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden upon me":

For he was not provided, it seems, with sufficient support for his own family. And Hushai, though famous as a counsellor in the cabinet, being unpracticed in the camp, and no soldier, could not be so useful to him in the army as he might be at court. David therefore, conceives the idea of employing him in endeavoring to defeat or render abortive the counsel of Ahithophel.

We are not told why he would be a burden, but we know this was not said to insult him. It was a fact for some reason.

2 Samuel 15:34 "But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; [as] I [have been] thy father's servant hitherto, so [will] I now also [be] thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel."

David here counsels fraud and treachery, and Hushai willingly accepts the part assigned to him, in order to thwart Ahithophel's counsel and weaken Absalom's rebellion. The narrative simply states the facts without justifying them. But while we cannot too strongly condemn such a strategy, two things are to be remembered. First, that like frauds in time of war and rebellion have been practiced in all ages, and still continue. And, secondly, that David and Hushai had but slender knowledge of the Divine revelation of truth and righteousness which enables us to condemn them. Therefore, did with a clear conscience many things which we see to be wrong.

He could be a tremendous help to David by spying for him. Absalom will probably, believe him and not believe Ahithophel.

2 Samuel 15:35 "And [hast thou] not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, [that] what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell [it] to Zadok and Abiathar the priests."

To assist in forming schemes directly opposite to Ahithophel's, or to whom he could communicate the secrets of Absalom's court.

"Therefore it shall be that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house": Absalom's, who had now, at possession of the house and palace of David.

"Thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests": To whom he might have recourse without suspicion, pretending he had business with them as priests, on religious accounts, to offer sacrifices for him, etc.

The high priest and the priests were true to David as well. They will probably, not be noticed because of their position in the tabernacle.

2 Samuel 15:36 "Behold, [they have] there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's [son], and Jonathan Abiathar's [son]; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear."

As (in 2 Samuel 15:27); not that they were in the city with them, but they were near it (2 Sam. 17:17); with whom they had a communication.

"And by whom ye shall send unto me everything that ye can hear": That is, by the sons of the priests. He by telling the priests about how things were at court; and them sending their sons with messages to David. Which was a good scheme to get intelligence, and easy to be put into execution.

If Zadok remains in the tabernacle to serve as high priest, the priests can be spared to take messages to David. Hushai could listen to the plans of Absalom and the priests could bring the information to David. It is very important for Hushai to be in the palace with Absalom.

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

The city of Jerusalem; by the direction and persuasion of David. And in obedience to him, in order to serve him to the uttermost.

"And Absalom came into Jerusalem": Just at the same time; so that he knew not that Hushai had been out of it, and been with David, and which also appears from what he said to him, 2 Samuel 16:17.

It appears they arrived at about the same time. Absalom probably thought he would defeat his father in Jerusalem. He did not know that he would go into hiding. The plan is now in place. David has his strategic men in place.

2 Samuel Chapter 15 Questions

1. How many men did Absalom have to run before him?
2. The chariots and horses were for _____.
3. Where did Absalom station himself, to be able to talk to men coming to see David?
4. What was said of David's judgment?
5. What was Absalom trying to convince these people of?

6. In verse 3, Absalom is telling them what about their getting judged fairly?
7. What is all of this an indication that Absalom wants to do?
8. When these people came and bowed to Absalom, what did he do?
9. Absalom stole the _____ of the men of Israel.
10. What did Absalom ask David to let him go and do?
11. What did David say to him?
12. What were the spies, that Absalom sent out, to say when the trumpet blew?
13. How many men went with Absalom out of Jerusalem?
14. What was their simplicity?
15. Who was David's counselor, who went with Absalom?
16. How was he connected to David?
17. What message was brought to David?
18. What did David do, in response to this news?
19. Who stayed behind to care for the house?
20. How many men passed before the king?
21. Who was a Philistine, who was with David?
22. What did David offer him?
23. How did Ittai answer David?
24. Who passed over the brook Kidron first?
25. Where would they hide?
26. Who wept, when David and his people left?
27. Who, of the priesthood, was with David?
28. What did David insist that Zadok do with the ark?
29. David is willing for the _____ to judge him.
30. What is a "seer"?

31. Who carried the ark back?
32. Where did David go?
33. Why did David have his head covered?
34. What did David pray to God about Ahithophel?
35. Who came to meet David on the Mount of Olives?
36. What did David send him to do?
37. Who will he report to?
38. How will David get the message?
39. Where did Hushai meet Absalom?
40. Why had Absalom come here?