

2 SAMUEL CHAPTER 15

¹ And it came to pass after this that Absalom prepared for himself chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. ² And Absalom rose early, and stood beside the way of the gate. And it came to pass that every man who had a cause came to the king for judgment. And Absalom cried to him, and said to him, "Of what city are you?" And he said, "Your servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel." ³ And Absalom said to him, "See, your affairs *are* right and clear, yet you have no one *appointed* by the king to hear you." ⁴ And Absalom said, "O that one would make me a judge in the land; then every man who had a dispute or a cause would come to me, and I would judge him!" ⁵ And it came to pass that when a man came near to bow down to him, that he stretched out his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him. ⁶ And thus Absalom did to all Israel that came to the king for judgment; and Absalom gained the hearts of the men of Israel.

⁷ And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said to his father, "I will go now, and pay my vows which I vowed to the Lord in Hebron, ⁸ for your servant vowed a vow when I dwelt at Geshur in Syria, saying, 'If the Lord should indeed restore me to Jerusalem, then will I serve the Lord.'" ⁹ And the king said to him, "Go in peace." And he arose and went to Hebron.

¹⁰ And Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shall you say, 'Absalom has become king in Hebron.'" ¹¹ And there went with Absalom two hundred chosen men from Jerusalem; and they went in their innocence, and knew nothing. ¹² And Absalom sent to Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, from Giloh, where he was sacrificing. And there was a strong conspiracy; and the people with Absalom were increasingly numerous.

¹³ And there came a messenger to David, saying, "The heart of the men of Israel has gone after Absalom." ¹⁴ And David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Rise up, and let us flee, for we have no refuge from Absalom. Make haste and go, lest he overtake us speedily, and bring evil upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword." ¹⁵ And the king's servants said to the king, "In all things which our lord the king chooses, behold, *we are* your servants." ¹⁶ And the king and all his house went out on foot. And the king left ten women from among his concubines to keep the house. ¹⁷ And the king and all his servants went out on foot; and they stayed in a house far *away*. ¹⁸ And all his servants passed on by his side, and every Cherethite, and every Pelethite, 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 Cherethite, and every Pelethite, and all the six hundred Gittites that came on foot out from Gath, and they went on before the king.

¹⁹ And the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Return, and dwell with the king, for you are a stranger, and you have come forth as a sojourner out of your place. ²⁰ Whereas you came yesterday, shall I today cause you to travel with us, and shall you *thus* change your place? You came forth yesterday, and today shall I set you in motion to go along with us? I indeed will

go wherever I may go: return then, and cause your brothers to return with you, and may the Lord deal mercifully and truly with you." ²¹ And Ittai answered the king and said, "As the Lord lives and as my lord the king lives, in the place wheresoever my lord shall be, whether it be for death or life, there shall your servant be." ²² And the king said to Ittai, "Come and pass over with me." So Ittai the Gittite and the king passed over, and all his servants, and all the multitude with him. ²³ And all the country wept with a loud voice. And all the people passed by over the Brook of Kidron; and the king crossed the Brook Kidron. And all the people and the king passed on toward the way of the wilderness.

²⁴ And behold, Zadok and all the Levites were also with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had passed out of the city. ²⁵ And the king said to Zadok, "Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I should find favor in the eyes of the Lord, then will He bring me back, and He will show me *both the ark* and its beauty. ²⁶ But if He should say thus, 'I have no pleasure in you'; behold, *here* I am, let Him do to me according to that which is good in His sight." ²⁷ And the king said to Zadok the priest, "Behold, you shall return to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons with you. ²⁸ Behold, I continue in arms in Araboth of the desert, until there should come news from you to report to me." ²⁹ So Zadok and Abiathar brought back the ark of the Lord to Jerusalem, and it remained there.

³⁰ And David went up by the ascent of *the Mount of Olives*, ascending and weeping, and had his head covered, and went barefoot. And all the people that were with him, *every man*, covered his head; and they went up, ascending and weeping. ³¹ And it was reported to David, saying, "Ahithophel also *is* among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O Lord my God, negate the counsel of Ahithophel."

³² And David came as far as Ros, where he worshipped God. And behold, Hushai the chief friend of David came out to meet him, having torn his clothes, and dust *was* upon his head. ³³ And David said to him, "If you should go over with me, then will you be a burden to me; ³⁴ but if you shall return to the city, and shall say to Absalom, 'Your brothers have passed over, and the king your father has passed over after me: and now I am your servant, O king, permit me to live. At one time, even of late, I was the servant of your father, and now I *am* your humble servant'—so shall you negate for me the counsel of Ahithophel. ³⁵ And behold, Zadok and Abiathar the priests are with you; and it shall be that every word that you shall hear from the king's house you shall report it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. ³⁶ Behold, their two sons are with them, Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar; and by them you shall report to me every word which you shall hear." ³⁷ So Hushai the friend of David went into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.