

# Making Promises

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## Part 6: The Kingdom

### Review

- Two years after his return, Absalom was frustrated that he had not been reintroduced at court. To get Joab's attention, he burned his barley field. Afterward, Absalom was back in the King's good graces.
- Absalom carefully prepared his coup. First, he acquired a chariot and horses, along with fifty men as runners. Next, Absalom manipulated symbols by the way he greeted people coming to the capital city for judgment. Then, by rising early, Absalom was able to intercept people coming to the capital to put their cases before David.
- Under the guise of going to Hebron to fulfill a religious vow, Absalom entered into the second phase of his plot – garnering support from men of the surrounding cities.

### Unraveling Kingdom

- Faced with a powerful conspiracy and with Absalom moving toward Jerusalem from Hebron, David fled **east**. His entourage moved past the city gates, past the last house of the settlement outside the gates, then across the **Kidron valley**, and up the slope of the **Mount of Olives (2 Sam. 15:13-32)**.
  - ▶ **Eastward** movement in the Old Testament is always movement away from **the presence of God**. Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden to the East, and later Israel was driven from their Edenic land into exile in **Babylon**.
  - ▶ David brought his whole household, but left **ten concubines** to keep the house (v. 16). If David fought Absalom, the women would be a burden rather than a help. By taking these women, Absalom was **laying claim to the kingdom**.
- David's quick decision to **leave the city** rather than to stay and fight was probably guided by several factors:
  - ▶ He may have believed that the two hundred men of the city who were with Absalom were **cooperating willingly**.
  - ▶ He may have hoped to get out of Absalom's way before Absalom arrived, avoiding a **direct confrontation**, as he consistently did in his dealings with Saul.
  - ▶ He may also have thought it best for Absalom to move into Jerusalem

peacefully, rather than forcing the city to **endure a siege**.

- David's flight from Jerusalem was a pageant of his life in **reverse order**. The first few encounters were with people who served King David in **Jerusalem**, and as he moved to the wilderness, he encountered members of the **house of Saul**. The stages of his flight reversed David's rise to power; the kingdom of David was **unraveling**.
  - ▶ Zadok the priest came with the ark, with Abiathar and other Levites. Perhaps the priests believed that the ark would **bring favor** and **protection** to David, or perhaps they associated the ark with **David's house** and **kingdom**.
  - ▶ David, however, sent them back to the city. The ark had been set up in its place, and that was the place where **God had chosen to dwell**. Whatever happened to David, the **Lord's throne** would not be removed.
  - ▶ David prayed that the Lord would confuse the **counsel of Ahitophel**. Immediately Hushai appeared as an **answer to David's prayer**. Recognizing that Hushai could serve David more effectively by staying in Jerusalem, David sent him back, suggested a **deception** to get close to Absalom, and linked him up with the spy network of **the priests**. Hushai would be the crucial weapon against Absalom's conspiracy.
- The last two encounters were with members of the **house of Saul**. First, David met Ziba, the servant of **Mephibosheth**, who made a show of loyalty to David by bringing food and drink and donkeys (**2 Sam. 16:1-4**).
  - ▶ Ziba helped David and thereby ingratiated himself to him. Ziba also told David that Mephibosheth was using the opportunity of Absalom's conspiracy to reassert the claims of the **house of Saul**. Believing that Mephibosheth had betrayed him, David granted all the **lands** and **property** of Mephibosheth to Ziba.
- The second member of Saul's house, Shimei of Gera, was **openly hostile**. In Shimei's view, David had usurped the kingdom by eliminating the previous king and his house, not only Saul, but also **Ish-bosheth** (**2 Sam. 16:5-14**).
  - ▶ **Abishai**, true to form, suggested beheading Shimei, but David submitted to the cursing, as he had submitted to the **enmity of Saul**.
  - ▶ Two members of Saul's house appeared, one friendly and the other hostile. This repeated David's earlier wilderness experience: **Jonathan** provided for him, while **Saul** attacked him. David was back where he had started, in the wilderness, being **cursed** by a **Benjamite**.

## Part 6: The Kingdom

<p><b>2 Samuel 15:13-32</b></p>	<p><a href="#">13</a> And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom." <a href="#">14</a> 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." <a href="#">15</a> And the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides." <a href="#">16</a> So the king went out, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. <a href="#">17</a> And the king went out, and all the people after him. And they halted at the last house. <a href="#">18</a> 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. <a href="#">19</a> Then 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. <a href="#">20</a> 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." <a href="#">21</a> But 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." <a href="#">22</a> And 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. <a href="#">23</a> And 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. <a href="#">24</a> And 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. <a href="#">25</a> 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. <a href="#">26</a> But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." <a href="#">27</a> 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. <a href="#">28</a> See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." <a href="#">29</a> So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there. <a href="#">30</a> But 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. <a href="#">31</a> 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." <a href="#">32</a> While 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.</p>
<p><b>2 Samuel 16:1-4</b></p>	<p><a href="#">1</a> When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. <a href="#">2</a> And the king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink." <a href="#">3</a> And the king said, "And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he remains in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back the kingdom of my father.'" <a href="#">4</a> Then the king said to Ziba, "Behold, all that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." And Ziba said, "I pay homage; let me ever find favor in your sight, my lord the king."</p>

**2 Samuel 16:5-14**

[5](#) When King David came to Bahurim, there came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera, and as he came he cursed continually. [6](#) And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David, and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. [7](#) And Shimei said as he cursed, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you worthless man! [8](#) The Lord has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned, and the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood." [9](#) Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head." [10](#) But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' " [11](#) And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Behold, my own son seeks my life; how much more now may this Benjaminite! Leave him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. [12](#) It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today." [13](#) So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust. [14](#) And the king, and all the people who were with him, arrived weary at the Jordan. And there he refreshed himself.