

In Lesson 14, Joab sought to restore Absalom and David. Eventually, David agreed to allow Absalom's return but was reluctant to deal with him or see him face-to-face for two years. Eventually, Absalom manipulated his way in to see David. With this, their relationship was restored.

Absalom had an evil purpose in mind. After four years, Absalom made his move. He deceived David into allowing him to go to a feast in Hebron. Many who were loyal to David became a part of this conspiracy, including Ahithophel, his trusted counselor (and Bathsheba's grandfather). David and his loyal followers decided to flee the capital in order to save the innocent from being victims of a bloody coup.

David wept as he ascended the Mount of Olives for it was the fourth fold of the judgment he had called on himself. David was not forsaken in all of this. Faithful friends stood up to help him. Through it all, David demonstrated confidence in God, knowing that He would do what was right. The chapter ended with Absalom occupying Jerusalem and the priests set up as spies to relate messages to David.

We begin this study examining David's further exile, and what we can learn as we study the impact of this time in David's life.

DAY 1

Deception and Cursing 2 SAMUEL 16:1-14

Please Read 2 Samuel 16:1-14 and answer the following questions.

[1] What did Ziba tell David about Mephibosheth (verse 3)?

[2] How did David rashly react to this news (verse 4)?

Note: This was a deceptive move on Ziba's part, as we'll see in 2 Samuel 19.

[3] Abishai wanted David to order them to kill him for his cursing, but David refused. Why was this, and how does this show the confidence that David had in God (verses 11-12)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] What do Proverbs 18:13, 17 and 19:2 warn us about rushing to judgment?

[2] David did not defend his anointing as king when he was being cursed. How does this demonstrate Romans 8:28 in difficult times?

Daily Life Point: Read 1 Corinthians 13:7. How can you practice this when someone starts to spread things that may or may not be true; how does it help you to avoid falling into the same trap?

MEMORY PASSAGE

This week we will memorize 2 Samuel 16:12. Review the passage several times throughout each day. By the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing this day. (2 Samuel 16:12 NKJV)

DAY 2

Mixed Advice
2 SAMUEL 16:15-17:14

Please Read 2 Samuel 16:15-17:14 and answer the following questions

[1] What was Ahithophel's perverse counsel to Absalom, and why did Absalom follow it (16:21-23)?

[2] After seeing that this advice was followed, Ahithophel offered some battle advice on how to deal with David. What did he want to happen (17:1–3)?

[3] They all thought this was great advice, but how did Hushai advise against this and suggest they do things differently (17:7–13)?

[4] Why did Absalom so readily accept Hushai's advice (verse 14)?

Note: God's plan in all this was not just for the judgment of David's sin, but also to deal with Absalom. He purposed to bring calamity and ruin upon Absalom, which comes from a Hebrew root word meaning "bad, wicked, evil, something malignant or noxious."¹

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Ahithophel's suggestion that Absalom go into David's concubines was perverse, but in their culture it was a logical move of taking over the government, because possessing the harem came along with the throne.² This action also made it impossible for reconciliation with David and forced the people to choose sides.³ Not only was this action wrong, but how was it sadly a fulfillment of what David was warned of in 2 Samuel 12:11–12?

[2] How will secret sin be open scandal in heaven (Luke 8:17; 1 Corinthians 4:5)?

[3] Absalom's pride would become his downfall, as it will for those snared by pride and self-seeking. What somber warnings do Proverbs 16:18 and 1 John 2:16 give about this?

Daily Life Point: Ahithophel is another example of someone who had great potential for God (16:23). Sadly, he allowed bitterness and unforgiveness to corrupt him, and now he advised rebellion and sexual perversion to pour salt into David's open wounds!

What are some things that you personally can do to avoid falling to the same fate of becoming useless to or even in rebellion against God's kingdom? How can others in your group pray for you to deal with any bitterness, unforgiveness, or anything that may be trying to crowd the Lordship of Christ out of your life?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

It may be that the Lord will look on my _____, and that the Lord will repay me with _____ for his cursing this day. (2 Samuel 16:12 NKJV)

DAY 3

The Pursuit Is On
2 SAMUEL 17:15–29

Please Read 2 Samuel 17:15–29 and answer the following questions

[1] The priests sent a female servant to bring Jonathan and Ahimaaz the message they were to take to King David. How was the whole thing almost blown (17:15–20)?

[2] What was the pathetic ending for Ahithophel (17:23)?

[3] What wonderful way did God provide for the needs of David and his men while they were at Mahanaim (17:27–29)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David and his men were hungry, thirsty, and weary in the wilderness. What are some ways that the following passages encourage you to meet others' needs in their own wilderness times—in practical ways?

Matthew 25:35–40

Galatians 6:1–2

James 1:27; 1 John 3:16–18

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

It may be that the Lord will look on my _____, and that the Lord will repay me with _____ for his _____ this day. (2 Samuel 16:12 NKJV)

DAY 4

The Fall of Absalom
2 SAMUEL 18:1-18

Please Read 2 Samuel 18:1–18 and answer the following questions

[1] As David prepared his men for battle, what did he charge the commanders of his forces to do (verse 5)?

[2] This battle took place in the woods of Ephraim. How did Absalom's troops fair against the battle-hardened men of David? What else factored into this fight (verses 7–8)?

[3] In this battle, what ironic thing happened to Absalom as he rode through the woods, and what was Joab's reaction to the report about this (verses 9–11)?

[4] What other facts are related about the two monuments of Absalom (verses 17–18)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] In order to be remembered, Absalom made a stone monument of himself. Now a heap of stones covered his corpse. This was used in that culture to show the burial spot of a criminal or enemy.⁴

How is this symbolic of the type of end that the law prescribed for such a son (Deuteronomy 21:18–23)?

[2] We know that there is no neutrality when it comes to supporting or defending God's kingdom, and "David wanted love without justice, but with Joab it was justice without love."⁵

In what way were love and justice truly able to meet and be given out (Romans 8:32; Ephesians 2:4–7)?

Daily Life Point: As we have read this week, God stands up for His own. How has this helped you to trust all the more in the Lord as you face your own daily battles and struggles? Remember 2 Chronicles 20:15: "Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's."

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

It may be that the Lord will _____ on my _____, and that the
Lord will _____ me with _____ for his _____ this day. (2 Samuel
16:12 NKJV)

DAY 5

Grievous News
2 SAMUEL 18:19-33

Please Read 2 Samuel 18:19-33 and answer the following questions

[1] What strange debate took place over who would run the news to David (verses 19–23)?

[2] How did Ahimaaz limit the amount of the news he shared with David, and what else did the Cushite say (verses 28–32)?

[3] What was the reaction of David to all of this (verse 33)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] It is right that God's justice will be displayed but to find some sort of pleasure in this is not God's desire. What strong statement does Amos 5:16–20 make about those who long for God's judgment to be poured out? How does Ezekiel 18:23, 30–32 express the heart of God in this matter?

[2] How was David's reaction to Absalom's death similar to some amazing statements that Moses and Paul made (See Exodus 32:32; Romans 9:3)?

Daily Life Point: The world, the flesh, and the devil are a trio committed to bringing you down. We need to fight against these things using our spiritual weaponry and pray that they too will get caught and slain by their own evil devices. This way we can walk in victory over them.

How has this week's study encouraged you in this? Please share some thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Write out this week's passage by memory. Then review the passage throughout the week.

2 Samuel 16:12 NKJV

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] We can really feel for David in all that he suffered. Sadly, much of this was his own doing, because he made a string of bad decisions after one illicit night.

What good decisions can you make to prevent repercussions down the road? What positive seeds will you sow, rather than sow wild oats that will only come back to haunt you in the future? Share some thoughts here and pray through this with your group.

[2] We saw this week that God is with us and helps us through all that we face. We also saw that God can use us to provide for those who are in need!

What are some ways that God spoke to you about these things this week? What have you realized that you need to do differently? Please record your thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

From memory, write out this week's passage below. Then review the passage throughout the day. Be prepared to share the verse with your group.

2 Samuel 16:12 NKJV

PARTING THOUGHTS

There were several psalms that David wrote during his run from Absalom. Let's close off by considering Psalm 63. About this psalm, C. H. Spurgeon well said the following:

David did not leave off singing because he was in the wilderness, neither did he in slovenly idleness go on repeating psalms intended for other occasions; but he carefully made his worship suitable to his circumstances, and presented to His God a wilderness hymn when he was in the wilderness. There was no desert in his heart, though there was a desert around him. We too may expect to be cast into rough places. In such seasons, may the Eternal Comforter abide with us, and cause us to bless the Lord at all times, making even the solitary place to become a temple for Yahweh.⁶

Psalm 63

A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, You are my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.
So I have looked for You in the sanctuary,
To see Your power and Your glory.

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life,
My lips shall praise You.
Thus I will bless You while I live;
I will lift up my hands in Your name.
My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,
And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips.

When I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the night watches.
Because You have been my help,
Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.
My soul follows close behind You;
Your right hand upholds me.

But those who seek my life, to destroy it,
Shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
They shall fall by the sword;
They shall be a portion for jackals.

But the king shall rejoice in God;
Everyone who swears by Him shall glory;
But the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.

NOTES

- 1 Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2366.
- 2 John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), p. 451.
- 3 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 853.

