

2SAMUEL 15

2Samuel 15:1–37

Absalom Foments Revolution Against David

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

These exegetical studies are *not* designed for you to read each and every word. For instance, the Hebrew exegesis is put into greyish tables, so that if you want to skip over them, that is fine. If you question a translation, you can always refer back to the appropriate Hebrew tables to sort it all out.

The intent is to make this particular study the most complete and most accurate examination of 2Samuel 15 which is available in writing. The idea is to make every phrase, verse and passage understandable; and to make application of all that is studied.

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Doctrines Covered	Doctrines Alluded To		
	Ark of the Covenant	Davidic Timeline	The Geographical Will of God
Revolution	Heathenism	Laws of Divine Establishment	The Military
	Movement of the Ark and the Tabernacle	Polygamy	

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To

2Samuel 8	2Samuel 11	2Samuel 13	2Samuel 14
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Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter

Psalm 3	Psalm 39		
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Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's great contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. In addition to this, I will use a number of other more traditional technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Definition of Terms	
Client Nation	Client-Nation, is a national entity in which a certain number of spiritually mature Christians (the salt of the earth) have formed a pivot sufficient to sustain the nation and through which God specifically protects this nation so that believers can fulfill the divine mandates of evangelism, communication and custodianship of Bible doctrine, providing a haven for Jews, and sending missionaries abroad. The United States is a client-nation to God. A client nation must have freedom: Freedom to seek God, freedom to use one's own volition and self-determination to succeed or fail, freedom from anarchy and tyranny, freedom for evangelism, freedom for believers to hear Bible teaching without government interference and, therefore, to grow spiritually, and freedom to send missionaries to other nations.
Cosmic system thinking	A person's viewpoint is confused with the thinking of Satan, who thinks in terms of human viewpoint, lies, and legalism. This is exactly the opposite thinking of the gospel, Bible doctrine, and the laws of divine establishment.
Criminal arrogance	Criminal arrogance seeks to solve problems by violence and/or by criminal actions. The modus operandi of a person in criminal arrogance is criminal behavior. Believers are susceptible to this kind of arrogance just as unbelievers are.
Crusader arrogance	Crusader arrogance is the self-righteousness arrogance that tries to straighten the world from its error and mistakes. A person places his personal standards above the law or any form of establishment or authority. When criminal arrogance interlocks with crusader arrogance, there is terrorism or revolution.
Cycles of Discipline (Stage of National Discipline)	A national entity which is a client nation to God is under both God's protection and His discipline (much like the individual believer). As a nation moves further and further from God, God may impose disciplinary measures on that nation, which include economic disaster, illness, civil unrest, military defeat, and even invasion which may include a slavery or dispersion of the people. These cycles are found in Lev. 26. Although these warnings are designed for Israel, all client nations to God may face similar downward historical trends.
Doctrinal rationales	You understand, from Bible doctrine, the thinking, character and actions of God, and are able to apply God's essence and function to your day to day life.
Flying column	A flying column is a force of troops equipped and organized to move swiftly and independently of a principal unit to which it is attached. It is also a very mobile military organization which engages in guerilla tactics.
Laws of Divine Establishment	These are the laws, principles and morality which God has designed to perpetuate every society or government in such a way that freedom to evangelize, freedom to teach doctrine and the freedom to send out missionaries are maximized.
4th and 5th stages of national discipline	<p>The 4th stage of national discipline is when a foreign country comes in and both taxes and rules over the priest nation to God.</p> <p>The 5th stage of national discipline involves complete loss of personal and national sovereignty, the destruction of the family and the nation. Offerings to God are unacceptable. Nations which have undergone this destruction have experienced slavery, cannibalism, and the assimilation of its surviving citizens into other cultures.</p>

Definition of Terms	
Pivot	<p>Believers with doctrine influence a society. A good example of this is the Roman Empire, which began as being very opposed to Christianity, but which became strongly influenced by Christianity. As the Christian Tertullian observed: "We are but of yesterday, yet we fill your cities, islands, forts, towns, councils, even camps, tribes, decuries, the palace, the senate, the forum; we have left you the temples alone." This was accomplished without an armed insurrection against Rome.</p> <p>The norms and standards of believers in Jesus Christ began to filter into the society. Abraham and his people represented a positive influence on the surrounding areas; Lot and his family had almost no influence whatsoever.</p>
Priest nation	A priest nation is a nation through whom God works. The Word of God will be preserved in a priest nation (and even written in a priest nation); and evangelization will occur both within that priest nation, and men will be sent out to evangelize (like Jonah).
Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers).
Reversionism, reversionistic	The believer <i>reverts</i> back to his sinful habits as an unbeliever with great regularity. This can also refer to a person who is an unbeliever who once embraced divine establishment and now rejects it.
Sexual arrogance; sexual addiction	This is the points where sexual desire overrides all else in a person's psyche. It overrides reason, compassion, protocol. Just as the drug addict might be willing to do nearly anything for a fix; so the sexually addicted will be willing to do and even risk anything in order to fulfill their lusts. For the sexual addict, the object of his sexual lust is simply an object; his sexual lust does not indicate any sort of love is involved; not even <i>like</i> .
Supergrace believer	This is a term originated by R. B. Thieme, Jr. to indicate that a person is in spiritual maturity.
<p>Some of these definitions are taken from http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html http://www.theopedia.com/</p>	

Winston Churchill on clandestine warfare: "In wartime, truth is so precious that she should be attended by a bodyguard of lies." By the time that we complete this chapter, you will understand what Churchill was talking about.

From Lord Wolseley's "Soldier's Pocket-book"¹: "As a nation, we are brought up to feel it a disgrace to succeed by falsehood; the word 'spy' conveys in it something as repulsive as slave. We will keep hammering away with the conviction that honesty is the best policy, and that truth always wins in the long run. These pretty little

¹ http://oil.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=127&chapter=10210&layout=html&Itemid=27 accessed October 18, 2012.

sentences do well enough for a child's copybook, but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheathe his sword for ever."

Sun Tzu, "All war is deception."

R. B. Thieme, Jr., "Who knew before Sun Tzu?"

2Sam. 15:31b Therefore, David prayed to God, saying, "Frustrate, O Jehovah, the counsel and advice of Ahithophel."

2Sam. 17:14b For Y^ehowah had ordained [from eternity past] to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel [through the tactics of clandestine warfare], to the intent that He might bring evil on Absalom.

An Introduction to 2Samuel 15

Introduction: 2Sam. 15 is an incredible chapter of Holy Writ. It covers two primary narratives: Absalom, David's son, organizes a revolution against David; and David flees Jerusalem, and chooses to oppose the revolution from outside Judah. There are quite a number of topics covered in this chapter, including politics (with very modern-day applications) and the concept of clandestine warfare (also known as, *when is it okay for the believer to lie?*).

Like every portion of Scripture, this is the Word of God inspired by God the Holy Spirit. God expects us to learn from what is found here. There are things in this chapter found nowhere else in the Word of God. This, and the chapters which immediately follow, give us great insight into covert warfare.

This chapter continues the pressure that God puts upon David, but one could argue that, these are the natural results of what David has himself done. That is, God did not reach into the volition of half of Israel and make them rebel against David. David, by his actions, caused much of that.

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of 2Samuel 31

Characters	Commentary
Absalom	Absalom is King David's son and he will rebel against his father in this chapter. He will become the defacto king.
King David	King David is still reaping what he has sown, and he faces an all-out revolution led by his eldest living son. ²
Ahithophel	Ahithophel is Bathsheba's grandfather and, apparently, a brilliant strategist who will side with Absalom in the revolt. 2Sam. 15:12 16:23 Some believe that Ahithophel was the loyal friend who turned against David, mentioned in Psalm 41:9 55:12-14
Ittai the Gittite	Ittai is a leader of the 600 soldiers from Gath who have chosen to follow David. As their leader, Ittai pledges his loyalty and his life to David.
Zadok and Abiathar	The two high priests under David.

² There is actually an older son (Chileab), but we do not hear anything about him. He is either dead, incapable of governing or disinterested in it.

The Principals of 2Samuel 31

Characters	Commentary
Ahimaaz and Jonathan	Two of the sons of the high priests who will act as couriers.
Hushai the Archite	Hushai is an older man, loyal to David, who will act as a mole in Absalom's inner circle.

There are also the Pelethites and the Cherethites, who are foreign soldiers who act as David's bodyguards.

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It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of 2Samuel 15

In the previous chapters of 2Samuel, David has set himself up for a great deal of pressure by God, at times while he is in fellowship and at times when he is not in fellowship. David, when his soldiers were at war, observed from his house rooftop the exquisite Bathsheba bathing and he called for her to be brought to him and he had sex with her (which appears to be rape, although the Bible does not explicitly call it rape). Then David, when he finds that he has impregnated this woman, tries to get her husband to think that he is the father of the child. When this does not work, David has this man killed in battle by Joab, his top general. In this, David has sunk to his lowest point of sexual lust resulting in great personal corruption, and the only way that God would be able to restore David's soul and his divine viewpoint thinking would be to apply constant pressure upon David for a period of maybe ten years. **2Samuel 11** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

Part of this pressure included one son (Amnon) raping David's daughter, Tamar, and, when David fails to do anything about this, her brother Absalom steps in and kills Amnon. However, this means that Absalom has to flee David's jurisdiction, so he leaves Jerusalem and goes to the country of his grandfather, in Geshur, east of the Jordan and north of Jerusalem. **2Samuel 13** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

Joab, who made a mistake to follow David's orders in the first place, tries to make all of this better by getting David and his son Absalom back in the same room with one another. This involved a rather convoluted plot on Joab's part, which did work, which did bring Absalom back to Jerusalem, but he lived in Jerusalem for two years without being able to see the face of his father. **2Samuel 14** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

Absalom took the initiative and got Joab to arrange a meeting, but he revealed a criminal soul when he did this, getting Joab's attention by burning down his field. However, when David and Absalom got into the same room together, many years after Absalom had killed Amnon, all was forgiven. Absalom needed this forgiveness; not because his soul craved his father David's affection, but because he could not put his plot of revolution into motion as a pariah to the palace. He must be able to come and go as he pleases, be known as the king's son, and function as a king's son. This is key. Without David's approval, Absalom cannot revolt against him.¹

However, we are going to find out that Absalom is not a man who likes to wait for anything; nor is he above breaking the law when it suits his purpose. He may look at it from the standpoint of, if breaking a few laws has a good result, then breaking a few laws is legitimate.

The storyline for this narrative goes back to 2Samuel 11, where David's adultery with Bathsheba and his killing of her husband set David up for all that follows (however, much of Absalom's character was probably molded prior to this). All of the subsequent chapters lead us to this point in time.

¹ I read a number of commentators—maybe as many as 15—and I do not recall anyone apart from R. B. Thieme, Jr. make this point (and he made it rather quickly, almost as an aside). However, 2Sam. 14:33 (Joab went to the king and told him. So David summoned Absalom, who came to the king and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. Then the king kissed Absalom.) is why Absalom will be able to lead a revolt against his father.

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Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This timeline is simply a shortened version of the **David Timeline (HTML)** (**PDF**), with a few principle events of David's life recorded, along with the events of this chapter. Bracketed dates are derived from the Scripture, based upon author's original premises.

The Abbreviated David Timeline

Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
[1085 B.C.]	1040 B.C.	[1055 B.C.]	Ruth 4:22	David is born.
1062 B.C.		1029 B.C.	1Sam. 17	David defeats Goliath.
1055 B.C. (c. 1010 B.C.)	1010 B.C.	1025 B.C.	2Sam. 2:1–4	David becomes king over Judah (the southern kingdom). David is 30. 2Sam. 5:4 David was 30 years old when he began to reign. He reigned 40 years.
1048 B.C. (c. 1004 B.C.)	1003 B.C.	1018 B.C.	2Sam. 5:1–3 1Chron. 11:1–3	David becomes king over all Israel. He is still ruling from Hebron. David is approximately 37 years old, according to Bible Truth 4U.
1035 B.C.		1005 B.C. c. 1016 B.C. (Klassen)	2Sam. 11:2–25	David's sin with Bathsheba. He has her husband, Uriah the Hittite, killed in battle.
1032 B.C.	990 B.C.	1002 B.C.	2Sam. 13:1–22	David's son, Amnon, rapes David's daughter, Tamar.
1030 B.C.	[990–985 B.C.]	1001–999 B.C. 998 B.C. (Klassen – date was changed; typo in Reese)	2Sam. 13:23–39	David's son Absalom kills Amnon and flees. 2Sam. 13:23 And it happened after 2 full years Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, beside Ephraim. And Absalom invited all the king's sons. 2Sam. 13:38 And Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there 3 years.

The Abbreviated David Timeline				
Fenton-Farrar (F. L. Smith)	Bible Truth 4U	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Narrative
1024 B.C.	979–961 B.C. (?)	994–993 B.C.	2Sam. 15	Absalom rebels against David and David goes into exile. 2Sam. 15:6–10 <i>And in this way Absalom did to all Israel that came to the king for judgment. And Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. And it happened at the end of 4 years, Absalom said to the king, Please let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to Jehovah in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Syria, saying, If Jehovah will indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Jehovah. And the king said to him, Go in peace. And he arose and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you shall say, Absalom reigns in Hebron!</i>

There is a problem with the material above; none of these sources appear to take into consideration the 4 years³ of this chapter, during which Absalom will build up his support among Israeli citizens. F.F. has no interval; Bible Truth has an 18 year interval and Reese has a 2 year interval. Given those problems, let us conclude the following:

David is around 61–62 years of age.

This places him at the beginning of his 4th decade as king.⁴

If we assume that Absalom is 15 when his sister is raped (they are quite young), he is now still very young, being 23 or 24. Taking the 4 years into account, that brings him to 27 or 28, which is not far from the NIV Study Bible's approximation of 30 years.⁵ My age approximation for Absalom is based upon an assumption.

Let's approach Absalom's age from a different way. He is born to David in Hebron, when David would be 30–37 (see 2Sam. 5:4–5). Absalom is the 3rd son born to him in Hebron, where 6 sons are born to him over a period of 7 years (1Chron. 3:1–4). Since these are by different wives, they could have all been born in the same year; however, David seems to have married Absalom's mother while he was reigning in Hebron, which marriage probably represented a political alliance. The puts Absalom somewhere between 24 and 32. If Absalom is born in the 3rd year, then he is in his late 20's.

There is nothing magical about these dates or ages. It sometimes helps you to get a grasp of the difference in ages. You know someone in their early 60's. Think of someone that age who is vigorous, intelligent and driven—that would be David. Think of someone else who is in his mid to late 20's, who is spoiled and believes that he is entitled; and he will do anything to steal what he believes is rightfully his (or, let's say, he is the kind of person who will take shortcuts to get what he wants). That would be Absalom. Imagine now that these are father and son, and you have a rough picture of David and Absalom.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

³ Also, this 4 years is, in itself, somewhat problematic, which will be discussed in v. 7.

⁴ Which comports with *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote), where this is said to be the beginning of David's last decade as king.

⁵ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote).

You may wonder, after the previous chapters, *why is David still getting beat up over his sins by God?* What has happened throughout this period of a decade is (1) David is reaping what he sowed. The actions of his children were all a matter of his having too many wives and too many families to take care of, and, therefore, his children were raised, for all intents and purposes, by single mothers with financial support from the state. (2) God has to take David to a point where he will not fall into this same gate of **sexual arrogance**. David had become obsessed with his own personal sexual satisfaction, and it had gotten to a point where, he would literally do anything. It had become an addiction which took over his life. (3) David's sexual arrogance has affected him in a number of areas. He is off his game judicially: he was too indulgent to the woman from Tekoa and he did not try Amnon or Absalom. He sons should have been dealt with judicially because they broke the law. Being a king's son does not give anyone the right to break the law.

On the other hand, this appears to be one of the most productive times of David's writing; he penned 6 or more psalms during this time period (possibly as many as (10), and likely recording the chapters we have been studying.

To warm you up to Absalom's character, Clarke writes (I think he is quoting Calmet?): *[Absalom] was a bold, violent, revengeful, haughty, enterprising, magnificent, eloquent, and popular prince; he was also rich, ambitious, and vain of his personal accomplishments: after the death of Amnon, and his reconciliation to his father, he saw no hindrance in his way to the throne. He despised Solomon because of the meanness of his birth, and his tender years. He was himself of the blood royal, not only by his father David, but also by his mother Maacah, daughter to Talmai, king of Geshur: and, doubtless, in his own apprehension, of sufficient age, authority, and wisdom, to sustain the weight of government. There was properly now no competitor in his way: Amnon, David's first-born, was dead. Of Chileab, his second son by Abigail, we hear nothing; and Absalom was the third: see 2Sam. 3:2–5. He, therefore, seemed to stand nearest to the throne; but his sin was, that he sought it during his father's life, and endeavored to dethrone him in order to sit in his stead.*⁶

Absalom, David's son, is not a man who has any patience, and he will do what he believes is right, no matter who thinks differently. He is very much like his father David, but probably unregenerate and without interest in David's Savior.

Application: We have Supreme Court justices who have, over the past 100 years, far overstepped the bounds of their authority, and have been making law for years now. Their belief is, if what they are ruling on has a right result, in their own estimation, then it does not matter to them how they come to that right result. That is, a particular law may say "X", but if they believe that "not-X" is the proper outcome, and the righteous outcome, then they will rule "not-X." Their proper role is to interpret the law in the light of the constitution, which is a relative short document. If a law passed by Congress and signed by the president is contrary to the constitution, they are to strike that law down, no matter how good it seems to them. The idea is—and this, I believe if the Fundamental mistake of Chief Justice John Roberts in this year 2012—no matter how good a law happens to be, there is a much lower threshold required for the passing of a law as opposed to the passing of a constitutional amendment. Therefore, if a law violates the constitution, that law must be struck down, requiring the Congress to re-submit this law under the stricter requirements of being a constitutional amendment, as the only thing which can override a constitutional amendment is a more recent constitutional amendment. All of this takes a great deal of time, and that was the intent of our founding fathers, so that arbitrary laws and philosophical directions are not determined by a set of very transitory leaders, whose rule is overthrown in subsequent elections.

Absalom believed that his approach to governing was superior to his father's, and he believed that he was right in supplanting his father as ruler of the land. Governing always looks easier from the outside. We saw this from our 2008 election, where our current president, Barack Obama, essentially ran against the actions of policies of his predecessor, George W. Bush. On at least one occasions, Obama **railed against** the debt that Bush ran up; and on many occasions, he indicated **great personal disdain** for our prisoner-of-war camp at Guantanamo Bay (which is perhaps the most pleasant prisoner-of-war camp in the history of the world). When in office, President Obama could not control the debt; in fact, it **skyrocketed** under his management; and, although he signed orders

⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:1.

to close Guantanamo Bay Prison, it remains open in this 4th year of his presidency (I write this in the year of our Lord, 2012). Absalom's approach will be, he will complain about Israel's judicial system with his father as a judge of the land. This was a personal issue with Absalom, who was never subjected to a trial (nor was his degenerate brother, Amnon).

We have witnessed this transformation in his personality and direction in life, from being simply a concerned and loving brother, to finally overruling the law of the land by his own hand, believing himself to be right and David to be wrong. Absalom has now reached a point where he believes that it is right over violently overthrow the government of his own father.

Note how different this is from David's attitude toward Saul, the king of Israel. David had two chances to kill Saul (1Sam. 24-26). Saul was at his mercy, David's own men encouraged him to kill Saul, and yet he did not. Saul was the Lord's anointed and David was not going to lift his hand against the Lord's anointed. David did not have this overpowering lust to be king and to have authority over all Israel. So his judgment was not clouded at that point in time. David was willing to be on God's timetable.

By rebelling against his father, Absalom fulfills the prophecy of 2Sam. 12:11a **Thus says the LORD, "Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house."** Actually, Absalom continues this evil, which was begun by Amnon.

In this chapter, Absalom is going to first attack David where he believes his father to be weakest: in his judicial decisions. David should have ruled in favor of the execution of Amnon, and he did not (which was a serious breach of David's judicial responsibility). Even though David is wrong, that does not give Absalom the right to supersede David's judgment.

Application: It is my own belief that Chief Justice John Roberts chose to uphold the Affordable Healthcare Law simply so that his court would not strike down a law based on a 5-4 ruling. However, even though I believe that he came to the wrong conclusion in this case, this does not mean I have any rights to try to remove Justice Roberts from the bench through illegal means. Along the same lines, there are a lot of Congressmen and our current President (I write this in 2012) that I think are making a mess of our country, but it is not my prerogative (or anyone else's) to illegally remove them from office. This includes anything from voter fraud to assassination (which could include inaccurate character assassination). Wrong as these leaders may be, we must operate within our system of government to correct the problem, no matter how serious we perceive that problem to be.

Syndein has some brief introductory notes to Bob Thieme's many lessons on this chapter of 2Samuel.

Syndein Notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Bible Class

At the end of Chapter 14, we see David's timing is again off. He should have forgiven Absalom if he was going to pardon him. But after two years, RBT says the time was not right for him to allow Absalom back in the palace when in bitterness, Absalom was plotting revolution and was just using David.

An addendum needs to be added to this. The key was not that David did not fully forgive Absalom, but that David did not deal with Absalom in justice. There were several outcomes from 2Sam. 14 which would have involved the application of justice by David. David would have had to have gone back to the original crime committed by Amnon and work forward from there to Absalom's crime, and this should have been done in an open court. Then David would have needed to pronounce a just verdict upon Absalom, even if it were a pardon, given the circumstances.

There is an important parallel to our lives here on this earth. We want God to deal with us in justice. We do not want God to abandon His justice in order to save us—otherwise, God is not God. We are not saved on the basis of God's sentimental nature—God is not sentimental. Because, with sentimentality comes its counterpart, which is familial anger. As a person with an old sin nature, I sin. I do not want God viewing me sentimentally one day, and then after a great failure in my spiritual life, destroying my life. We are saved on the basis of justice, because Jesus Christ died for our sins. We are not saved because we lead some better-than-mediocre

Syndein Notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Bible Class

life after believing in Jesus. I can trust in my salvation, not because I am some great Christian, but because Jesus paid for my sins. I can trust in my salvation because God, in His justice, judged His Son in my stead.

In the David series, RBT says there are three basic groups in a revolutionary situation: 1) The core conspirators, 2) the masses/hoi polloi, and 3) the biblical conservatives opposing the revolution. The core conspirators start out with the arrogant crusaders. In all reality, a revolution is the quintessence of human arrogance. The arrogant crusaders believe that they have a cause that warrants a rejection of God's laws for establishment (ends justifies the means). People with criminal arrogance step forward and provide the brutality needed to get the revolution going. The common folk (the hoi polloi), are duped into following the leaders based on the leaders charisma, personality, or some other superficial characteristic of the group. The biblical conservatives understand God's laws concerning respect for authority - they must be destroyed by the conspirators for the revolution to take place. Technically, a 'revolution' is the overthrow of legitimate authority by pseudo-authority with no respect for God's laws of authority. For example, the so called 'American Revolution' was NOT a revolution but instead of 'fight for freedom'. Without representation in the government, the colonies were not under God's laws for a established nation under Him. The colonists fought for their right to have a say in their own governments which is proper under God's laws for establishment.

Vocabulary of Revolutions: 1) A plot is the plan of the revolution. 2) The means for carrying out the plot of a revolution is called 'intrigue'. 3) The foot solders of the core group RBT calls couriers. A 'courier' is one who carries a message or is an administrator. Here we have the beginning of the core conspiracy. These men are impressed by Absalom's looks and personality and intelligence and his apparent authority. They will give him their loyalty. So, this is an example of how 'loyalty' can be evil - loyalty to pseudo-authority is evil. 4) 'Cadre' is the word for those who rally around someone, regardless of how arrogant and anti-establishment that person is.

From: http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_15.html accessed September 9, 2012. There has been some modification made to these notes.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Here is a complete synopsis of 2Sam. 15:

A Synopsis of 2Samuel 15

Although David finally forgave Absalom, it was all based upon emotion (2Sam. 14:33). Absalom began to live the part of a king-in-waiting, hiring an entourage and a stretch limousine (2Sam. 15:1). He also began to speak to people who came into Jerusalem to get court cases settled. He sympathized with those who were unhappy, for whatever reason, and always agreed with them (vv. 2–4). That way, when they returned home, they always had something good to say about the king's son, Absalom. When Absalom spoke to people, he treated them as an equal or as an intimate friend, so that the people of Israel really got to like him (vv. 5–6). He ran a political campaign not unlike those that we see today.

After spending four years speaking to individuals and selling himself as a man of the people, Absalom made his big move, going down to Hebron—but he told his father David that he was going to Hebron to fulfill a religious vow (2Sam. 15:7–11). He did a couple of things on this trip: he organized men to go all over Israel, so that, when given the signal, they would cry out, "Absalom is king in Hebron." (v. 10). He also got 200 men—probably of David's closest confidants—to go with him to Hebron, so that David thought that Absalom had won them over; however, they were unaware of Absalom's plot (v. 11). Absalom also managed to get as his chief administrator and advisor, Ahithophel, who was a brilliant man, and was potentially the key to Absalom's success (v. 12).

A Synopsis of 2Samuel 15

Eventually, someone told David about all of this (2Sam. 15:13), so David decided to leave Jerusalem, in part, to protect the people of Jerusalem from bloodshed (vv. 14–17). Of his personal relations, David left behind 10 of his mistresses to keep the palace (v. 16).

David has quite a number of foreigners who joined him (vv. 19–20), and, although David tries to talk at least one of them out of following him, they are steadfast in their loyalty to him. 2Sam. 15:17–22

The two high priests had joined David, bringing with them the Ark of God. However, David sent them back, setting them up as an intelligence cell within Jerusalem. They were to use their sons as couriers. 2Sam. 15:24–29

When David finds out that Ahithophel has allied himself with Absalom, David quickly prays that his counsel be nullified (2Sam. 15:31). Within an hour of making this prayer, God answers David in the form of Hushai the Archite, who is apparently an older man with strong loyalties to David. David will send him back to Jerusalem to act as his mole in the Absalom organization. 2Sam. 15:31–37

2Sam. 15 is Absalom fomenting rebellion against his father David.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Most of the outlines for this chapter are fairly similar.

Alternative Outline from Poole

Scripture	Text/Commentary
2Sam. 15:1–6	Absalom steals the hearts of Israel
2Sam. 15:7–12	Under pretense of a vow obtains leave to go to Hebron: there with Ahithophel’s aid he conspires to be king
2Sam. 15:13–37	David flees from Jerusalem with all his men; and leaves ten of his concubines, .

From Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:1 (Edited).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Many believers are quite confused about warfare and what is allowed and what is not. Some believers understand that, killing in war is not just allowed, but expected of us when we are at war. In fact, the Christian ought to be the greatest killing machine in his unit.

However, another sticky theological point is spying; what can spies do? What can they say? Can a spy who is a believer lie to someone? This chapter and the 2Sam. 17 will answer these questions in the affirmative. Spying is a legitimate tactic in warfare, and lying as a spy is completely legitimate. Although these things can be reasonably confirmed in Joshua, when Rahab the prostitute allies herself with Joshua, this is even more clear in 2Sam. 15 and 17.

And, even though David ruled over Israel as a king, and Absalom attempted to depose him yet as a king, there are still many applications to our politics today. Since I write this in 2012, the applications within will often be from the past decade or so; but many times, the principles found in the Bible are timeless, and can be adjusted and applied to nearly any time period.

This is fallow ground that lay unplowed for centuries until R. B. Thieme, Jr. exegeted it in the 1970's and 1980's. Several pastors who have come out of his church have also taught it. Insofar as I know, this is the first time that this chapter is laid out clearly in great detail in written form.

As in all previous chapters of Samuel, the greater part of this exegesis was done independently of notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Bible classes. However, they were consulted in the end, just in case an important principles were left out. In other words, these are not Bob Thieme's notes written out.

As a personal testimony, I cannot tell you just how wonderful it is to sit down with the Word of God and to dissect it. Every chapter seems to become more vibrant and alive to me, with greater and greater applications to real life. I only hope I can convey a portion of what a joy it is to me to be given the grace to examine these things as you see here.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Absalom Lays the Groundwork for His Populist Revolution

Slavishly literal:

And so he is from after then and so he makes for himself Absalom a chariot and horses and fifty a man running to his faces.

2Samuel
15:1

Moderately literal:

And so it is after this [lit., *thus*] that Absalom acquires for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men running before him.

And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation⁷; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

⁷ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

Latin Vulgate	Now after these things Absalom made himself <u>chariots</u> , and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is from after then and so he makes for himself Absalom a chariot and horses and fifty a man running to his faces.
Peshitta (Syriac)	AND after this, Absalom prepared for himself <u>chariots</u> and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass after this that Absalom prepared for himself <u>chariots</u> and horses, and fifty men to run before him.
Brenton's Septuagint	And it came to pass after this that Abessalom prepared for himself <u>chariots</u> and horses, and fifty men to run before him.
Significant differences:	<i>Chariot</i> is in the singular in the Hebrew; and apparently in the plural in the other languages (confirmed as plural in the Greek). The differences at the beginning of this verse and at the end are simply legitimate ways to translate the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Absalom plots rebellion Some time later, Absalom got a chariot and horses for his own use, along with fifty men to run ahead of him.
Contemporary English V.	Some time later, Absalom got himself a chariot with horses to pull it, and he had fifty men run in front.
Easy English (Pocock)	Absalom makes a secret plan against King David After this, Absalom got a *chariot and some horses. He also got 50 men who ran ahead of him.
Easy-to-Read Version	After this, Absalom got a chariot [A small wagon used in war.] and horses for himself. He had 50 men run in front of him {while he drove the chariot}.
Good News Bible (TEV)	After this, Absalom provided a chariot and horses for himself, and an escort of fifty men.
<i>The Message</i>	As time went on, Absalom took to riding in a horse-drawn chariot, with fifty men running in front of him.
New Century Version	Absalom Plans to Take David's Kingdom After this, Absalom got a chariot and horses for himself and fifty men to run before him.
New Life Bible	Absalom Becomes Friends With Men Of Israel
New Living Translation	After this, Absalom got a warwagon and horses, and fifty men to run in front of him. Absalom's Rebellion

After this, Absalom bought a chariot and horses, and he hired fifty bodyguards to run ahead of him.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, thereafter, AbSalom obtained some chariots and horsemen, and he recruited fifty men to run in front of him.
God's Word™	Soon after this, Absalom acquired a chariot, horses, and 50 men to run ahead of him.
New American Bible	<i>Absalom's Ambition.</i> After this, Absalom provided himself with chariots, horses, and a retinue of fifty. 1Sam. 8:11 1Kings 1:5.
NIRV	Absalom Makes Secret Plans Against David Some time later, Absalom got a chariot and horses for himself. He also got 50 men to run in front of him.
New Jerusalem Bible	After this, Absalom procured a chariot and horses, with fifty men to run ahead of him.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom provided a chariot and horses for himself. He had an escort of fifty men to run ahead of him.
Revised English Bible	After this Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and fifty outrunners.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	So afterwards, Absalom was making a chariot with horses for fifty men to run in front of him.
Bible in Basic English	Now after this, Absalom got for himself a carriage and horses, and fifty runners to go before him.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And it came to pass after this, that Absalom made for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men were running before him.
NET Bible®	Absalom Leads an Insurrection against David Some time later Absalom managed to acquire [Heb "acquired for himself."] a chariot and horses, as well as fifty men to serve as his royal guard [Heb "to run ahead of him."]. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.
NIV – UK	Absalom's conspiracy In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And it comes to pass afterwards, that Absalom prepares for himself a chariot, and horses, and fifty men are running before him;...
English Standard Version exeGesés companion Bible	After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. <u>THE CONSPIRACY OF ABI SHALOM</u> And so be it, afterward, Abi Shalom works him chariots and horses and fifty men to run at his face:...
The Geneva Bible	And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to [Which were as a guard to set forth his estate.] run before him.
Hebrew Names Version	It happened after this, that Avshalom prepared him a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

LTHB **And it happened afterward that Absalom prepared a chariot for himself, and horses, and fifty men running before him.**

New King James Version **Absalom's Treason**
After this it happened that Absalom provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

Syndein/Thieme {Verses 1-12: Conspiracy of Absalom}
 {Verses 1-4: Absalom Undermines David's Authority}
And it came to pass after this {after David's public display of 'forgiving' Absalom - people take it as David's 'approval' of Absalom making him the 'heir apparent' - so Absalom can use 'pseudo- authority' to overthrow true authority}, **that Absalom prepared him 'a chariot of state' and horses . . .** {merkabah - special chariot here capitalizing on David's public act of forgiveness - giving impression that Absalom is heir apparent} **and fifty men 'acting as couriers'** {idiom: literally: 'to run before him'}. {carrying the message of the blooming revolution}.

World English Bible **It happened after this, that Absalom prepared him a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him.**

Young's Updated LT **And it comes to pass afterwards, that Absalom prepares for himself a chariot, and horses, and fifty men are running before him.**

The gist of this verse: Absalom begins the act the part of a king, to his own way of thinking, by getting a chariot, horses and 50 men to run before him.

2Samuel 15:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
mê'achar (מֵאַחַר) [pronounced <i>may-ah-KHAHR</i>]	<i>from, from after, from (being) after, from behind, from following after</i>	compounded prepositions	Strong's #4480 BDB #577 and Strong's #310 BDB #29
This is especially used when one leaves what one has been following.			
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485

2Samuel 15:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
All of the BDB meanings are listed here: 1) <i>so, therefore, thus (adverb)</i> ; 1a) <i>thus, so</i> ; 1b) <i>just so</i> ; 1c) <i>therefore</i> ; 1d) <i>so ... as (paired with adverb)</i> ; 1e) <i>then</i> ; 1f) <i>forasmuch as (in phrase)</i> ; 1g) <i>(with preposition)</i> ; 1g1) <i>therefore, this being so (specific)</i> ; 1g2) <i>hitherto</i> ; 1g3) <i>therefore, on this ground (general)</i> ; 1g4) <i>afterwards</i> ; 1g5) <i>in such case</i> ; 2) <i>right, just, honest, true, veritable (adjective)</i> ; 2a) <i>right, just, honest</i> ; 2b) <i>correct</i> ; 2c) <i>true, veritable</i> ; 2d) <i>true!, right!, correct! (in assent)</i> .			

Translation: *And so it is after this* [lit., *thus*]... In the preface, the exact details of what has occurred has already been discussed. However, Absalom, the king's son, has developed somewhat of a criminal streak. He has decided that, if he has a plan, that he is going to carry it out, whether it is legitimate or not. So, he has lived in Jerusalem for two years now, without his father prosecuting him for killing his half-brother Amnon, and he and his father David have met and come together as father and son, where all is forgiven, but where there has been no actual application of justice.

We do not know how much time has passed; we do not know exactly what responsibilities that Absalom has; and we do not know what sort of access he has to cash as one of the king's many sons. However, he is the king's #1 son at this point, and a man who seems to be very much like his father, at least in the most superficial ways.

2Samuel 15:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
The full set of Qal meanings from BDB: <i>to do, work, make, produce; to do; to work; to deal (with); to act, act with effect, effect; to produce; to prepare; to make (an offering); to attend to, put in order; to observe, celebrate; to acquire (property); to appoint, ordain, institute; to bring about; to use; to spend, pass.</i>			
All of the BDB Qal meanings for this word are: 1a1) <i>to do, work, make, produce</i> ; 1a1a) <i>to do</i> ; 1a1b) <i>to work</i> ; 1a1c) <i>to deal (with)</i> ; 1a1d) <i>to act, act with effect, effect</i> ; 1a2) <i>to make</i> ; 1a2a) <i>to make</i> ; 1a2b) <i>to produce</i> ; 1a2c) <i>to prepare</i> ; 1a2d) <i>to make (an offering)</i> ; 1a2e) <i>to attend to, put in order</i> ; 1a2f) <i>to observe, celebrate</i> ; 1a2g) <i>to acquire (property)</i> ; 1a2h) <i>to appoint, ordain, institute</i> ; 1a2i) <i>to bring about</i> ; 1a2j) <i>to use</i> ; 1a2k) <i>to spend, pass.</i>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

2Samuel 15:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
An alternate form of this word is 'Ab ^e shâlôwm (אַבְשָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ahb^e-shaw-LOHM</i>].			
mer ^e kâbâh (מֶרְכָבָה) [pronounced <i>mer^e-kaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>chariot, war chariot</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4818 BDB #939
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çûwç (סוּס) [pronounced <i>soos</i>]	<i>horse, chariot horse; swallow, swift</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5483 BDB #692

Translation: ...that Absalom acquires for himself a chariot and horses...

Absalom is David's third son (2Sam. 3:2–3), who appears to be the most politically motivated of all David's sons. He wants power and he wants it now, as this chapter will make clear. When speaking of him personally, the Bible emphasizes his flawless physical appearance (2Sam. 14:25). Nowhere does the Bible speak of his fine character or of his devotion to the God of Israel.

Absalom has observed his father and he has observed his grandfather, so he does the things which make him appear to be a ruler of men.



When Barack Obama first won his party's nomination and later the presidency, all along the way, he did things to make himself seem as though he was a president. On the podium in front of him, he had an official sign saying, "Office of the President Elect." Now there is no such office as the "office of President Elect." But it looked official and made it seem as though he is an important government official of sorts. He was attempting to act the part of a president, back in November 2008 before he took office, the idea being, he could do official stuff as *president elect*, despite the fact that this was **considered by some to be illegal**.⁸

This is what Absalom is doing. He is making himself out to appear to be a king. He is making it seem as though he is royalty, that he is the natural successor to David, and that, perhaps, he is sort of the unofficial king. He occupied the "Office of the King-in-Waiting." Or, if you would rather, "The Crown Prince" (a title we are more familiar with).

Barnes confirms this: [*Absalom does this*] to make himself look grand and respectable among the people; perhaps he got these from his grandfather at Geshur in Syria.⁹

First thing that he needed was a chariot. The verb says that Absalom *made* a chariot, and that is a possibility. After all, we do not know what sort of skills Absalom acquired over the years. He did not seem to be a lazy layabout like his half-brother Amnon, but he seemed as though he was more the sort of guy who wanted to appear to be king because he wanted to be king, not because he was the king.

The verb suggests that it is possible that Absalom made this chariot. However, the verb can also mean *to acquire*, and Absalom also acquired horses, apparently to power the chariot. Interestingly enough, Moses warned against

⁸ Although I certainly have a political persuasion, I find it instructive to use contemporary politicians to illustrate what is going on politically in Scripture. Most people are cognizant of this period of a few months when then Senator Obama occupied the *office of president elect*. This is exactly what Absalom is doing. He is occupying the office of king elect.

⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:1.

a king acquiring too many horses (Deut. 17:16). The idea was, a king should not use his office in order to simply collect wealth (which is one of Solomon's great failings¹⁰). Samuel warned against the same thing in 1Sam. 8:11 ("These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots."). Part of the reason for such a warning is, the king of Israel was a kind of Christ, and God wanted our Lord to be seen not only as king, but as a meek and humble man, as Jesus gave up His place as God to dwell among us (John 1:1–3, 14 Philip. 2:8).

This is the first instance that we are aware of, where a member of royalty put on such a show.

2Samuel 15:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chămishîym (חֲמִשִּׁיִּם) [pronounced <i>khuh-mih-SHEEM</i>]	<i>fifty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #2572 BDB #332
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
rûts (רוּץ) [pronounced <i>roots</i>]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *before him, before his face, in his presence, in his sight, in front of him.*

Translation: ...and fifty men running before him. Here is the place which caused me to wonder about Absalom's cash flow, because he apparently hires 50 men to run in front of him, so that, everywhere he goes, in this chariot, Absalom appears to be royalty, with a staff of 50 men at his beck and call at any instant. These men also functioned as his bodyguards, because the most important thing to Absalom, besides looking like a king, was his own personal safety.

It is possible that these men look at being with Absalom as being on the inside track. That is, when Absalom takes over the kingship, then these men will all get federal jobs. So, they might be working for slave wages or for nothing. The idea is, their investment in time will pay off in the long run.¹¹

And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him. Prior to his meeting, Absalom could not have done this. As a man cut off from King David, Absalom could not act like the king's son; or like a king-in-waiting. The final scene of 2Sam. 14 is key to what Absalom is able to do right

¹⁰ 1Kings 10:26–29. See also *Apes and Peacocks* by R. B. Thieme, Jr.

¹¹ Pun intended.

here. David kissed him and forgave him in open court, so to speak. Absalom is no longer the king's estranged son, but the son that the king loves. Therefore, Absalom can get a chariot and horses and 50 men. David himself sees Absalom as probably the next king, so all of this entourage stuff is fine to him, the indulgent father. More will be said about this once we get to v. 5.

And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him. Such an entourage for kings and political leaders were common in ancient history as well as modern history. *Nero the Roman emperor never went on a journey with less than a thousand calashes or chariots, and a great number of men that ran before him.*¹² When Adonijah wants to assume David's kingship when David is an old man, he will do much the same thing (1Kings 1:5).

Samuel, Paul, and Elijah, among many others, traveled by foot, often with just the barest of necessities.

Application: This does not mean that a believer cannot enjoy some opulence to some degree; nor does it mean that a believer must always travel 3rd class. There are many pastors like Joel Osteen and Rick Warren who are well-known, and I assume travel with a small entourage, if for nothing else but protection. I don't know this about these men, but if they traveled with bodyguards, or in first-class seating, that would be no reason to disparage them. All believers have various duties and various stations in life; and they must do what is appropriate to their own notoriety.

However, what Absalom is doing here is putting on a show. He is making it seem as if he is the heir apparent, when he is not. Furthermore, as we will continue to observe, Absalom has absolutely no spiritual dynamics. It is possible that he is not even a believer in Y^ehowah Elohim.

Application: If you are the average believer with an average salary, do not disparage or covet the possessions or manner in which another believer travels. It is not up to you to judge them. It is not up to you to determine whether their level of opulence is acceptable to God. I don't care if they have a diamond ring on every finger and drive the most expensive car on this planet. Before their own master, God, they stand or fall. If you work up some mental attitude sins over it, then you need to confess those sins and move right along. It does not matter if you live in a cardboard box and they live in the biggest mansion in their state; what they make and what they do with their money is a matter of their own personal freedom. If they are out of bounds, God is fully capable of dealing with that. However, it is NEVER your job to pass judgment on another believer (unless that is your responsibility in your vocation or in some other legitimate manner of evaluating a person, e.g., on a job, mortgage, loan or rental application). To be more specific, if you are a mortgage officer and Rick Warren is applying for a loan, you evaluate him as you would anyone else. You do not deny him a loan because you think he is too rich already; nor do you give him a loan simply because he is a Christian. In a private bank, and if you have the authority to do so, and you want to take his status as a believer into account, that is fine; but his credit record ought to back it up. However, if you are a believer without that sort of connection to Warren, then it is none of your business how he lives, how much money he makes, what he eats, etc. He lives his life before God; and you should respect that.

Remember that several believers in the Bible were wealthy: Abraham, David and Solomon immediately come to mind. God did not come to them, like some phony liberal, and tell them to sell all they had and give that money to the poor. At no time did God tell them that they had too much money and they needed to redistribute it. So, similarly, it is none of your business what some other believer makes or how he spends his money. Before his own master, he stands or falls (Rom. 14:4).

Application: This is a tangent from the previous application, but not covered enough in most churches: as a believer in Jesus Christ, you ought to have the best damn credit you can have. If you have an unpaid bill, you should not be out buying new stuff without dealing with that bill first. As a believer in Jesus Christ, your credit should be impeccable, even if you owe someone money that you don't like. You still fulfill your monetary obligations.

¹² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:1. He took it from Suetonius in Vit. Neron. c. 30. Vid. Senecae, Ep. 87. & 123.

Our verse reads: **And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him.** David let Absalom off the hook and he did not deal with his criminal case in a court of law, as he should have. However, Absalom is now clearly an adult, and, therefore, whether his upbringing was good or bad, he now stands on his own two feet. What he reveals in this chapter, beginning with this first verse, is a stunning lack of character, and this observation will continue through this and chapter 17, where he will die as a failure. What David did, on several occasions, was completely wrong. What Absalom should endeavor to do is to learn from what David did wrong.

Application: We have many people who influence us in our lives. Since I was a teacher, I thought about many good and bad teachers that I had in my past. I did my best to emulate what I believed to be the good points of the many great teachers I had, and to do the opposite of what my bad teachers did. When it comes to morality and character, we will observe the same things in our lives; and we need to be able to learn from both our good and bad influences.

Absalom had David, and David had many great qualities and many faults, and Absalom, as his son, probably knew most of them. What David did right, Absalom should have emulated and what David did wrong, Absalom should have avoided.

Application: Once we are adults, this is all on our shoulders. We do not get to blame our past and the lousy people in our past for the lousy things that we do.

And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him. What does the Bible say about this approach? **Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great, for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble (Prov. 25:6–7a).** Or, **Let another man praise you, and not your mouth; a stranger, and not your lips (Prov. 27:2).** Absalom is trying to pretend that he holds some kind of office, but he doesn't; and he will act as though he is going to make great and wonderful changes in the system, which he does not have the first clue as to what he is going to do. What did Jesus say? A modest approach is the order of the day: **"When you are invited by anyone to a wedding, do not recline in the chief seat, lest a more honorable man than you may be invited by him. And he who invited you and him shall come and say to you, Give place to this man; and then you begin with shame to take the last place. But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes, he may say to you, Friend, go up higher. Then glory shall be to you before those reclining with you. For whoever exalts himself shall be abased, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."** (Luke 14:8–11). Or, as Peter wrote: **For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they lure through the lusts of the flesh, by unbridled lust, the ones who were escaping from those who live in error; promising them liberty, they themselves are the slaves of corruption. For by whom anyone has been overcome, even to this one he has been enslaved (2Peter 2:18–19).** As you will see in the next few verses, this describes Absalom to a T; he is just the person that these verses are saying, *don't be like that.*

One of the things which I have pondered, to which the Bible does not directly speak is, *what did David think about this?* No doubt, David knows about and has probably seen Absalom moving about town, looking important, with his great entourage. My educated guess is, at the very worst, David was amused. However, it is not out of the realm of possibility that David thought that this was good training or a good approach to being king. Given David's indulgence toward his own children, it is even possible that David admired Absalom's initiative, even though this was empty, meaningless initiative. Since Absalom is his kid, David may not be looking carefully and thinking this over, wondering, "Just what is he trying to accomplish?" I think, maybe David was amused; but that he did not realize at all what Absalom was up to. If Absalom became king, he would be leading hundreds of men; so beginning with 50 men was a good start; so David might have thought (recall that David tended to be very indulgent to his sons). That Absalom might use this to try to displace him, probably never cross David's mind.

And so has risen early Absalom and has taken a stand upon a road of the gate and so is all the man who is to him a dispute to come unto the king for the judgment. And so calls Absalom to him and so he says, "Where from this one a city you?" And so he says, "From one of tribes of Israel, your servant."

2Samuel
15:2

Furthermore, Absalom used to rise up early and remain by the road of the gate and [speak to] any man who had a legal dispute to bring to the king for a judgment. And Absalom called out to him and said, "Which city are you from?" And he would answer [lit., *and so he says*], "Your servant [is] from one of the tribes of Israel."

Furthermore, Absalom made a habit of rising up early and waiting by the road into the city to speak to any man who had a legal dispute to bring before the king for a resolution. And Absalom would then call out to him, saying, "Which city are you from?" And he would answer, "You servants is from one of the tribes of Israel."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Absalom rising up early stood by the entrance of the gate, and when any man had <u>business</u> to come to the king's judgment, Absalom called him to him, and said: Of what city are you? He answered, and said: Your servant is of such tribe of Israel.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so has risen early Absalom and has taken a stand upon a road of the gate and so is all the man who is to him a dispute to come unto the king for the judgment. And so calls Absalom to him and so he says, "Where from this one a city you?" And so he says, "From one of tribes of Israel, your servant."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Absalom rose up early and stood beside the <u>king's</u> gate; and it was so that when any man had a case to be tried before the king, then Absalom called him to him, and said, Of what city are you? And he said, Your servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom rose early, and stood by the side of 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.
Significant differences:	The English translation of the Syriac has <i>the king's gate</i> rather than the <i>way (road) of the gate</i> . The English translation of the Latin has <i>business</i> rather than <i>dispute</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	He would get up early each morning and wait by the side of the road that led to the city gate. Anyone who had a complaint to bring to King David would have to go that way, and Absalom would ask each of them, "Where are you from?" If they said, "I'm from a tribe in the north,"...
Easy English	Absalom used to get up early. He stood by the road that went to the gate of the city. If a person had a problem, that person sometimes went to the king. The king would be the judge. When someone went past Absalom he would say to them, 'Which town do you come from?' The man would answer, 'Your servant is from one of the *tribes of *Israel.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom got up early and stood near the gate [This was where people came to do all of their business. This was also where many court cases were held.]. Absalom watched for any person with problems who was going to King David for judgment. Then Absalom would talk to that person. Absalom would say, "What city are you from?" The man would answer, "I am from such and such family group in Israel."

Good News Bible (TEV)	He would get up early and go and stand by the road at the city gate. Whenever someone came there with a dispute that he wanted the king to settle, Absalom would call him over and ask him where he was from. And after the man had told him what tribe he was from,...
<i>The Message</i>	Early each morning he would take up his post beside the road at the city gate. When anyone showed up with a case to bring to the king for a decision, Absalom would call him over and say, "Where do you hail from?" And the answer would come, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."
New Berkeley Version	Moreover, Absalom would get up early and stand by the entrance to the gate, [Where judicial cases were decided (Deut. 21:19 22:15)] and whenever a man had a suit to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call out to him, "From what city are you?" He would answer, "Your servant is from such and such of the tribes of Israel."
New Century Version	Absalom would get up early and stand near the city gate.[a] Anyone who had a problem for the king to settle would come here. When someone came, Absalom would call out and say, "What city are you from?" The person would answer, "I'm from one of the tribes of Israel."...
New Life Bible	He used to get up early and stand beside the way to the gate. When any man had a problem to be decided upon by the king, Absalom would call to him and say, "What city are you from?" And he would answer, "Your servant is from one of the families of Israel."...

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then he would get up early each morning and station himself along the street by the city gate. And whenever he saw someone who was coming to try a case before the king, he would call to him and ask, 'What city are you coming from?' And if he replied, 'Your servant is from one of the tribes of IsraEl,...
Christian Community Bible	Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the gateway. Whenever a man with a grievance came before the king's tribunal, Absalom would call to him and say, "From which city are you?" Should he say, "Your servant is from such and such a tribe in Israel,"...
<i>God's Word</i> TM	Absalom used to get up early and stand by the road leading to the city gate. When anyone had a case to be tried by King David, Absalom would ask, "Which city are you from?" After the person had told him which tribe in Israel he was from,...
New American Bible	Moreover, Absalom used to rise early and stand alongside the road leading to the gate. If someone had a lawsuit to be decided by the king, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he replied, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe of Israel,"...
NIRV	He would get up early. He would stand by the side of the road that led to the city gate. Sometimes a person would come with a case for the king to decide. Then Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "I'm from one of the tribes of Israel."
New Jerusalem Bible	He would get up early and stand beside the road leading to the city gate; and whenever a man with some lawsuit had to come before the king's tribunal, Absalom would call out to him and ask, 'Which town are you from?' If he answered, 'Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel,'...
Revised English Bible	He made it a practice to rise early and stand by the road leading through the city gate, and would hail everyone who had a case to bring before the king for judgement and ask him which town he came from. When he answered, 'I come, sir, from such and such a tribe of Israel,'...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom arose and stood with a hand over the gate in the way. Any man that had an argument and was coming to the king for a verdict, Absalom called to him, saying, "Where is your city?" He said, "Your servant is from one of the staffs of Israel."
Bible in Basic English	And Absalom got up early, morning after morning, and took his place at the side of the public meeting-place: and when any man had a cause which had to come to the king to be judged, then Absalom, crying out to him, said, What is your town? and he would say, Your servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and early in the mornings Absalom placed himself at the side of the street of the High Court and when any man had a law suit came to the king for a decision, Absalom would invited him to himself, and ask, "From village do you come?" When he would answer, "Your servant is from one of the Tribes of Israel."
HCSB	He would get up early and stand beside the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone had a grievance to bring before the king for settlement, Absalom called out to him and asked, "What city are you from?" If he replied, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel,"...
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Absalom would rise up, and stand beside the path of the gate; and it was <i>when</i> any man that would have a suit <i>due</i> to come to the king for judgment, then Absalom called to him and he said: "From what city are you?" and he said: "Of one of the tribes of Israel is your servant.
New Advent Bible	And Absalom rising up early stood by the entrance of the gate, and when any man had business to come to the king's judgment, Absalom called him to him, and said: Of what city are you? He answered, and said: Your servant is of such tribe of Israel.
NET Bible®	Now Absalom used to get up early and stand beside the road that led to the city gate. Whenever anyone came by who had a complaint to bring to the king for arbitration, Absalom would call out to him, "What city are you from?" The person would answer, "I, your servant [Heb "your servant." So also in vv. 8, 15, 21.], am from one of the tribes of Israel."
NIV – UK	He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, 'What town are you from?' He would answer, 'Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel,"...
exeGesés companion Bible	...and Abi Shalom starts early and stands at the hand by the way of the portal: and so be it, any man who has a controversy comes to the sovereign for judgment; and Abi Shalom calls to him and says, Of what city are you? And he says, Your servant is of one of the scions of Yisra El.
New RSV	Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, "What city are you from?" And he would say, "Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel."
Syndein	Now Absalom would rise up 'early in the morning', and stand by the side of the 'castle gate road' so that when anyone had a grievance/complaint and came to the

king for 'a judicial decision'/judgment, then Absalom called out to him, and said, "Of what city are . . . you?" {the delay gives 'special attention' to the malcontent} And he would reply, "Your loyal subject is . . . {would name his tribe - this is a 'content quotation'} 'of one of the tribes of Israel'. {Jewish narrative does not give us every one of these discussions in detail - each man would name his own tribe - of Dan, of Judah, of Ruben, etc.} {Note: The picture here is now Absalom is permitted to be at the castle. He is standing by the road that leads to the King's Court room. As malcontents come to ask for justice, he uses his great looks, personality, and authority, to woo the malcontents to being loyal to him instead of David. For revolution to succeed, the law of the land must be disrespected. Second, a malcontent is always impressed when someone in apparent authority gives him 'special attention' - it appeals to their arrogance.}

Third Millennium Bible

And Absalom rose up early and stood beside the way of the gate; and it was so that, when any man who 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."

Updated Bible Version 2.11

And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that, when any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgment, then Absalom called to him, and said, Of what city are you? And he said, Your slave is of one of the tribes of Israel.

World English Bible

Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgment, then Absalom called to him, and said, Of what city are you? He said, Your servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.

Young's Updated LT

And Absalom has risen early, and stood by the side of the way of the gate, and it comes to pass, every man who has a pleading to come unto the king for judgment, that Absalom calls unto him, and says, "Of what city are you?" and he says, "Of one of the tribes of Israel is your servant."

The gist of this verse:

Absalom regularly went to the road at the gate into Jerusalem, and he would speak to people who had a court case before his father David. Absalom would inquire as to which city he came from and engage these men in conversations.

2Samuel 15:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâkam (שָׁכַם) [pronounced shaw-KAHM]	to start, to rise, to rise early, to make an early start; morning (in the Hiphil infinitive absolute)	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7925 BDB #1014
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâmad (עָמַד) [pronounced ʿaw-MAHD]	to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

2Samuel 15:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced DEH-rek ^e]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
sha'ar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced SHAH- gahr]	<i>gate [control of city can be implied]; area inside front gate; entrance</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044

Translation: Furthermore, Absalom used to rise up early and remain by the road of the gate... Rather than two imperfect verbs held together by two wâw consecutives, we have two perfect verbs held together by two wâw consecutives. This apparently is something which Absalom did regularly. He would get up early and go stand by the gate of the city. The city gate is generally where most legal and commercial transactions took place;¹³ and this was often the place of the king's court. People would come and have their cases heard by the city gate, so they would have to pass by Absalom.

We learn several things here. First of all, Absalom apparently does not have a job, but he has money. Or, if the king has given him responsibilities, Absalom has farmed out that work to others to deal with. He has delegated these responsibilities.

However, Absalom does not mind work. He is not a layabout like Amnon was; he gets up early and, apparently, daily, to do this. Absalom apparently has worked out a long-range plan in his mind, and that plan involves ingratiating himself to the public. We know that Absalom is capable of grand, long-term schemes; and he plays his cards close to the vest. He is also a man who can manipulate others. He managed to get his father to send Amnon up to a bbq with Absalom, giving Absalom the perfect opportunity to murder his half-brother Amnon. So, what Absalom is doing here is right up his alley.

Although we are not told this specifically, v. 1 suggests that Absalom is taking a stand by the gate with his entire entourage of chariot, horses and 50 men. It is not so powerful if some guy with nothing to do is out there standing by the city gates, after you have had a case in court, starts engaging you in conversation. However, when the king son begins to talk to you, and he is in full entourage mode, surrounded by underlings, minions and acolytes, it is rather impressive. A man would walk by, Absalom would call to him, and the man would be thinking, "You, the king's son; you want to talk to me?"

2Samuel 15:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

¹³ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 424 (footnote).

2Samuel 15:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural) with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Literally, this means <i>who is to him</i> ; but together, these words mean <i>who has...</i>			
rîyb (בִּיַּב) [pronounced ree ^b v]	<i>strife, dispute, controversy, legal contention, forensic cause; an argument used in a public discussion or debate</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7379 BDB #936
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mîsh ^e pâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced mish ^e -PAWT]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, a judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048

Translation: ...and [speak to] any man who had a legal dispute to bring to the king for a judgment. At the city gate, court cases are tried; one might say it is an open court. It was common for public meetings and court cases to all take place in an open air forum right by the city gate. Psychologically, it was a good thing, because it made

the king appear busy, and people coming in and out of the city gate saw the king at work solving disputes and making judgments.

According to Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, these cases were heard in the mornings only: *Public business in the East is always transacted early in the morning--the kings sitting an hour or more to hear causes or receive petitions, in a court held anciently, and in many places still, in the open air at the city gateway; so that, as those whose circumstances led them to wait on King David required to be in attendance on his morning levees, Absalom had to rise up early and stand beside the way of the gate. Through the growing infirmities of age, or the occupation of his government with foreign wars, many private causes had long lain undecided, and a deep feeling of discontent prevailed among the people. This dissatisfaction was artfully fomented by Absalom, who addressed himself to the various suitors; and after briefly hearing their tale, he gratified everyone with a favorable opinion of his case. Studiously concealing his ambitious designs, he expressed a wish to be invested with official power, only that he might accelerate the course of justice and advance the public interests. His professions had an air of extraordinary generosity and disinterestedness, which, together with his fawning arts in lavishing civilities on all, made him a popular favorite. Thus, by forcing a contrast between his own display of public spirit and the dilatory proceedings of the court, he created a growing disgust with his father's government, as weak, careless, or corrupt, and seduced the affections of the multitude, who neither penetrated the motive nor foresaw the tendency of his conduct.*¹⁴

From an 1871 commentary: *This dissatisfaction was artfully fomented by Senator Obama, who addressed himself to the various suitors; and after briefly hearing their tale, he gratified everyone with a favorable opinion of his case...[he] had an air of extraordinary generosity and disinterestedness, which, together with his fawning arts in lavishing civilities on all, made him a popular favorite.*

I write these words in 2012, when the election of 2008 was still firmly in memory. This was nearly exactly the campaign of Barack Obama: *This dissatisfaction was artfully fomented by Senator Obama, who addressed himself to the various suitors; and after briefly hearing their tale, he gratified everyone with a favorable opinion of his case...[he] had an air of extraordinary generosity and disinterestedness, which, together with his fawning arts in lavishing civilities on all, made him a popular favorite. Thus, by forcing a contrast between his own display of public spirit and the dilatory proceedings of the court, he created a growing disgust with the Bush administration's government, as weak, careless, or corrupt, and seduced the affections of the multitude, who neither penetrated the motive nor foresaw the tendency of his conduct.*¹⁵ This is a commentary written circa 1871. Do you see how up-to-date the Bible is? The Bible is not some old dusty book written by a bunch of old guys who have no idea what life is like today. This is the book of our time and the book of the future.

Now, obviously, I make application to recent American politics because that is what I know; however, any Bible teacher who knows and understands these various chapters can find illustrations from their own politics, no matter what the country, no matter what the era.

Here is what we have so far: [Furthermore, Absalom used to rise up early and remain by the road of the gate and \[speak to\] any man who had a legal dispute to bring to the king for a judgment.](#) In every court case, just about, there is a winner and a loser. Absalom is there, his minions are there (probably in the spectators for each case),

¹⁴ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 15:2–6.

¹⁵ Quote, of course, taken from Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, 2Sam. 15:2–6, but with substituting in the names of contemporary politicians.

and judgment is pronounced. Often, once a judgment has been rendered, one of the people walks out of the court displeased. It is easy for one of these minions to signal which party is least happy with the verdict.

2Samuel 15:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: *And Absalom called to him...* So, Absalom is not talking to every single person who comes into court. But, either he is given a signal or he can read people, and he calls out to those who do not appear to be pleased with the final decision. Now, with 50 men under him, Absalom does not have to be there right in the court to know what is going on. He needs to know one thing: is Charlie Brown, who just came out of the court yard (so to speak), upset with King David?

Here is the idea: Absalom sees David as being weak when it comes to making court judgments, because David did not call for the execution of Amnon. So, in Absalom's mind, David is unable to be objective (and, with regards to David's sons, David is unable to be objective).

I have been to court many, many times, and on one of those occasions, I had a judge who was not the least bit objective, and his lack of objectivity stood out like a sore thumb (he was later removed as a judge). Most of the other judges that I have seen in action seemed to be reasonable and objective.

So Absalom is watching these people just coming out of court (from an open air court). He knows how they feel about this verdict, and so he calls out to them. He is simply going to chat with them, as equals, as friends, as citizens of Israel who are concerned about the same things.

2Samuel 15:2d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 15:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'êy (אי) [pronounced āy]	<i>where</i>	adverb; with a suffix, the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #335 BDB #32
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
zeh (זה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
'îyr (עיר) [pronounced ġeer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
'attâh (אתה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

These four particles together apparently mean *where [are] you from?* When adding in the word *city*, this means, *what city are you from?*

Translation: ...and said, "Which city are you from?" Absalom doesn't talk to them immediately about the verdict; he gets to know them. He asks them a personal question or two. They have a conversation. He is warm and engaging. People like this young man Absalom. "He looks important and royal; and yet, he is talking to me." So the passers-by are pleased to talk to someone. There is Absalom, the son of the king, standing in his chariot, poised to ride out, with 50 soldiers standing in front of him, at attention. And yet, he talks to the common man, and talks about normal things.

If you have ever been to court and have lost, there is nothing you would rather do than vent. Now, if you can vent to the son of the judge, that is even better. "Do you know what your low-life father decided? He was just wrong."

2Samuel 15:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

2Samuel 15:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective construct form	Strong's #259 BDB #25
shêbeṭ (שֵׁבֶט) [pronounced SHAY ^B -vef]	<i>rod, staff, club, scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #7626 BDB #986
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĞE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: *And he would answer [lit., and so he says], “Your servant [is] from one of the tribes of Israel.”* So these men, unhappy with the results of their court case, would begin engaging in a conversation with Absalom.

Now, remember: this man has a family. He has a wife, he has brothers, he has children, he has a mother and a father, and he has co-workers. Most of them know about him going to court and wonder about the disposition of his case. The whole idea is, Charlie Brown is going to come home and say, “I am so upset with King David; I was right in my case, but he ruled against me anyway. In fact, even his son, Absalom, agreed with me.”

“You spoke to the king’s son?”

“Yes. In fact, he is a very nice fellow; and, although he appeared to be ready to go off somewhere, he took the time to talk to me. And he agrees with me! He thought his father’s ruling was wrong.”

So, you take each of these men, and multiply them by 10 or by 100; and that is how many people know about his court case and about his conversation with Absalom. How many court cases are tried each day? Maybe 5–10 and possibly more, if the cases are simple.

Bear in mind, for the past 10 years, there have been rumors flying all over about David and Bathsheba, and about her husband who was mysteriously killed in the war. These people also know about Amnon raping his half-sister and how David was unable to take action against Amnon; and Absalom had to step in and take care of him. So, there is talk flying all over the country about the royal family, and about what is going on.

We have the same thing today. People can tell you about various television shows and who is in them and what their social lives are like, and what movies they are also in. Well, there was one set of celebrities in David’s day and time: that was David and the royal family. They were the reality stars of their day; and people talked about David, and his wives, and his affair with Bathsheba.

What you need to understand here is, even though David was one of the greatest kings in human history, and even though most of his decisions and rulings were good, he made some grand mistakes, and people knew about these mistakes. In fact, many people hated David (as we will see in the next chapter).

Application: One of the things which was difficult for me to grasp at first was the concept of morality and kings. On many occasions, even in the New Testament, God dealt with immoral kings. I often wondered, “If they are halfway decent kings, why is God concerned about a second marriage or some random affair?” But when a king is immoral, and the people know it, they react in two possible ways: (1) they resent the king and revolution is fomented, which means a lack of stability in the region; or (2) the people simply copy the bad behavior of the king and also engage in immorality themselves. We have the most recent example of President Bill Clinton who had an affair with a young intern in the White House, and this changed the attitudes of at least a generation of young people about sex relations.

Application: Let’s say that the people in life you admire all work hard, are genuinely humble, and have strong close relationships with their spouses; then you see that as what is good and right and the norm for living. However, if the people that you admire do drugs, coast on their celebrityship, cheat on their wives (or husbands), are in and out of relationships, and have children scattered all over, then you have a completely different set of values. The values of the people that you admire have an effect upon your values; what they do actually impacts you and your thinking.

And so says to him, Absalom, “Look, your words good and just, and hearing none to you from with the king.”

2Samuel
15:3

Then Absalom said to him, “Look, your matter [is] good and just [and straightforward]. [There is] none to hear you directly from the king.”

Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, it is clear that your claim is valid and just, but there is no one designated by the king to properly listen to you.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Absalom answered him: “Your words seem to me good and just. But there is no man appointed by the king to hear you.”
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to him, Absalom, “Look, your words good and just, and hearing none to you from with the king.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Absalom said to him, I see your <u>arguments</u> are good and just; but there is no man deputed by the king to hear you.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom said to him, See, your <u>affairs</u> are right and clear, yet you have no one <i>appointed</i> of the king to hear you.

Significant differences: The words *arguments* and *affairs* are reasonable translations from the Hebrew. The final phrase (in the Latin, Syriac and Greek) appears to be a reasonable understanding of what is said in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	...then Absalom would say to him, "No doubt your claims are correct and valid, but the king won't listen to you.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom would say, "You deserve to win your case. It's too bad the king doesn't have anyone to hear complaints like yours.
Easy English	Then Absalom would say to him, 'Your situation is right. But the king does not have an assistant who can listen to you.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Then Absalom would say to this man, “Look, you are right, but King David won't listen to you.”

Good News Bible (TEV)	Absalom would say, "Look, the law is on your side, but there is no representative of the king to hear your case."
<i>The Message</i>	Then Absalom would say, "Look, you've got a strong case; but the king isn't going to listen to you."
New Century Version	Then Absalom would say, "Look, your claims are right, but the king has no one to listen to you."
New Life Bible	Then Absalom would say to him, "Your side of the problem is good and right. But there is no man to listen to you for the king."
New Living Translation	Then Absalom would say, "You've really got a strong case here! It's too bad the king doesn't have anyone to hear it."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	...he would say, 'Look, you have a good case, but no one from the king will listen to it.'
Beck's American Translation	"see," Absalom would say to him, "your claims are good and right, but the king hasn't appointed anyone to her you."
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Absalom would say, "Your case is good and proper, but the king hasn't appointed anyone to hear it."
NIRV	Absalom would say, "Look, your claims are based on the law. So you have every right to make them. But the king doesn't have anyone here who can listen to your case."
New Jerusalem Bible	...then Absalom would say, 'Look, your case is sound and just, but not one of the king's deputies will listen to you.'
New Simplified Bible	Absalom would say: »My friend, the law is on your side. However, there is no representative of the king to hear your case.«
Revised English Bible	...Absalom would say to him, 'I can see that you have a very good case, but you will get no hearing from the king.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom said to him, "See, your words are good and honest, but the king will not hear you."
Bible in Basic English	And Absalom would say to him, See, your cause is true and right; but no man has been named by the king to give you a hearing.
Complete Jewish Bible	Avshalom would say to him, "Look, your cause is good and just; but the king hasn't deputized anyone to hear your case."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then Absalom would say to him, "Look! Your case is good and right; but there is no one appointed by the king to hear it for you."
HCSB	Absalom said to him, "Look, your claims are good and right, but the king does not have anyone to listen to you."
New Advent Bible	And Absalom answered him: Your words seem to me good and just. But there is no man appointed by the king to hear you. And Absalom said:...
NET Bible®	Absalom would then say to him, "Look, your claims are legitimate and appropriate [Heb "good and straight."]. But there is no representative of the king who will listen to you."
NIV – UK	Then Absalom would say to him, 'Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Absalom would say to him, Your claims are good and right, but there is no man appointed as the king's agent to hear you.
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English Standard Version	Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you."
exeGeses companion Bible	And Abi Shalom says to him, See, your words are good and straight; but there is no man of the sovereign to hear you.
LTHB	And Absalom said to him, Behold, your matters are good and right. And there is no listener to you from the king.
NASB	Then Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims [Lit words] are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king."
Syndein	Furthermore Absalom would say to him, "Look, your grievances are valid and legitimate . . . but 'you have no one authorized by the king' {Idiom: literally 'there is no man for you'} to 'judge the case' {implying the judicial system is wrong - and attacking the laws of establishment such as law enforcement, military, marriage, judicial system - a tool of revolutionists is to take a perceived error and exploit it to overthrow the existing government}. {Insinuates Only Arrogant Absalom is Qualified to Obtain Justice for the People}.
World English Bible	Absalom said to him, Behold, your matters are good and right; but there is no man deputized of the king to hear you.
Young's Updated LT	And Absalom says unto him, "See, your matters <i>are</i> good and straightforward—and there is none hearkening to you from the king."

The gist of this verse: Absalom agrees with the merits of the case, but suggests that the king doesn't properly assign out responsibilities to hear these cases.

2Samuel 15:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lah</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אבִּישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: *Then Absalom said to him,...* We are given the gist of one particular conversation, but this took place many times on many days. We do not know how long that Absalom did this. But he talked to enough people to help foster a revolt against his father.

Furthermore, what we have here is probably a sample of the sort of thing that Absalom would say. He is a smart young man, and he could tailor his message to whomever he spoke.

2Samuel 15:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>look, see, behold, view, see here, listen up</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
d ^e bârîym (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced daw ^b -vawr-EEM]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine plural adjective which can act like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nakoach (נָכוֹן) [pronounced naw-KOH-ahkh]	<i>straight, right, straightness; upright, just; straightforward; to be in front of</i>	masculine plural adjective/substantive;	Strong's #5228 & #5229 BDB #647

Translation:...“Look, your matter [is] good and just [and straightforward]. At some point, Absalom listened to the case that Charlie Brown brought before the court, and he agrees with Charlie Brown. “It is obvious; your court case is very straightforward. You have a good case and you are right in your claims.” The guy could be the biggest idiot in Israel, but if Absalom could agree with him, he would. Absalom is only looking to ingratiate himself to each man who has a case.

This is something that Absalom probably said on many occasions. When he spoke to any man coming out of court, if things did not go his way, no matter what the reason, Absalom listens to his case and agrees that it is a good one. If you are trying to gain favor, you do not listen to a case and then suggest, “Okay, I hear what you’re telling me, but your case is a loser from the word go.”

Absalom was not really interested in the case, nor did he have any interest in investigating the validity of each man’s claims. He is simply playing on the frustrations of those who have brought their dispute to Jerusalem. He wants each of these men, who are a little turned off by the *system* at this time already, to look upon Absalom as a friend that he could count on.

2Samuel 15:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma ^c (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHÇ]	<i>hearing, listening; one who listens [hears]; one paying attention; to listening [and agreeing]</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

2Samuel 15:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ēyn (אין) [pronounced ān]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min 'êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: [\[There is\] none to hear you directly from the king.](#)” On some days, the king would be judging these cases, and, apparently, on other days, he would appoint someone to decide these matters. It is very likely that someone listened to Charlie Brown’s claims and ruled against him. Charlie Brown did not just show up, and there was no one to judge his case. This is an important function of the king.

There are other possibilities. The docket is too full and Charlie Brown’s case is unsubstantial or there is not enough time to get to it. Or, it is heard, and the judge throws his case out, based upon Charlie Brown’s testimony alone (which ought to be done in more cases in the United States). Or, for whatever reason, the case is not heard; perhaps the judge did not show up on this day.

What we have here is a particular instance, which no doubt occurred from time to time. But this was not Absalom’s only rap. This is simply an example of what Absalom would say. [Then Absalom said to him, “Look, your matter \[is\] good and just \[and straightforward\]. \[There is\] none to hear you directly from the king.”](#) In this case, the plaintiff’s case was not heard. Judge did not show up; the docket was too full; or his case was thrown out on summary judgment.

Keil and Delitzsch point out: *Of course the king himself could not give a hearing to every complainant, and make a personal investigation of his cause; nor could his judges procure justice for every complainant, however justly they might act, though it is possible that they may not always have performed their duty conscientiously.*¹⁶

The Pulpit commentary suggests what they believe to be the case: *Probably all causes between citizens were tried by it, just as causes in the country were tried by the mishpachah; (see note on*

¹⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:1–3.

2Sam. 14:7) but with an appeal in weighty matters to the king. It is a mistake to suppose that David altogether neglected his judicial functions. On the contrary, the woman of Tekoah obtained an audience, as a matter of course; and Absalom would not have risen up thus early unless David had also taken his seat in the early morning on the royal divan to administer justice. It was the suitors on their way to the king whom Absalom accosted, and made believe that he would be more assiduous in his duties than his father, and that he would have decided every suit in favour of the person to whom he was talking, whereas really one side alone can gain the cause. Still, we may well believe that, guilty himself of adultery and murder, and with his two elder sons stained with such terrible crimes, David's administration of justice had become half hearted. And thus his sin again found him out, and brought stern punishment. For Absalom used this weakness against his father, and, intercepting the suitors on their way, would ask their city and tribe, and listen to their complaint, and assure them of the goodness of their cause, and lament that, as the king could not hear all causes easily himself, he did not appoint others to aid him in his duties. It was delay and procrastination of which Absalom complained; and as many of the litigants had probably come day after day, and not succeeded in getting a hearing, they were already in ill humour and prepared to find fault. Now, as David possessed great powers of organization, we may well believe that he would have taken measures for the adequate administration of law had it not been for the moral malady which enfeebled his will. In the appointment of Jehoshaphat and Seraiah (2Sam. 8:16–17) he had made a beginning, but soon his hands grew feeble, and he did no more.¹⁷

So, because of the previous chapter, we do know for a fact that David sat as judge on some court hearings, and that he listened patiently and with interest, and made valid rulings. However, as we also saw in the previous chapter and in the one before that, sitting as the judge over the supreme court of the land was not David's forte. He could not rule properly if a case was too close to him (e.g. it involved any of his sons) and he was too easily influenced by women (2Sam. 14). David no doubt should not have been trying all of the cases which came before him. In fact, like Moses (Ex. 18:14–26), he should have delegated this particular duty to other people.

It is possible—in fact, it is implied here—that David was not doing enough by way of stocking the courts with judges to hear the cases which came to Jerusalem. We do not know if this was a weakness in David's government in general, or if this was a more recent problem which had come to pass. We do know a couple of things: David had an eye for the ladies, and when his soldiers were out of town, David apparently made use of this time (2Sam. 11). We also know that, when it came time to judge Amnon, David was unwilling to do that (he did get mad, but he never took it any further than that—2Sam. 12:21).

Application: When you are in a position of power, you need to know what your weaknesses are, and you need to put someone in your place to shore up your lack of knowledge or ability in that area.

Application: In many cases, a president has little foreign diplomacy experience, and he is to be negotiating with men who, in many cases, have been ruling for 20 or more years, and therefore, have some knowledge of how to manipulate other leaders. A president, therefore, needs to have foreign advisors and a Secretary of State who has real understanding of the geo-politics that our nation faces. A president needs to have a few, easily discernable foreign-policy principles, and he needs to find people who know enough to carry out these principles.

Although we have covered these problems, let's just summarize them quickly.

A Summary of the Judicial Problems of the Davidic Court in Jerusalem

1. David did personally hear cases, but it is clear that he was swayed by helpless females. 2Sam. 14:1–20
2. David was unwilling to prosecute his own sons, when they should have been prosecuted. Emotion is no substitute when action is required. 2Sam. 13:21
3. Some people were turned away from the Jerusalem court. 2Sam. 15:2–4

¹⁷ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:2.

A Summary of the Judicial Problems of the Davidic Court in Jerusalem

- 1) We have already speculated that David did not appoint enough judges, that cases got thrown out of court on a preliminary hearing (which is not a bad thing), or that the docket was too full from time to time.
- 2) Keil and Delitzsch suggested the following: *Of course the king himself could not give a hearing to every complainant, and make a personal investigation of his cause; nor could his judges procure justice for every complainant, however justly they might act, though it is possible that they may not always have performed their duty conscientiously.*¹
- 3) Is it possible that, once Amnon had raped his half-sister, that David avoided the court system for awhile? Amnon should have been prosecuted, and David never did this.
4. Whatever the other problems were, Absalom was clearly able to exploit them to his own benefit. 2Sam. 15:2–6
5. It is likely that Absalom used other approaches in dealing with people who had complaints, and that we are viewing one particular example here.

What we find here is not necessarily typical of the Davidic administration. 2Sam. 8:15 tells us that: [David reigned over all Israel, and David executed justice and righteousness to all his people](#). When a government has both provided protection for its people from outside forces and has administered justice and righteousness to its people inside the country, that government is doing what it ought to be doing.

Application: In any election, when it comes to removing one administration and replacing it with another, you must consider, is the present administration keeping you protected from outside forces and is there a good and honest judicial system functioning in the United States (not *perfect*, mind you, but good and just). Anything over and above that is gravy.

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:1–3.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom is carefully blaming the “system” by emphasizing to these “victims” that he would be doing a better job. He is careful not to attack his father personally and outright.

By the way, David was capable of farming out responsibilities. Joab was his commanding general in charge of all warfare, below David. Joab was his man in the field at all times. It was not that David was unable to do this; but David was older, getting past his prime, and he had other responsibilities.

We are not given any specifics on David’s judicial appointments, apart from the complaint made here. Did he appoint inferior judges? Did they not show up? Did he not hire enough judges to hear the cases which came in? What we do know is, there are times when a case was not heard or fully heard; that David did sit in on court cases, and that David was clearly influenced by women who were plaintiffs or defendants. He seemed less likely to do follow-up or investigations of cases involving women complainants.

This verse reads: [Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, it is clear that your claim is valid and just, but there is no one designated by the king to properly listen to you.”](#) There are a number of things at work here. Probably, some cases were not heard; some cases might be thrown out when the preliminary statement of the complainant is given; some cases may not get on the docket in time or there is not enough time to get to them. And, of course, there is always the loser in every case.

What is implied here, but not stated outright, is, the person who heard the case did not get it. He was not qualified to hear Charlie Brown’s case. His care was straightforward and should have obviously been decided and Charlie’s favor, but it was not. Therefore, the person at the bench was not really qualified. Absalom has to be careful about what he says. He cannot just come out and say, “The judge is crooked. He got paid off.” Or, “The judge is a drunk and he just came off the 3 month bender.” Or, “King David is too lazy to come to court today, so he just sent

some unqualified flunky to sit in for him.” There is a certain decorum here, and Absalom cannot be seen to be seditious.

What we have here is just one example of one judicial problem. There were no doubt many. I have been in court, and, although I have found most judges to be honest, forthright, and desirous to follow the law; I have seen others who have not been fair-minded or unbiased. This was a wonderful time in Israel; and they had a great judicial system. However, that does not mean that it was not flawed; that does not mean that there were no mistakes that were made. And, even in a nearly flawless system, one half of a lawsuit is going to be unhappy with the result.

Absalom preyed upon any weakness that he could see, real or believed by the person to whom he spoke.

When we hear exactly what we want to hear—particularly from a politician—then we need to remember David’s own words from Psalm 12:2 **People speak lies to one another. They speak with flattering lips and with double-heart** (i.e., They say one thing but mean another). (NSB). Or Psalm 36:3–4 **The words of his mouth are troubling and deceitful; he has ceased to act wisely and do what is right. He plots trouble before he falls asleep; he makes himself look good when he really isn’t; he does not reject evil [human viewpoint thinking].** Jer. 9:8 **Their tongue is a murderous arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each speaks peace and friendship to his neighbor, but in his heart he plans an ambush for him.**

Application: Do not listen to people’s words simply because they sound good or even if they sound sincere. You need to evaluate their actions as well. This should be the order of the day when listening to a politician. In the time that I write this, there has rarely been a better **example** of this than our current President Barack Obama. Part of the reason that his transgressions have been so egregious is that, we have more access to the things that he has said than any other president in previous history. He has said many things, particularly in the 2008 election, which swayed huge numbers of people, because he looked and sounded good. However, 10 or more years previous to this, we did not have easy access to promises made by presidents. There was no YouTube; there was no alternative media. If the press did not want to recall what Bill Clinton promised as a candidate, then we never heard it after the campaign. However, if the press wanted to remind us of what President George H. W. Bush promised in his campaign (“Read my lips: no new taxes”), then we saw it over and over again. We are in a position, post the year of our Lord 2000, to compare what a politician says with what he does.

Vv. 2–3: Furthermore, Absalom made a habit of rising up early and waiting by the road into the city to speak to any man who had a legal dispute to bring before the king for a resolution. And Absalom would then call out to him, saying, “Which city are you from?” And he would answer, “You servants is from one of the tribes of Israel.” Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, it is clear that your claim is valid and just, but there is no one designated by the king to properly listen to you.” There is another unstated narrative behind all of what Absalom is saying. Absalom’s own sister, Tamar, had been raped by their ne’er-do-well half-brother Amnon. Absalom and Tamar did not get the justice that they ought to have gotten (2Sam. 14:1–21). Absalom eventually had Amnon killed, and this was no doubt on the minds of many citizens in Israel. Absalom was the kind of man who saw that a job got done. He was the kind of man who would see justice done, no matter what the cost. Absalom is not going to be there bragging, on “the steps of the courthouse,”¹⁸ how he killed his half-brother Amnon. But, this would be on the minds of many of the men who spoke with him. Absalom was a doer. He didn’t just talk a good game; he followed through.

And so says Absalom, “Who places me judging in the land? And upon me comes every man who is to him a dispute and a judgment, and I have brought him justice.”

2Samuel
15:4

Then Absalom would say, “Who will [or, O that one might] appoint me a judge in the land? Then comes any man to me who has a dispute or a judicial decision and I will give him justice [or, I will vindicate him].”

¹⁸ This is just an expression; in ancient Israel, there was no courtroom; there were no steps.

Then Absalom would then say, “O that I would be appointed as a judge in the land! Then any man could come to me with a dispute or an appeal and I would see to it that he received a just outcome.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Absalom said: <u>O that they would</u> make me judge over the land, that all that have business might come to me, that I might do them justice. “And Absalom said:” is actually a part of v. 3 in the Latin.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Absalom, “Who places me judging in the land? And upon me comes every man who is to him a dispute and a judgment, and I have brought him justice.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	Absalom said moreover, <u>Oh that I were</u> made a judge in the land, that every man who has a lawsuit or a cause might come to me, and I would do him justice!
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom said, <u>O that one would</u> 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!
Significant differences:	In the first part of Absalom’s quotation, it appears that the words he used could be so translated into English (see the Hebrew exegesis below).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	If only I were made a judge in the land," Absalom would continue, "then anyone with a lawsuit could come to me, and I would give them justice."
Contemporary English V. Easy English	I wish someone would make me the judge around here! I would be fair to everyone." Then Absalom would say, 'I wish that someone would appoint me as the judge of this nation. Then everyone who has problems could come to me. I would make sure that each person gets a fair judgement.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom would also say, "Oh, I wish someone would make me a judge in this country! Then I could help every man who comes to me with a problem. I would help him get a fair solution to his problem."
Good News Bible (TEV)	And he would add, "How I wish I were a judge! Then anyone who had a dispute or a claim could come to me, and I would give him justice."
<i>The Message</i>	Then he'd say, "Why doesn't someone make me a judge for this country? Anybody with a case could bring it to me and I'd settle things fair and square."
New Century Version	Absalom would also say, "I wish someone would make me judge in this land! Then people with problems could come to me, and I could help them get justice."
New Life Bible	And Absalom would say, "If only I were chosen to be the one to be judge in the land! Then every man who has a problem could come to me. And I would do for him what is right and fair."
New Living Translation	I wish I were the judge. Then everyone could bring their cases to me for judgment, and I would give them justice!"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, why doesn't he appoint me as the judge of the land and let me handle the disputes and cases, for I will give you justice.'
<i>God's Word</i> ™	He would add, "I wish someone would make me judge in the land. Then anyone who had a case to be tried could come to me, and I would make sure that he got justice."
New American Bible	And he would continue: "If only I could be appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a lawsuit to be decided might come to me and I would render him justice."

NIRV	Absalom would continue, "I wish I were appointed judge in the land! Then anyone who has a case or a claim could come to me. I would make sure he is treated fairly."
New Jerusalem Bible	Absalom would say, 'Oh, who will appoint me judge in the land? Then anyone with a lawsuit or a plea could come to me and I should see he had justice!'
Revised English Bible	He would add, 'If only I were appointed judge in the land, it would be my business to see that everyone with a lawsuit or claim got justice from me.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom said, "Who set me as judge in the land? Any man having an argument comes over to me for righteous verdicts!"
Bible in Basic English	And more than this, Absalom said, If only I was made judge in the land, so that every man who has any cause or question might come to me, and I would give a right decision for him!
Complete Jewish Bible	Then Avshalom would continue, "Now if I were made judge in the land, anyone with a suit or other cause could come to me, and I would see that he gets justice!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Next he would exclaim, "If I were appointed as a judge in the country, and any man came to me who had a wrong, I would decide and rectify it for you!"
HCSB	He added, "If only someone would appoint me judge in the land. Then anyone who had a grievance or dispute could come to me, and I would make sure he received justice."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And Absalom went on, "If only I were appointed judge in the land and everyone with a legal dispute came before me, I would see that he got his rights."
NET Bible®	Absalom would then say, "If only they would make me [Heb "Who will make me?"] a judge in the land! Then everyone who had a judicial complaint [Heb "a complaint and a judgment." The expression is a hendiadys] could come to me and I would make sure he receives a just settlement."
NIV, ©2011	And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice."
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Ab?shalom would say, "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any complaint or case would come to me, and I shall let right be done to him."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Absalom said, `Who does make me a judge in the land, that unto me does come every man who has a plea and judgment? --then I have declared him righteous.
Darby Translation	And Absalom said, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man who has any controversy and cause might come to me, and I would do him justice!
English Standard Version	Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Abi Shalom says, Who set me judge in the land, that every man who has any plea or judgment comes to me to justify him?.
LTHB	And Absalom said, Who shall make me a judge in the land, that every man who has a dispute, I will then declare him right, even with justice?
Syndein	Then Absalom would add, "Who will appoint me a judge in the land, {Absalom's arrogance and self-centeredness exposed} that every man which has any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would see to he, that he receives justice!.
World English Bible	Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man who has any suit or cause might come to me, and I would do him justice!

Young's Updated LT

And Absalom says, "Who does make me a judge in the land, that unto me does come every man who has a plea and judgment? —then I have declared him righteous."

The gist of this verse:

Absalom claims that if he were judge in Israel, he would see to it that everyone got a fair shake.

2Samuel 15:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ābîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
Under some circumstances, the mîy pronominal interrogative can express a wish or a desire, as in 2Sam. 15:4 or 23:15. ¹⁹			
sîym (שִׂיַם) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]; also spelled sūwm (שׁוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i>]	<i>judging, governing; a judge, governor</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: Then Absalom would say, "Who will [or, O that one might] appoint me a judge in the land? Now, you will note that Absalom does not call for this discontented person to support him in a revolution. He simply seems to be musing to himself. Now, in the previous verse, Absalom said *to him*; but in this verse, there is no *to him*. The idea is, Absalom would engage them in some conversation, usually about their dispute, but then Absalom would kind of look out in the distance and say, "Who will appoint me as a judge?" Or, "O that I would be a judge in Israel." Or words to that effect. As if, this is what God has called him to do.

¹⁹ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 566.

Now, bear in mind, it does not appear that Absalom actually has a public office or a responsibility. He looks quite kingly, with his great entourage, but that is all for show. However, the people who talk to him don't know that. They don't look up at him and say, "You phoney so-and-so." Absalom looks like he's important; he looks like he is somebody. He looks successful and powerful. That is what he wants. However, he is apparently just a man living off the taxpayer dole. If David has given him any responsibility, he has sloughed that off on someone else. People are supposed to look at him and think that he is really something, but he's not. He's really not much different than today's "welfare mom," except that he gets a much higher pay to do nothing. He apparently has some kind of an expense account which allows him to buy frivolous things, such as a chariot and horses, and to hire men.

And this man, who has just been able to blow off a little steam because of his own court case to the king's son, who is surrounded by this great entourage, and he thinks of Absalom in a very favorable way. He also thinks, "If only Absalom had been my judge. He obviously understands the case and would render the correct decision."

2Samuel 15:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
We would have expected to see the lâmed preposition here, which would mean <i>to me</i> ; but that is not what we have.			
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The combination of <i>is</i> and <i>to me</i> can be rendered <i>to have</i> .			
rîyb (בִּיר) [pronounced ree ^b v]	<i>strife, dispute, controversy, legal contention, forensic cause; an argument used in a public discussion or debate</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7379 BDB #936
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mîsh ^e pâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced mish ^e -PAWT]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, a judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048

Translation: Then comes any man to me who has a dispute or a judicial decision... We do not have the normal Hebrew word for *to* here. The preposition found here usually means *upon, over, above*; and the idea is, any man comes to Absalom and he shifts his burden upon Absalom. He bring his case and places it upon Absalom. So, even though a strict translation sounds goofy (*And upon me comes every man who is to him a dispute and a judgment*); the idea conveyed here is, a man comes to Absalom with a burden, a burden that he can lay upon Absalom's shoulders. So, even though Absalom talks about *justice*, he really means that he, as the government, will take upon himself that man's burden. Now, have you ever heard a politician who talks about *justice*, but, what he essentially means is, government will take your burden on its shoulders? Essentially, that is what Absalom was offering.

So far, this is what we have: *one might*] appoint me a judge in the land? Then comes any man to me who has a **dispute or a judicial decision**... There are two kinds of cases discussed here. The first is a *dispute* or a *legal controversy*. However, the second appears to be a judgment which has already been reached. So, in another court or another forum, a judgment has been reached, but it is the wrong judgment. Then any man can bring that verdict to Absalom to be reexamined. In other words, Absalom is suggesting that appeals be brought to him as well.

Barnes on what we have so far: *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.*²⁰

2Samuel 15:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

²⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:3.

2Samuel 15:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsâdaq (צַדִּיק) [pronounced tsaw- DAHK]	<i>to do or bring to justice (in administrating the law); to declare righteous [just, innocent]; to justify; to vindicate the cause [of someone]; to make [someone] righteous (just); to turn to (toward) righteousness and integrity</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6663 BDB #842

Translation: ...and I will give him justice [or, I will vindicate him].” Absalom, at this point, has the confidence and the ear of the disgruntled citizen, and Absalom assures him that, if any man brought him a case, he would vindicate him; he would see that he receive a proper judicial verdict. And this man leaves thinking, “If only Absalom had been my judge.” And he will go home and he will tell all of his friends and neighbors and family about his time in court, how he got screwed over by the system, but that there is the king’s son, Absalom. A very important man, but a man who took time out of his busy schedule to hear the facts of his case and to unofficially adjudicate this case correctly and in his favor. “If only Absalom were my judge,” the man would tell his friends and relatives.

Poole’s comment: *I should refuse no man, and decline no pains to do any man good. So he pretends to a very public spirit.*²¹

Now, in case you did not know, there are several political campaigns in the Bible. There is another one in Judges 9. So there is no misunderstanding, it does not matter that these are kingships and we live in a democracy; no one can become king without being a leader and having popular support.

The entire verse reads: *Then Absalom would say, “Who will [or, O that one might] appoint me a judge in the land? Then comes any man to me who has a dispute or a judicial decision and I will give him justice [or, I will vindicate him].”* Absalom indicates that providing justice for all—that is what he was called to do. That is his specialty. He is a man of the people and a man of justice.

Note that even Absalom’s language is careful. He does not tell these people, “You need to revolt against David and proclaim me as your king.” He can’t do that. He can’t say what he wants or what he will do. He has to couch everything in terms of what sounds good to the average person. Does that sound somewhat modern to you? Do you know any politician like that? Or, should I ask, do you know any politician who is not like that?

As David wrote in Psalm 55:21 *His buttery words are smooth, but war is in his heart. His words are softer than oil, but they are drawn swords.* Or we read in Prov. 26:25–28 *When he speaks graciously, don’t believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart. Though his hatred is concealed by deception, his evil will be revealed in the assembly. The one who digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever rolls a stone—it will come back on him. A lying tongue hates those it crushes, and a flattering mouth causes ruin.* (Both HCSB)

Application: This is not all that deep: just because someone says they are your friend or looking out for you or on your side, does not mean that they are. Just because they say they are for the poor or the downtrodden, does not mean that they will always look out for the poor and the downtrodden. In fact, for some politicians, it is better for them to have poor and downtrodden in large numbers that will vote for them. It does them no good to take a poor and downtrodden person and move them up into the middle or upper class. They might lose a vote if that

²¹ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:4.

happens. In any case, politicians as often as possible try to make it seem if they are on the side of the electorate when they are not.

V. 4 reads: *Then Absalom would then say, "O that I would be appointed as a judge in the land! Then any man could come to me with a dispute or an appeal and I would see to it that he received a just outcome."* The NIV Study Bible comments: *Absalom presents himself as the solution to the people's legal grievances. In the case of Amnon, he had taken matters into his own hands because of his father's laxity. He has found, he believes, the weakness of his father's reign, and he capitalizes on it with political astuteness.*²²

Here is what we have so far in vv. 2–4: *Furthermore, Absalom used to rise up early and remain by the road of the gate and [speak to] any man who had a legal dispute to bring to the king for a judgment. And Absalom called out to him and said, "Which city are you from?" And he would answer [lit., and so he says], "Your servant [is] from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom said to him, "Look, your matter [is] good and just [and straightforward]. [There is] none to hear you directly from the king." Then Absalom would say, "Who will [or, O that one might] appoint me a judge in the land? Then comes any man to me who has a dispute or a judicial decision and I will give him justice [or, I will vindicate him]."* David had a failing in some specific instances of judgment: he did not prosecute Amnon and he did not try his son Absalom in court for the murder of Amnon (he should have dealt with his sons in justice and not in sentimentality). However, that does not mean that David's courts were unjust or unresponsive. Remember the woman from Tekoa received a trial by King David. Here, in this context, Absalom is rising up early in order to speak to these various litigants. If David is not holding court or if these people are being turned away in droves, then why is it that they show up day after day after day? If David's court was inefficient, unjust or shut down, then, after awhile, no more people would be coming to him for judgment.

We know that Absalom is doing all of this for himself. He has no concern for other people. He is not a man of the people. Recall that, when he could not get Joab's attention, he just burned his field down (2Sam. 14:29–30). Absalom would resort to criminal activity whenever he needed to. Then ends justified to means, in Absalom's mind. Joab was the man who sponsored Absalom's return to Israel, and Absalom, in a petulant self-centered fit, destroyed Joab's property. So we know that justice is not at the top of Absalom's list when it comes to anything.

Application: When a politician wants your support, he will make a variety of promises to you as to what he will provide. What characterized the Democratic approach to the 2008 elections is their *parade of victims*. One right after another of people who have been victimized by the system, whose life is difficult. The implication was, elect the Democrats, and these people (along with those with similar problems) will have their problems solved by the government. Your healthcare costs too much? Government will lower the cost and give you free healthcare if necessary (as if government has lowered the cost of anything). You want to go to school? Government will pay for it. Funds will be provided. You need daycare while you are at work. "Look to the government; we will take care of you." The 2012 election was even more ridiculous. If you are going to a school that costs in excess of \$30,000 a year, then there was even the promise to force them to pay for your *birth control*.

So, making a person feel as though they have been victimized by one political party, and promising that they, of the other party, will fix that—that's nothing new. This narrative takes place 4000 years ago, and that is exactly what Absalom is doing. Eccles. 1:9–11 *What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Can one say about anything, "Look, this is new"? It has already existed in the ages before us. There is no memory of those who came before; and of those who will come after there will also be no memory among those who follow them.* Of, as was later expressed by George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it," Or, as George Bernard Shaw said, "We learn from history that we learn nothing from history."

King David and son Absalom both represent two kinds of leadership: David is a true leader, who articulates a vision and a direction, and leads his people in that direction (although, he would listen to others). Absalom's vision for the future is Absalom as king—that is the sum total of his vision for Israel's future.

²² *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote).

True Leadership Versus False Leadership

1. A false leader tells you what you want to hear. A true leader tells you what you need to hear.
2. A false leader will flatter the public; a true leader will make clear his goals and objectives.
3. So far, Absalom has intimated that he would make things better; but you will notice, he always agreed with those whom he spoke to and he never laid out a clear set of principles for people to accept or reject. It is as if he was offering “hope and change” as his fundamental principles, which is meaningless.
4. A false leader does everything he can to obscure his goals and objectives; a true leader—particularly in a democracy—will state his true goals and objectives and attempt to sell them based upon principle.
5. Ronald Reagan was continually spouting overarching principles which most Americans agree with. Therefore, among conservatives, you will see him **quoted** often (as well as our founding fathers). On Facebook, for instance, I can see posted by one person or another, a Reagan quote almost daily. Similarly, I will see quotations from various founding fathers almost daily posted on one wall or another. These quotes express establishment truth; and people post them because they see Reagan and the founding fathers as being true leaders.
6. Absalom has been informally listening to these court cases and agreeing with all of them. They got screwed and it was the fault of the Davidic courts.
7. We had this in the 2008 election, where Democrats had their parade of victims—anyone who had a difficult time in 2008 and prior, and then proclaiming it was George W. Bush’s fault.
8. Their candidate, Barack Obama, had a similar approach. When running in the primary, he presented himself as being solidly to the left. In the general election, almost overnight, he began to present himself as a very moderate candidate. He presented the Barack Obama most acceptable to his audience at that time.
9. You cannot simultaneously agree with a crowd and lead that crowd. You cannot simply listen to public opinion in order to lead that same public. Sometimes public opinion is wrong, and you have to shape public opinion.
10. A man who caters to you is not a leader.
11. In our democracy, when you have a set of principles that you believe are correct, but the public is against you, you attempt to sell the public on these principles. You explain your principles and you lay out careful justification for them. George W. Bush should have done this when he was trying to **push through** Social Security **reform** or looking into the practices of **FNMA and FHLMC**. Even though he was correct on both principles, he made little or no attempt to inform and sway the public.
 - 1) As an aside, liberals often push back against George Bush for his desire to privatize Social Security, saying, “And look what would have happened to everyone’s money had they put it in the market. It would have lost nearly half its value.” This is because there was a dramatic crash in the stock market at the end of Bush’s term. Two points need to be made: (1) This crash came about because of horrible practices in FNMA and FHLMC, which, in part, tanked the market; and (2) social security investors would still have some money. The money that you pay into social security is not put into some kind of lockbox somewhere and saved for you when you reach age 65—there is no lockbox; there is no government savings account with your name on it. Congress spends every dime that you send them, no matter what they claim it is for, and then some. Every dime you have put into social security has already been spent. It is gone. All of it. Your social security depends upon the next few generations agreeing that social security is a good thing and that they should continue to pay into it.
12. A true leader can function among those he agrees with and disagrees with. Ronald Reagan worked often with the other side and hammered out deals. When Bill Clinton was faced with a Congress of the other party, he worked with them and hammered out deals (although it was difficult to ascertain what he really believed in). Our current president, Barack Obama, almost never contacts members of the opposing party, and has even called them in essentially to lecture them. Early on in his presidency, when working with conservatives with whom he disagreed, **essentially said**, “I won and you lost;” on at least **two occasions**.
13. When the blind leads the blind, they both fall into the ditch. Luke 6:39
14. A true leader espouses principles of divine establishment; a false leader, when quoting the Bible, will nearly always take a quote out of its context or give it a meaning different than what is found in Scripture.

True Leadership Versus False Leadership

“I am my brother’s keeper” as Barack Obama has **quoted** on several occasions, actually refers to the fact that we ought to be willing to help those who are around us. He uses this **quote** to suggest that the rich should be paying more in taxes. He has not **helped out** his own half-brother.

15. A true leader has specific ideas and principles, which, in a democracy, is a part of his platform. A false leader in a democracy will attempt to obscure his ideas and principles, or water them down to make the palatable to the hoi polloi.
16. Socialists are naturally dishonest. Whatever the public is subjected to because of their politicizes, they will not subject themselves to. Lenin and Stalin do not see themselves as equal to the rabble.
17. In the United States, a true president is simultaneously a leader and a man who is a servant of the people. Jesus illustrated that He Himself was a servant -leader in Matt. 20:25–28 John 13:6–17.
18. A person who simply wants to boss everyone around is not a leader. A person who is not willing to debate the arguments of the past is not a leader. Paul describes the attitude that we ought to have: **Don't act out of selfish ambition or be conceited. Instead, humbly think of others as being better than yourselves. Don't be concerned only about your own interests, but also be concerned about the interests of others. Have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Although he was in the form of God and equal with God, he did not take advantage of this equality. Instead, he emptied himself by taking on the form of a servant, by becoming like other humans, by having a human appearance. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, [even His] death on a cross** (Philip. 2:3–8; God’s Word™ mostly).
19. Absalom is selling himself as king of Israel based upon two things: his good looks and his ability to connect well with people, neither of which is meaningful as good leadership qualities. One thing I have noticed, particularly in the past decade or so is, both Democratic and Republican candidates are looking more and more attractive (I am referring not only to the president, but to governors, those in high office below the governor; and members of Congress—I write this in 2012 when this is particularly true of the Republican party).
- 20.

If the people are arrogant, then they will follow an arrogant man who is not truly a leader. Absalom’s entire platform in his reign as king over Israel, albeit short, will simply be to get rid of his father.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And he was in coming a man to bow down to him, and he stretched out his hand, and he takes a hold to him, and he kisses to him.

2Samuel
15:5

And it was when a man came to bow down to him, that Absalom [lit., he] would reach out his hand [to lift them up], or he would embrace him, or he would kiss him.

And it was whenever a man came to bow before Absalom that he would, instead, reach out his hand or he would embrace him or he would kiss him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

Moreover when any man came to him to salute him, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And he was in coming a man to bow down to him, and he stretched out his hand, and he takes a hold to him, and he kisses to him.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And whenever a man arose to do him obeisance, he held him by his hand and kissed him.

Septuagint (Greek) 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.

Significant differences: The first verbs in the Greek and Syriac are not exactly what is found in the Hebrew, but they are close in meaning. The Syriac leaves out the phrase that follows Absalom stretching out his hand. That is a key phrase, because it suggests that Absalom does not just shake his hand, but he is reaching down to pull the man up.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible Whenever anyone came near to Absalom, bowing low out of respect, he would reach his hand out, grab them, and kiss them.

Contemporary English V. Whenever anyone would come to Absalom and start bowing down, he would reach out and hug and kiss them.

Easy English People went to bend down in front of Absalom, in order to show him honour. But Absalom reached out his hand to each person and held him. Then Absalom kissed the person.

Easy-to-Read Version And if a person came to Absalom and started to bow down to him, Absalom would {treat him like a close friend}—Absalom would reach out and touch that person and kiss him.

Good News Bible (TEV) When the man would approach Absalom to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out, take hold of him, and kiss him.

The Message Whenever someone would treat him with special honor, he'd shrug it off and treat him like an equal, making him feel important.

New Berkeley Version Furthermore, whenever a man approached to prostrate himself before him, he would extend his hand, lift him up, and kiss him.

New Century Version People would come near Absalom to bow to him. When they did, Absalom would reach out his hand and take hold of them and kiss them.

New Life Bible When a man came near to put his face to the ground in front of him, Absalom would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.

New Living Translation When people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn't let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and kissed them.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible And whenever some man would come and bow before him, he would reach out and grab him, then kiss him.

New American Bible Whenever a man approached him to show homage, he would extend his hand, hold him, and kiss him.

New Jerusalem Bible And whenever anyone came up to him to prostrate himself, he would stretch out his hand, draw him to him and kiss him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English As a man was bowing near to him, he sent his hand to fortify him, and kissed him. And if any man came near to give him honour, he took him by the hand and gave him a kiss.

Ferar-Fenton Bible And when a person approached to bow to him, he would stretch out his hand, and seize his, and salute him,...

Judaica Press Complete T. And it would be, when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, that he put forth his hand and took hold of him, and kissed him.

New Advent Bible Moreover when any man came to him to salute him, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

NET Bible® When someone approached to bow before him, Absalom [Heb "he"; the referent (Absalom) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] would extend his hand and embrace him and kiss him.

New Heart English Bible It was so, that when any man came near to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him.

NIV, ©2011 Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version And it has come to pass, in the drawing nearing of any one to bow himself to him, that he has put forth his hand, and laid hold on him, and given a kiss to him;..."

English Standard Version And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.

exeGesés companion Bible And so be it, when any man approaches to prostrate to him, he sends his hand and holds him and kisses him:...

Syndein {Absalom's Condescension/Politicking} Now it came to pass, when anyone approached to 'salute'/'do obeisance'/greet him, he {Absalom} put extend his hand, and take hold of him, and 'kiss him'/'give him the customary warm greeting of the day'. {Note: The Principal is the bible must be interpreted in conjunction with the time in which it was written. The normal greeting in this culture (and still in the Middle East today) was for men to kiss when they greeted each other. Oriental cultures tend to bow respectfully. Westerners shake hands. It is all the same thing.}.

World English Bible It was so, that when any man came near to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him.

Young's Updated LT And it has come to pass, in the drawing nearing of any one to bow himself to him, that he has put forth his hand, and laid hold on him, and given a kiss to him.

The gist of this verse: It appears that Absalom would not allow men to do obeisance to him, but to lift the man up to his level, as if to say, "We are all equal in this land."

2Samuel 15:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

2Samuel 15:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qârab (בָּרַב) [pronounced kaw-RA ^{BV}]	<i>to come near, to approach, to draw near</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong #7126 BDB #897
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

The meanings of the lâmed preposition broken down into groups: ❶ *to, towards, unto*; it is used both to turn one's heart *toward* someone as well as to sin *against* someone; ❷ *to, even to*; in this sense, it can be used with a number to indicate the upper limit which a multitude might approach (*nearly*). ❸ Lâmed can be equivalent to the Greek preposition eis (εἰς), meaning *into*, as in transforming *into* something else, changing *into* something else (Gen. 2:7). This use of lâmed after the verb hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW] (Strong's #1961 BDB #224) is one thing *becoming* another (Gen. 2:7). ❹ Its fourth use is the mark of a dative, after verbs of giving, granting, delivering, pardoning, consulting, sending, etc. This type of dative is broken down into several categories, but one includes the translation *by*, which would be apropos here. ❺ *With regards to, as to*. Similar to the Greek preposition eis (εἰς) plus the dative. [Numbering from Gesenius]. ❻ *On account of, because, propter*, used of cause and reason (*propter* means *because*; Gesenius used it). ❼ *Concerning, about*, used of a person or thing made the object of discourse, after verbs of saying. ❽ *On behalf of* anyone, *for* anyone. ❾ As applied to a rule or standard, *according to, according as, as though, as if*. ❿ When associated with time, it refers to *the point of time at which or in which* anything is done; or it can refer to *the space of time during which* something is done (or occurs); *at the time of*.

Translation: *And it was when a man came to bow down to him,...* Absalom became well known. He traveled with this entourage. People would come to meet him. It was protocol to bow down before royalty, and therefore, bow down they did. But Absalom is going to do something which is going to make him seem like a different kind of royal personage.

2Samuel 15:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand; figuratively for strength, power, control</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Translation: ...that Absalom [lit., he] would reach out his hand [to lift them up],... However, Absalom did not want them to feel as though they needed to bow before him. He would reach out to them. We might think of this as a handshake, although that is not necessarily what is going on. What Absalom was doing was reaching out to lift them up to his level. There was no upper class in his country; Absalom was equal to the people whom he wanted to rule over.

Try to see this in your mind's eye. A "subject" comes along, sees Absalom, and then bows down low before him. So, he is on the ground, either on his knees and bowing or sprawled out before Absalom, and Absalom reaches out his hand, presumably to lift him up.

We do not know when handshaking began, but some of the "origin" stories begin in **medieval times**, which is 2000 years after this period of time. However, there are statues and steles with handshaking occurring that go back to the **4th century** B.C. For all we know, we might even be in on the first handshaking to occur in human history right in this passage.

2Samuel 15:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châzaq (חָזַק) [pronounced khaw-ZAHK]	<i>to take hold [of something], to grab, to hold fast, to gain [take] possession of; to strengthen, to make strong, to support; to repair; to display strength [power]; to prevail [upon]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #2388 BDB #304
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced lê]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

The lâmed preposition here acts very much like the sign of a direct object.

Translation: ...or he would embrace him,... He might embrace the person who has come to him. Have you seen politicians do this? Many times. We do not know if Absalom does the lifting up and then the embracing, or, sometimes he does one, but not the other. But, again, the concept of equality is radiated. The embrace tells the man, “We’re equal, my brother; I am not higher than you as royalty.”

So that there is no misunderstanding, Absalom does not see himself equal to any of these people. This is salesmanship, not leadership. This is a ruse to win their favor.

Recall that Satan attempted to sell the woman on equality as well. “If you eat the fruit, you will know what God knows.”

2Samuel 15:5d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
nâshaq (נשק) [pronounced <i>naw-SHAHK</i>]	<i>to kiss, to touch, to have close contact with</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong’s #5401 BDB #676
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong’s # BDB #510

The lâmed preposition here acts very much like the sign of a direct object.

Translation: ...or he would kiss him. And, in those days, you kissed your parents and close friends and relatives; and that is what Absalom would do with “his potential subjects.” A little gross to me, but that was the culture of the day. Again, Absalom is conveying the idea of equality.

It is here where the less literal translations are helpful. When I was first saved, I believe that the most literal, most careful word-for-word translation was always the best. I have since changed my mind about this. Here, we can read what the more lax translations have done, and we get a better idea what is going on, despite the cultural differences.

Easy English	People went to bend down in front of Absalom, in order to show him honour. But Absalom reached out his hand to each person and held him. Then Absalom kissed the person.
Easy-to-Read Version	And if a person came to Absalom and started to bow down to him, Absalom would {treat him like a close friend}—Absalom would reach out and touch that person and kiss him.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When the man would approach Absalom to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out, take hold of him, and kiss him.
The Message	Whenever someone would treat him with special honor, he'd shrug it off and treat him like an equal, making him feel important.
New Living Translation	When people tried to bow before him, Absalom wouldn't let them. Instead, he took them by the hand and kissed them.

In the translations above, it is clear that many of these words are not found in the Hebrew. However, this gives us a better idea about what is going on. Absalom is conveying the idea, “We are all equal here, brother; I am no better than you are. We are all comrades here.” Now, this is not what Absalom believes. This is what he does in order to manipulate the masses.

So, people who met Absalom would come back and tell their friends and family, “Let me tell you, this Absalom fellow, he’s approachable. He’s just a regular guy.” Others would say, “You know, he’s the kind of guy you could have a beer with.”

This is a point that needs to be driven home, because there are no written commentaries that I am aware of which make this connection.²³

The Importance of 2Samual 14:33

1. 2Sam. 14:33 reads: **Joab went to the king and told him. So David summoned Absalom, who came to the king and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. Then the king kissed Absalom.**
2. Prior to this, Absalom was estranged from King David. David allowed Absalom back into Jerusalem, but he would not see him. David would not forgive him; David would not bring him into court for a final adjudication; David just made it known that Absalom was not to come to the palace. This went on for 2 years. Absalom live in Jerusalem, but he could not come and see the king. 2Sam. 14:28
3. We know that Absalom is a clever man of plots; for two years he hatched a plot to kill his half-brother Amnon and carried it out with the unwitting help of his father. 2Sam. 13:24–33
4. So, Absalom, who is far less sentimental than his father, thought about his place in Jerusalem, and decided that he could become king as a young man, and so he hatched a plot to bring that to pass.
5. He has to have a free hand to bring this plot to fruition. He could not do this as the estranged son of David. He needed access to castle Zion; he needed to be able to talk freely to the people of Israel as they walked in and out of the courtroom (it was an open courtroom at the gate of the city). And Absalom needed an entourage to make himself appear to be a king. He could not do this as David’s estranged son; that would arouse suspicions.
6. As David’s favored son, he could begin acting like the king’s son; like a king-in-waiting. David, the overindulgent father, would notice this, but not think much about it.
7. So, once Absalom recognized that he needed to be close to his father David, he needed to see his father.
8. Absalom had one ally inside Castle Zion and that was Joab. When Joab refused to answer his messages, Absalom took what appears to be a petulant act. However, given what Absalom needed from Joab and then David, this was not an act of angry frustration, but an act calculated to get him into the palace with his father David.
9. Once Absalom was in the palace with David, he, with very little effort, was able to play his father. Absalom figured he could show up, do obeisance, and his father David would be unable to help himself. He would have to accept Absalom back as his beloved son.
10. In other words, Absalom was not thinking 2 or 3 steps ahead; he was thinking 5 or 6 steps ahead. Whatever you may think of Absalom personally, do not underestimate his intelligence or his forethought.

So there is no misunderstanding, Absalom is not the prodigal son here. The prodigal son came back in true humility, willing and able to work as a servant for his father. Absalom just faked it. He would not be cleaning out horse or mule barns; he would not be drawing water or emptying out waste containers. Absalom was not willing to do servile work; he needed his father’s approval and affection in order to proceed.

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Quite obviously, Absalom does not have anywhere near the same affection for David as David has for him. David is just a means to an end, and he no doubt anticipates killing his father in battle. This is what is in Absalom’s soul right here, right now; and when his father kissed him.

²³ It is certainly possible that I skimmed over a commentator who made this point and missed it.

One could make the case that Absalom is a victim of injustice, and that David did not deal with him properly. This was taught in the previous chapter. The key was not a “full forgiveness” but a just verdict rendered in an open court by David. But, regardless of David’s shortcomings and failure as a father, Absalom is now an adult. Therefore, Absalom is responsible for his own decisions.

Application: You may have had the worst home life and the lousiest parents in the human race. And many people are willing to give you slack because of this maybe up to age 16. However, there is a point at which you need to assume responsibility for your own life, no matter what has happened to you. Absalom is, without a doubt, an adult, and the decisions that he makes will bring him to his own violent death. Once you are an adult, you have to grow up, lousy parental guidance or not.

Application: Everyone has setbacks in their life; everyone has faced injustice; everyone has had a bad break. What can God do about it? He can mix all things together for good to those who love Him (Rom. 8:28).

Let me suggest a rather odd parallel here: Satan, when he is let out of his bondage after the earth has been enjoying 1000 years of perfect environment, will come to the people of the world and offer them a better deal, if they would just revolt against Jesus Christ, who will be ruling the world on David’s throne from Jerusalem. There will be perfect environment at this time (Isa. 11:1–13). And still, Satan will come in and sway the people of the earth to turn against God and to revolt against Him in the Gog/Magog revolution (Rev. 19:11–16). People, even under perfect environment, can be led astray.

And so does Abraham as the word the this to all Israel who came for judgment unto the king. And so steals Absalom a heart of men of Israel.

2Samuel
15:6

So, according to this manner, Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment. Therefore, Absalom deceived the hearts of the men of Israel.

As so described, Absalom interacted with all Israel who came to the king for judgment. In this way, Absalom deceived the men of Israel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And this he did to all Israel that came for judgment, to be heard by the king, and he <u>enticed</u> the hearts of the men of Israel.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so does Abraham as the word the this to all Israel who came for judgment unto the king. And so steals Absalom a heart of men of Israel.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And in this manner did Absalom to all the <u>Israelites</u> who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom did after this manner to all Israel that came to the king for judgment; and Absalom <u>gained</u> the hearts of the men of Israel.

Significant differences: The English translation from the Syriac has *Israelites* rather than *all Israel*. Although the final verbs noted above are slightly different, they are not that different.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	This is how Absalom treated every Israelite who came to the king seeking justice. This is how Absalom stole the hearts of the Israelites.
Contemporary English V.	That’s how he treated everyone from Israel who brought a complaint to the king. Soon everyone in Israel liked Absalom better than they liked David.

Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom did that to all the Israelites who came to King David for judgment. In this way, Absalom won the hearts of all the people of Israel.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Absalom did this with every Israelite who came to the king for judgment, and so he won their loyalty.
<i>The Message</i>	Absalom did this to everyone who came to do business with the king and stole the hearts of everyone in Israel.
New Berkeley Version	Absalom acted like this for all the Israelites who were coming to the king for judgment, and so he stole away the loyalty of the men of Israel.
New Century Version	Absalom did this to all the *Israelites who came to the king for a decision. It was as if Absalom stole the people of *Israel. They loved him and they became loyal to him.
New Life Bible	He acted this way toward all those of Israel who came with a problem for the king to judge. So Absalom became friends with the men of Israe.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, AbSalom was doing this to everyone from IsraEl who came to the king for a judgment, and he was winning the hearts of the men of IsraEl.
Christian Community Bible	Absalom did this to all Israelites who came to the tribunal of the king, winning their hearts for himself.
<i>God's Word™</i>	This is what he did for all Israelites who came to the king to have him try their case. So Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.
New American Bible	By behaving in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king for judgment, Absalom was stealing the heart of Israel.
NIRV	Absalom did that to all of the people of Israel who came to the king with their cases or claims. That's why the hearts of the people were turned toward him.
New Jerusalem Bible	Absalom acted like this with every Israelite who appealed to the king's tribunal, and so Absalom won the Israelites' hearts.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom did this with every Israelite who came to the king for judgment. That way he won their loyalty.
Revised English Bible	By behaving like this to every Israelite who sought justice from the king, Absalom stole the affections of the people.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom did this word for anyone in Israel that came to the king for verdicts. Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel.
Bible in Basic English	And this Absalom did to everyone in Israel who came to the king to have his cause judged: so Absalom, like a thief, took away the hearts of the men of Israel.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and by this means, Absalom made himself popular to all Israel who came for justice to the king. Thus Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.
HCSB	Absalom did this to all the Israelites who came to the king for a settlement. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.
New Advent Bible	And this he did to all Israel that came for judgment, to be heard by the king, and he enticed the hearts of the men of Israel.
NET Bible®	Absalom acted this way toward everyone in Israel who came to the king for justice. In this way Absalom won the loyalty [Heb "stole the heart."] of the citizens [Heb "the men."] of Israel.
New Heart English Bible	Absalom did this sort of thing to all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.
NIV – UK	Absalom behaved in this way towards all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Ab?shalom did this to all Yisra' ěl who came to the sovereign for right-ruling. And Ab?shalom stole the hearts of the men of Yisra' ěl.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Green's Literal Translation	And Absalom acted this way to all Israel who came in to the king for judgment. And Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel.
LTHB	And Absalom acted this way to all Israel who came in to the king for judgment. And Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel.
Syndein	Consequently, Absalom behaved in the manner, to all Israel who came to the king for justice and so Absalom stole the hearts/'right lobes' of the men of Israel. {Note: Apparently the judicial system at this point was overwork and possibly even unjust. Incompetency in the government and the building of a huge incompetent bureaucracy is a government asking for revolution.}
World English Bible	In this manner Absalom did to all Israel who came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.
Young's Updated LT	And Absalom does according to this thing to all Israel who come in for judgment unto the king, and Absalom steals the hearts of the men of Israel.

The gist of this verse: By these simple acts, Absalom got many people to think that he was really a great guy and potentially a great leader.

2Samuel 15:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
The full set of Qal meanings from BDB: <i>to do, work, make, produce; to do; to work; to deal (with); to act, act with effect, effect; to produce; to prepare; to make (an offering); to attend to, put in order; to observe, celebrate; to acquire (property); to appoint, ordain, institute; to bring about; to use; to spend, pass.</i>			
All of the BDB Qal meanings for this word are: 1a1) <i>to do, work, make, produce; 1a1a) to do; 1a1b) to work; 1a1c) to deal (with); 1a1d) to act, act with effect, effect; 1a2) to make; 1a2a) to make; 1a2b) to produce; 1a2c) to prepare; 1a2d) to make (an offering); 1a2e) to attend to, put in order; 1a2f) to observe, celebrate; 1a2g) to acquire (property); 1a2h) to appoint, ordain, institute; 1a2i) to bring about; 1a2j) to use; 1a2k) to spend, pass.</i>			
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately; combined with an infinitive, it can also take on the meaning as, often, when, as soon as</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

2Samuel 15:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
Together, dâbâr zeh mean <i>this thing, this matter, this command</i> .			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: So, according to this manner, Absalom dealt with all Israel... Absalom found this to be a profitable place to speak to fellow Israelites. It was a fertile field in which to find supporters. They walked out of court mad, wanting to vent; and they spoke to Absalom. This made them feel a bit better. They believe he is a regular guy and he is a guy who cares. He is right there, right where they face a court that is stacked against them, and he cares.

The implication is, there was a problem in the courts; a backlog, and it is possible that not all men got a fair hearing for their grievances. However, as noted before, in any court case, all you need to do is just talk to the loser, and they'll be glad to tell you how they feel, and happy to hear that you agree with them.

Application: Have you ever voted for a politician because you believe that he cares for you and is concerned about your problems? Absalom appeared to care about those who walked out of the court.

2Samuel 15:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bôw' (בָּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mîsh ^e pâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced mish ^e -PAWT]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, a judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048

2Samuel 15:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...who came to the king for judgment. The people that Absalom focused on were those who had to go to court. In many cases, this means they travel 20 or 40 or even 60 miles; and then, once they arrive, they lose their court case, or they are not given a hearing, for whatever reason. So these are people who are upset.

So Absalom spoke with the malcontents; he shot the breeze with them. He treated them as equals; and he sympathized with their problems and agreed with their grievances. In this way, those who spoke to Absalom walked away impressed by him.

Now, recall that Absalom was a handsome young man; and he was apparently very personable when he chose to be. He knew how to *work a room*, as it were. So these people that he met and spoke with, went back home, and they told all of their friends and family what a nice young man Absalom is, and how he would make a great judge, or maybe king.

2Samuel 15:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
gârab (גָּרַב) [pronounced gaw-NAH ^{BV}]	<i>to steal [away]; to deceive</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1589 BDB #170
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced lay ^{BV}]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
'ănâshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced uh-NAW-sheem]; also spelled 'îyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced ee-SHEEM]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35

2Samuel 15:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yisʿrāʾēl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: Therefore, Absalom deceived the hearts of the men of Israel. The verb here can mean *to steal, to deceive*. Absalom deceived the thinking of all those who talked with him. They left the court yard believing Absalom to be a kind man, a real guy, someone who was not so hoity-toity, and a guy you could have a beer with. In this way, he deceived the thinking of the people. Absalom wanted power and he wanted it now. He did not care how he got it. The people who spoke to him were deceived; and he did not *earn* their loyalty, he *stole* it.

Clarke writes: *His manner of doing this is circumstantially related above. He was thoroughly versed in the arts of the demagogue; and the common people, the vile mass, heard him gladly. He used the patriot's arguments, and was every thing of the kind, as far as promise could go. He found fault with men in power; and he only wanted their place, like all other pretended patriots, that he might act as they did, or worse.*²⁴

Or, as Poole put it: *[Absalom] secretly and subtlety undermined his father, and robbed his father of the good opinions and affections of his people, that he might gain them to himself, by such insinuations into their affections, by his plausible and over-civil carriage.*²⁵

And J. Vernon McGee said: *Absalom is a true politician, isn't he? That is the way man men get elected to office today. They have no qualifications other than they fact that they are good at handshaking and back slapping.*²⁶

Guzik sums this up quite well.

Guzik on How Absalom Stole the Hearts of the Men of Israel

- He carefully cultivated an exciting, enticing image (chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him)
- He worked hard (Absalom would rise early)
- He knew where to position himself (beside the way to the gate)
- He looked for troubled people (anyone who had a lawsuit)
- He reached out to troubled people (Absalom would call to him)
- He took a personal interest in the troubled person (What city are you from?)
- He sympathized with the person (your case is good and right)
- He never attacked David directly (no deputy of the king to hear you)
- He left the troubled person more troubled (no deputy of the king to hear you)
- Without directly attacking David, Absalom promised to do better (Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice)

Let me append this with two verses: Rom. 16:18 For such people do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. 2Peter 2:3 In their greed [for power, in Absalom's case] they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation, pronounced [by God] long ago, is not idle, and their destruction does not sleep. (Both HCSB)

²⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:6.

²⁵ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:6.

²⁶ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©Eternal life Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 246.

From: *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:1–37.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I want you to think back about David and his rising to the throne. As long as Saul was alive, Saul was king, and David always showed him proper deference (with one exception on one occasion). David had two chances where he could have killed Saul, and it would have been so easy for him to rationalize such an act (as Saul was forever chasing him and trying to kill him). It would have been so easy for David to say, "The Lord has delivered Saul to me; blessed be the name of the Lord." And then plunge his sword into Saul's belly. But David did not do that. He would not lift his hand against the Lord's anointed.

But Absalom? That is a whole different story. If Absalom had a chance to kill his father, he would have done it in an instant. There would be no thought to God; no thought to what is right or wrong; there is just power, and it is there for him to take, so he would take it.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Absalom's Revolt Begins in Hebron

And so he is from an end of forty [probably *four*] a year and so says Absalom unto the king, "Let me go, please, and so I complete my vow which I vowed to Y^ehowah in Hebron. 2Samuel 15:7

And it is after [lit., *from*] the end of four years that Absalom said to the king, "Let me go, please, so that I can complete in Hebron my vow that I vowed to Y^ehowah.

And after four years passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please allow me to go to Hebron, so that I can complete my vow that I vowed to the Lord.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And after forty years, Absalom said to king David: Let me go, and <u>pay</u> my vows which I have vowed to the Lord in Hebron.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is from an end of forty [probably <i>four</i>] a year and so says Absalom unto the king, "Let me go, please, and so I complete my vow which I vowed to Y ^e howah in Hebron.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And it came to pass after <u>four</u> years Absalom said to the king, Let me go and fulfil my vow which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron;...
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said to his father, <u>I will</u> go now, and <u>pay</u> my vows, which I vowed to the Lord in Hebron.
Brenton's Septuagint	And it came to pass after forty years, that Abessalom said to his father, <u>I will</u> go now, and <u>pay</u> my vows, which I vowed to the Lord in Chebron.

Significant differences: Both the Syriac and, apparently, one version of the LXX, have *four* years rather than *forty*. Most ancient versions understand that Absalom is making a request. In the English translation from the Greek, it appears as if Absalom is simply informing his father of what he is going to do. We have *pay* my vows rather than *complete* my vows in the English translation from the Greek and Latin.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Four years later, Absalom said to David, "Please, let me go to Hebron. I have to keep a promise that I made to the LORD,...
Easy-to-Read Version	After four years [Some ancient writings say "40 years."], Absalom said to King David, "Please let me go to complete my special promise that I made to the Lord at Hebron.
Good News Bible (TEV)	After four years Absalom said to King David, "Sir, let me go to Hebron and keep a promise I made to the LORD.
<i>The Message</i>	After four years of this, Absalom spoke to the king, "Let me go to Hebron to pay a vow that I made to GOD.
New Century Version	After four years Absalom said to King David, "Please let me go to Hebron. I want to carry out my promise that I made to the LORD...
New Living Translation	After four years [As in Greek and Syriac versions; Hebrew reads forty years.], Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron to offer a sacrifice to the LORD and fulfill a vow I made to him.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

<i>God's Word</i> ™	Four years later Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and keep the vow I made to the LORD.
New American Bible	<i>Conspiracy in Hebron.</i> After a period of four years, Absalom said to the king: "Please let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD.
New Simplified Bible	After four years Absalom said to King David: »My lord let me go to Hebron and keep a promise I made to Jehovah.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	It was in the end of forty years: Absalom said to the king, "Please, I go to repay my vow which I vowed to Yahweh in Hebron.
Bible in Basic English	Now at the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, Let me go to Hebron and give effect to the oath which I made to the Lord:...
HCSB	When four years had passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron to fulfill a vow I made to the Lord.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	After a period of forty [Some Septuagint manuscripts and Syriac read "four."] years had gone by, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow that I made to the LORD.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And it came to pass at the end of forty years; and Absalom said to the king; "Allow me to go, I beg you, and pay my vow which I have vowed to the Lord in Hebron.
NET Bible®	After four years Absalom said to the king, "Let me go and repay my vow that I made to the LORD while I was in Hebron. The MT has here "forty," but this is presumably a scribal error for "four." The context will not tolerate a period of forty years prior to the rebellion of Absalom. The Lucianic Greek recension (τέσσαρα ἔτη, tessara ete), the Syriac Peshitta ('arba' sanin), and Vulgate (post quattuor autem annos) in fact have the expected reading "four years." Most English translations follow the versions in reading "four" here, although some (e.g. KJV, ASV, NASB, NKJV), following the MT, read "forty."
NIV – UK	At the end of four [Some Septuagint manuscripts, Syriac and Josephus; Hebrew forty] years, Absalom said to the king, 'Let me go to Hebron and fulfil a vow I made to the LORD.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And after [four] years, Absalom said to the king, I pray you, let me go to Hebron [his birthplace] and pay my vow to the Lord.
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English Standard Version	And at the end of four [Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew forty] years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron.
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, at the end of forty years, Abi Shalom says to the sovereign, I pray you, that I may go, and shalam the vow I vowed to Yah Veh in Hebron:...
Fred Miller's Revised KJV	And it was at the end four years, (Heb. Forty years) that Absalom said to the king, I beseech you, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron.
The Geneva Bible	And it came to pass after forty years [Counting from the time that the Israelites had asked a king of Samuel.], 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.
New King James Version	Now it came to pass after forty [Septuagint manuscripts, Syriac, and Josephus read four.] years that Absalom said to the king, "Please, let me go to Hebron and pay the vow which I made to the LORD.
Syndein	{vv. 7-8 Absalom Deceives His Father to Start Revolution} Now it came to pass after four years {introduces new subject}, that Absalom spoke to the king {David}, " 'Please sir/'I pray you', let me go to Hebron and fulfill my vow,. It happened at the end of forty years, that Absalom said to the king, please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to Yahweh, in Hebron.
World English Bible	It happened at the end of forty years, that Absalom said to the king, please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to Yahweh, in Hebron.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass, at the end of forty years, that Absalom says unto the king, "Let me go, I pray you, and I complete my vow, that I vowed to Jehovah in Hebron.

The gist of this verse: Absalom asks the king if he can take off to Hebron to fulfill a vow that he had made earlier.

2Samuel 15:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
qêts (קֵץ) [pronounced <i>kayts</i>]	<i>end [usually of time]; end [of space]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7093 BDB #893

2Samuel 15:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿar ^e bâʾîym (אַרְבַּעִים) [pronounced ar ^e -BAW-GEEM]	forty	undeclinable plural noun	Strong's #705 BDB #917
The masculine and feminine forms of <i>four</i> are shown below. The key here are the consonants, and not the vowels. The vowel points were added to Old Testament Scripture after the fact.			
ʿar ^e baʿ (אַרְבָּע) [pronounced ahr ^e -BAHG]	four	masculine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
ʿar ^e bâʾâh (אַרְבַּעַה) [pronounced ahr ^e -baw-GAW]	four	feminine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
There are certainly problems with the word here being <i>forty</i> and not <i>four</i> . Josephus and the Syriac version and, apparently, some versions of the LXX, have <i>four</i> . In the Dead Sea Scrolls, this word cannot be read, so my copy of the Dead Sea Scrolls has a footnote which reads: 4QSam ^c and 4QSam ^a presumably had "four," just as the LXX ^L , the Syriac, and Josephus have. "Forty" is found in the MT and LXX ^B . ²⁷ Most of the available texts made from the Greek are based up LXX ^B (which would suggest that it is the most accurate or the best available manuscript).			
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

Translation: And it is after [lit., from] the end of four years... There are a lot of problems with this verse. If you will notice in the Hebrew exegesis above, the Hebrew actually has *forty*, and a few translations have *four*. *Forty years* does not make sense. However, this would have been an unusual error for a copyist to make. He would have had to have added two letters, ם, for this to end up being a *forty*. Now, all it takes is for this to happen one time and for this to end up being the manuscript which is used in the future. Let me add that, of the books of the Bible, Samuel is known for having an abundance of errors.

Tyler Cronk (apparently a theological student): *The original Masoretic texts that exist have the most errors, omissions, and transmission errors than any other book in the Bible.5 The texts themselves are in bad shape and unintelligible in many areas.*²⁸

First of all, *40 years* makes very little sense, as David will rule for 40 years, and Absalom was born near the beginning of David's reign. One commentator tried to measure 40 years from some oddball, unnamed date, but that would make little sense in a narrative. Although one commentator explains this as *forty years since Saul*; there are other measurements of time as related to David and Absalom which have already been used (2Sam. 13:22, 38 14:28), so we know the time frame of what has gone down between David and Absalom; it is well laid out. So, inserting a *forty* here with reference to some weird time frame would simply not fit with what has gone before.

²⁷ *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*; translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, p. 250.

²⁸ From: http://eagle.northwestu.edu/faculty/bob-stallman/files/2011/03/1-Samuel-13_1-15-by-Tyler-Cronk.pdf accessed September 27, 2012, to which he sources Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy through 2 Samuel*, with the New International Version of the Holy Bible ed. Frank Ely Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1992), p. 559.

Another researcher²⁹ has put together manuscripts with *40 days* instead of *40 years* (*4 days*, in the Hebrew, is very close to *40*). Now, this is certainly possible, and allows for Absalom to speak to perhaps 300 or more people concerned about their court cases. However, taking 4 years to build up a following seems more reasonable to me (Absalom had a large following very early on—2Sam. 17:1).³⁰

Our only explanation is, this is an error in copying, and a serious one. We have had, so far, 3 or 4 serious errors in the book of Samuel. This error would throw all of the other numbers out of whack.

Now, quite likely, this was noticed by some copyists and translators. There are one set of manuscripts of the Septuagint (the early Greek translation of the Bible) and the much later translation into the Syriac (at least, our copies of the Syriac are not very ancient). We do not know if they worked from manuscripts that had the word *four* in them or if they just knew it could not be *forty*. I think the latter is the most likely case.

This is an odd error, but it is an error which accomplishes nothing. That is, there is no theological constituency out there who has this or that doctrine explained by having the word *forty* here. So, there would be no reason for someone to intentionally change this into *forty*. The only explanation is, for whatever reason, a copyist wrote *forty* instead of *four*.

Given what Absalom is doing—slowly appealing to the people of Israel to look upon him as the next king—a 4 year period of time seems quite reasonable.

Furthermore we are given a glimpse of what Absalom did to prepare for this revolution. There must have been preparations more extensive than what we have read. We are given a few highlights, so that we understand both Absalom’s purpose and his ruthlessness.

Now, having been a math teacher, I do get into the numbers angle now and again. We looked at the [Abbreviated Davidic Timeline](#), and came up with the follow conclusions: David is around 61–62 years of age. This places him at the beginning of his 4th decade as king.³¹ If we assume that Absalom is 15 when his sister is raped (they are quite young), he is now still very young, being 23 or 24. Taking the 4 years into account, that brings him to 27 or 28, which is not far from the NIV Study Bible’s approximation of 30 years.³² My age approximation for Absalom is based upon an assumption. If we assume that Absalom is 15 when his sister is raped (they are quite young), he is now still very young, being 23 or 24. Taking the 4 years into account, that brings him to 27 or 28, which is not far from the NIV Study Bible’s approximation of 30 years.³³ My age approximation for Absalom is based upon an assumption. The only problem with the references that I used is, none of them seem to take these 4 years into account.³⁴

2Samuel 15:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

²⁹ Dr. Kennicott; see notes from Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:7.

³⁰ And only one commentator out of more than a dozen that I refer to discusses this option seriously. Keil and Delitzsch mention it, but dismiss it out of hand.

³¹ Which comports with *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote), where this is said to be the beginning of David’s last decade as king.

³² *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote).

³³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 441 (footnote).

³⁴ I repeat this, because this verse brings time into the equation.

2Samuel 15:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...that Absalom said to the king,... So a period of time goes by. Absalom here is speaking to the king, so it indicates that he was able to approach the king now and to talk about whatever. We have no idea what King David thought about Absalom's entourage, and he may not have realized that Absalom was fomenting revolution all these past 4 years. His conversation, when taken superficially, looks innocent enough. One might even understand that Absalom, who would someday be king, was getting to know the judicial system and talking to the plaintiffs and defendants in order to understand the process better.

With his own children, David was always overindulgent and he never gave them the close scrutiny that they should have gotten.

2Samuel 15:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect; voluntative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The hê at the end of a 1 st person verb is called a cohortative hê. We often add a word like <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced naw]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609

Nâ' is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: "Oh, that I may not respect any man's person"); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2nd person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Gen. 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Gen. 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Gen. 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word *let*.

Translation:...“Let me go, please,... Clearly, Absalom could not just come and go as he pleased, but this does not mean that he came to David every time he wanted to move to the left or to the right. Going out of town would be something that would require the king's permission.

It ought to be noted that there are men watching Absalom (see 2Sam. 15:13).³⁵ Maybe they were assigned by David and maybe they have done this on their own initiative, but men loyal to David know what Absalom is up to, and they have, no doubt, been giving reports to David. Now, unless David has specifically said from the throne, “Listen, guys, I know you mean well, but I don’t want to hear this any more,” he is getting periodic reports on Absalom. However, David is who he is, an overindulgent father, and, no doubt, has made excuses for Absalom for much of this time. “He has an entourage? Look, he’s a young kid who wants to be king. He is interviewing people near the courthouse?”³⁶ Maybe that is what he is interested in.” And we have noted that Absalom has been very careful about what he has said and done, acting very circumspectly.

David would have done better to be more suspicious and less trusting. Absalom had approached him before about a bbq at his ranch, which request ended in the murder of Amnon (2Sam. 13:24–27).

2Samuel 15:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
shâlêm (שָׁלַם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAHM</i>]	<i>to make secure, to keep safe; to complete (finish); to make good; to restore, to requite, to recompense (pay)</i>	1 st person singular, Piel imperfect	Strong’s #7999 BDB #1022
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
nêder (נָדַר) [pronounced <i>NAY-der</i>]	<i>a vow, a promise, a personal guarantee, the giving of one’s word of assurance, a commitment</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong’s #5088 BDB #623
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong’s #834 BDB #81
nâdar (נָדַר) [pronounced <i>naw-DAHR</i>]	<i>to vow, to make a promise, to make a commitment, to give a word of assurance concerning a matter, to give one’s personal and honorable guarantee, to make a solemn oath or pledge to do or not to do a thing</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong’s #5087 BDB #623
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217

³⁵ Although it is certainly possible that David will have men begin to watch Absalom when he goes to Hebron, or that this is just some friend who reports back to David; it is more likely that people have been doing this all along.

³⁶ Again, there is no courthouse, but an open area near the gate where court cases were heard and adjudicated.

2Samuel 15:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Cheb ^e rōwn (חֶבְרֹן) [pronounced khe ^b v-ROHN]	<i>association, league, joined; transliterated Hebron</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: ...so that I can complete in Hebron my vow that I vowed to Y^ehowah. David appeared to exercise some supervision over Absalom, but it was limited. At this point in time, David seems to be as oblivious to Absalom's plans as he was when Absalom determined to kill Amnon. David is just not thinking that something like this could be taking place.

What Absalom says here is slightly problematic, but it can be explained. Absalom made this vow when in Geshur. However, he will complete the vow in Hebron. So, *in Hebron* essentially is connected to *completing the vow* and not really to *I vowed*. I moved that phrase to where it ought to be, but it may even suggest that Absalom is a little nervous before his father. I fudged a bit on the translation for the looser translation and came up with: *And after four years passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please allow me to go to Hebron, so that I can complete my vow that I vowed to the Lord.* Hebron is where Absalom wants to go; he did not make a vow in Hebron because Hebron is south of Jerusalem, and, for several years, he was north of Jerusalem.

Hebron was the capitol of the southern kingdom when David first took control of the southern kingdom, and Absalom was born there (2Sam. 5:4–5 1Chron. 3:1–2). Therefore, as Barnes³⁷ suggests, there will be some malcontents living there who wish that the capitol city was still Hebron, and some of Absalom's boyhood friends would live there, who might be natural allies to him.³⁸ But, mostly Absalom is going there to more easily organize an army which could war against David; which is something that he could not have done in Jerusalem.

Despite whatever warnings David may have heard, the idea that his son had made a vow and was going to Hebron to fulfill that vow was a great thing, in David's eyes. Maybe his boy was growing up and beginning to recognize that which is spiritual. Absalom seems to know David's blind sides: his sons and spiritual things. Here, Absalom combines them both, and David goes along with it.

What Absalom is saying will be explained more fully in the next verse.

For a vow vowed your servant in my living in Geshur in Aram, to say, 'If returning, returns me Y^ehowah [to] Jerusalem, and I have served Y^ehowah.' " 2Samuel 15:8

For your servant vowed a vow when living in Geshur, in Aram (Syria), saying, 'If indeed Y^ehowah returns me [to] Jerusalem, then I will serve Y^ehowah.' "

For your servant made a vow while living in Geshur in Aram, saying, "If Jehovah indeed returns me to Jerusalem, then I will serve Him by completing this vow.' "

Here is how others have translated this verse:

³⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:7.

³⁸ However, since David spent only 7 years there, these boyhood friends would have been, at most, 7 years old when Absalom knew them last.

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	For your servant made a vow, when he was in Gessur of Syria, saying: If the Lord shall bring me again into Jerusalem, I will <u>offer sacrifice</u> to the Lord.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	For a vow vowed your servant in my living in Geshur in Aram, to say, 'If returning, returns me Y ^e howah [to] Jerusalem, and I have served Y ^e howah.' "
Peshitta (Syriac)	For your servant made a vow while I abode at Geshur and in Aram, saying. If the LORD will bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.
Septuagint (Greek)	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.
Significant differences:	The final verb means <i>to serve</i> rather than <i>to offer a sacrifice</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	...when I was living with the Arameans in Geshur. I promised that if the LORD would bring me back to live in Jerusalem, I would worship him in Hebron."
Easy-to-Read Version	I made that promise while I was still living in Geshur, Aram. I said, 'If the Lord brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord.'"
Good News Bible (TEV)	While I was living in Geshur in Syria, I promised the LORD that if he would take me back to Jerusalem, I would worship him in Hebron."
<i>The Message</i>	Your servant made a vow when I was living in Geshur in Aram saying, 'If GOD will bring me back to Jerusalem, I'll serve him with my life.'"
New Berkeley Version	For your servant made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Syria, 'If the LORD will restore, will surely restore me to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.' " A hypocritical lie.
New Living Translation	For while your servant was at Geshur in Aram, I promised to sacrifice to the Lord in Hebron [As in some Greek manuscripts; Hebrew lacks in Hebron.] if he would bring me back to Jerusalem."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

Christian Community Bible	For while I lived at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If Yahweh will really bring me back to Jerusalem, I shall go there to worship him!'"
<i>God's Word</i> TM	I made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram. I said, 'If the LORD will bring me back to Jerusalem, I will serve the LORD.'"
New American Bible	For while living in Geshur in Aram, your servant made this vow: 'If the LORD ever brings me back to Jerusalem, I will worship him in Hebron.'" 2 Sm 3:3; 13:37.
NIRV	When I was living at Geshur in Aram, I made a promise. I said, 'If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I'll go to Hebron and worship him there.'"
New Jerusalem Bible	...for, when I was in Geshur, in Aram, your servant made this vow, "If Yahweh brings me back to Jerusalem, I shall pay my devotions to Yahweh in Hebron." "
New Simplified Bible	»When I lived at Geshur in Syria (Aram), I promised Jehovah that if he would take me back to Jerusalem, I would worship him in Hebron.«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	For while I was living in Geshur in Aram, your servant made an oath, saying, If ever the Lord lets me come back to Jerusalem, I will give him worship in Hebron.
Complete Jewish Bible	Your servant made a vow while I was staying at G'shur in Aram to the effect that if ADONAI would bring me back to Yerushalayim, then I would serve ADONAI."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	For your servant vowed a vow while I resided in Gheshur, in the land of Edom, saying, "If the EVER-LIVING will restore me to Jerusalem I will serve the EVER-LIVING."

HCSB	For your servant made a vow when I lived in Geshur of Aram, saying: If the LORD really brings me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the LORD in Hebron."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	For your servant made a vow when I lived in Geshur of Aram: If the LORD ever brings me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the LORD." Some Septuagint manuscripts add "in Hebron."
NET Bible®	For I made this vow [Heb "for your servant vowed a vow." The formal court style of referring to one's self in third person ("your servant") has been translated here as first person for clarity.] when I was living in Geshur in Aram: 'If the LORD really does allow me to return to Jerusalem, I will serve the LORD.' "
NIV – UK	While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: "If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron [Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew does not have in Hebron]."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For your servant vowed while I dwelt at Geshur in Syria, If the Lord will bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord [by offering a sacrifice].
Concordant Literal Version	...for a vow has your servant vowed in my dwelling in Geshur, in Aram, saying, If Yahweh does certainly bring me back to Jerusalem, then I have served Yahweh.
Context Group Version	For your slave vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If YHWH shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve YHWH.
English Standard Version	For 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 [Or will serve] the LORD.'
exeGesés companion Bible	...for your servant vowed a vow while I settled at Geshur in Aram, saying, If in returning, Yah Veh returns me to Yeru Shalem, then I serve Yah Veh.
The Geneva Bible	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 [By offering a peace-offering, which was lawful to do in any place.].
Syndein	...for your servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, thinking, "If Jehovah/God restores me and brings me back to Jerusalem, then I will worship Jehovah/God {in Hebron}." {Absalom is lying about the vow to God - Absalom never had a change of heart this is the sin of lying + arrogance = evil . . . and revolution} {Note: The KJV says 40 years, but RBT says 4 is the correct number in the Hebrew.} {Note: Absalom needs to get outside of Jerusalem to start the revolution, but still stay close to Jerusalem so he can gather his forces and quickly capture Jerusalem. So it took 2 years to get Absalom pardoned (and he formed the hard core conspirators) and back in Jerusalem. Now after 4 more years the seeds of Revolution had taken root (the general public malcontents mislead to be for Absalom and against David). Coming up, we will see that Ahithophel - the grandfather of Bathsheba - is the real brains behind the revolution. Hebron was the first capital of Israel and the citizens were dissatisfied that David moved the capital to Jerusalem. It was a perfect location to brew revolution. Hebron is also only 20 miles from the Southern boarder if the revolution fails and Absalom needs to flee.}.
World English Bible	For your servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If Yahweh shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Yahweh.
Young's Updated LT	...for a vow has your servant vowed in my dwelling in Geshur, in Aram, saying, If Jehovah does certainly bring me back to Jerusalem, then I have served Jehovah."

The gist of this verse: Absalom claims that he made a vow when in Geshur that he would serve the Lord if He brought Absalom back to Jerusalem.

2Samuel 15:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
nêder (נדן) [pronounced <i>NAY-der</i>]	<i>a vow, a promise, a personal guarantee, the giving of one's word of assurance, a commitment</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5088 BDB #623
nâdar (נדן) [pronounced <i>naw-DAHR</i>]	<i>to vow, to make a promise, to make a commitment, to give a word of assurance concerning a matter, to give one's personal and honorable guarantee, to make a solemn oath or pledge to do or not to do a thing</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5087 BDB #623
ʿebed (עבד) [pronounced <i>ĠE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâshab (בשי) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAH^BV</i>]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
G ^e shûwr (גשוש) [pronounced <i>g^esh-OOR</i>]	<i>to join; a bridge, a land of bridges and is transliterated Geshur</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #1650 BDB #178
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾĀrām (ארם) [pronounced <i>uh-RAWM</i>]	<i>the highland, high region; exalted; and is transliterated Aram; sometimes rendered Syria, Mesopotamia</i>	proper noun, singular	Strong's #758 BDB #74

Translation: For your servant vowed a vow when living in Geshur, in Aram (Syria),... Absalom is quite adept at lying to David, and he lies to David here. He claims that, while living in Geshur (remaining outside of Israel, because he orchestrated and ordered the killing of his half-brother, Amnon), he made a vow to God.

If David is not suspicious of Absalom, we ought to be.

Why We Know Absalom is Lying

1. Absalom making such a vow is not recorded in Scripture.
2. Absalom fulfilling such a vow is not recorded in Scripture, except for a slight mention in v. 12, which would have been in conjunction with his conspiracy.
3. The text tells us that 4 years have gone by; so, if Absalom made a vow to God if God brought him back to Jerusalem, why is he just getting around to fulfilling this vow now? Wouldn't that have been at the top of his list of things to do.
4. Absalom simply needs a reason to go to Hebron so that he can more easily organize his rebellion against David. This organizing is recorded in vv. 10–12 of this chapter.
5. Therefore, what Absalom does is simply to function as cover for his organizing a rebellion.
6. Absalom shows little interest in God, and, insofar as I can recall, this is the only place Absalom speaks of God—and here, he uses God as a cover for his revolution.
7. Absalom cannot simply leave town without this arousing suspicions in his father; therefore, in making such a move, he needs to go to his father first. Saying that this is all about a religious vow is just the right thing to blind-side his father David. Absalom is a master manipulator, and he knows this will cause David to agree to him going to Hebron, if it is for religious reasons.
8. There is nothing in Hebron which is particularly related to the worship of Y^ehowah. The Ark is in Jerusalem and the Tabernacle is in Gibeon. 2Sam. 6–7 1Chron. 15:1–3, 12 16:1, 37 1Chron. 15:26 1Kings 3:4 1Chron. 16:39 21:29 2Chron. 1:3
9. The last time that Absalom came to David to ask about going out of town, he used that excuse to lure Amnon up to a BBQ at his ranch to kill him. 2Sam. 13:24–27

Absalom is able to do two things well: lie and manipulate others. Put those together, and you have a con man, which is what Absalom is.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Map of Geshur, Aram:³⁹ Now, one commentator⁴⁰ makes a big deal about how this cannot be Geshur of Aram (Syria). However, this is a portion of a map from around this same time period. The borders of countries changes from time to time, and, during other eras, Syria was pretty much due north of Israel. Here, there territory is northeast of Israel, which Geshur being at its southwest corner.

Now, as an aside, you may ask, “Why use a source who messes up something like this?” Whereas all Bible commentators certainly do not have equal value, every commentator has made a mistake at some point in time. After referring to commentators over and over, it becomes obvious that some are almost nearly always mistaken while others have very little to say that is helpful.



³⁹ Map is from *Bible Atlas Maps* provided in E-sword. Map 051a – David's Conquest of Canaan.

⁴⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:8.

2Samuel 15:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'amar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'im (אם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
yâshab (בשי) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAH^BV</i>]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #3427 BDB #442

The infinitive absolute can act as a noun, a verb or an adverb. It takes the part of a noun, but with another verb (which may or may not be in the same stem), and it intensifies the verb's meaning, where it functions either as a complement of affirmation, and therefore translated *surely* or *indeed*; or it may act as a complement of condition, and therefore be translated *at all, freely or indeed*.⁴¹ The primary use of the infinitive absolute when found before its verb is to strengthen or emphasize. Its use does not simply intensify the meaning of a verb, as would a Piel, but applies an intensification to the entire phrase. Therefore, the infinitive absolute strengthens the note of certain in affirmations and in promises or threats, and of contrast in adversative or concessory statements, while it reinforces any sense of supposition or doubt or volition present in conditional clauses or questions or wishes. For this reason, it is a characteristic of grammar generally not found in the narrative. This would be used in speech and in letters in order to make a point. The use of the English adverbs *indeed, surely, of course, even, really, at all* or by the addition of the modals *should, could, must, may* might catch the nuance, but actually are often unnecessarily strong.⁴²

E-sword lists this as the Qal imperfect of the next verb, which would be unusual. We normally do not have two verbs together unless one is a Qal infinitive absolute and the other one an imperfect. There does appear to be a problem with the reading of this verb, in any case, there being a qere and a kethiv reading.

Most logically, this would simply be an infinitive absolute of the following verb, followed by the Hiphil imperfect of that same verb.

shûwb (בוש) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

⁴¹ Paraphrased from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2277.

⁴² Quoted or paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 123–124.

2Samuel 15:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced y ^{oo} -shaw-LAH-yim]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

Translation: ...saying, 'If indeed Y^ehowah returns me [to] Jerusalem,... The text here is all messed up, because both of the readings here are problematic. The Qal infinitive absolute of yâshab appears to be a mix up of the verb which ought to be here, and the verb when it was previously used in this verse. It is rare to have two imperfect verbs following one another in quick succession with no intervening words, but it is very common for a verb to be found with its infinitive absolute, which intensifies the meaning of that verb (I used the word *indeed*).

You may wonder why, in these two errors of this chapter, having 40 instead of 4 and here having the wrong verb in this verse should have been fixed. This is not what scribes did. Errors occurred, and sometimes they would make a notation off on the side, "Hey, I think that this ought to be _____ instead." But, what they would not do is *fix* the text, even when it seemed obvious that it needed fixing. So, what we have, more often than not, are clear errors which begin in one text and continue with that text and all of those copied from it. The scribes would copy exactly what was in front of them, messtup or not. They would leave it to others to fix, explain or whatever in the future.

So, what I believe should have been here is the infinitive absolute of shûwb followed by the Hiphil imperfect of the same, as that is what we would expect to find here.

So, Absalom is saying that he made a vow to God, if God brought him back to Jerusalem.

Bear in mind that all of this is bullcrap; Absalom made no such vow. He needs to leave Jerusalem; he needs to leave with his entourage, and he needs the king's permission to do so. Absalom knows that David is a religious man, so he figures the best thing to offer up in a religious excuse. Absalom simply knows how to work his father, just as he can work individuals who come out of a courthouse. Absalom is adept at being manipulative.

2Samuel 15:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced ġaw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly y ^{hoh} -WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *...then I will serve Y^ehowah.’ ”* *Serving Jehovah* does not mean that Absalom is going to become some sort of very religious type of guy like a monk; it simply means that he is going to fulfill the requirements of his vow. Therefore, he would go to Hebron in order to do this.

He does not seem to give a reason why it is Hebron that he would go to. Logically, if Absalom knew anything, he would have said, “I’m going to Gibeon” because that is where the Tabernacle was at this time. See the **Movement of the Ark and the Tabernacle** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). Or, he would have worshiped in Jerusalem, because that is where the Ark of God was. I do not know that there was any spiritual significance in going to Hebron.

V. 8 reads: *For your servant made a vow while living in Geshur in Aram, saying, “If Jehovah indeed returns me to Jerusalem, then I will serve Him by completing this vow.’ ”* This is phoney pious language, as well as a phoney excuse. Absalom knew how to read David and he knew what to say in order to manipulate him, and these were the magic words.

**And so says to him the king, “Go in peace.”
And so he rises up and so he goes Hebron-ward.**

2Samuel
15:9

So the king said to him, “Go in peace [and prosperity].” Therefore, Absalom [lit., he] rose up and went to Hebron.

So the king said to him, “Go in peace and prosperity.” Therefore, Absalom got up and went to Hebron.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And king <u>David</u> said to him: Go in peace. And he arose, and went to Hebron.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to him the king, “Go in peace.” And so he rises up and so he goes Hebron-ward.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king said to him, Go in peace. So he arose and went to Hebron.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said to him, Go in peace. And he arose and went to Hebron.

Significant differences: The name *David* appears to be inserted into the Latin text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	"Go in peace," the king said. So Absalom left and went to Hebron.
Contemporary English V.	David gave his permission, and Absalom went to Hebron.
Easy-to-Read Version	King David said, "Go in peace."
<i>The Message</i>	The king said, "Go with my blessing." And he got up and set off for Hebron.
New Berkeley Version	The king gave him permission, "God in peace." So he left and went to Hebron.
New Living Translation	"All right," the king told him. "Go and fulfill your vow." So Absalom went to Hebron.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

<i>God's Word</i> TM	"Go in peace," the king told him. So he went to Hebron.
New American Bible	The king said to him, "Go in peace," and he went off to Hebron.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king said to him, 'Go in peace.' So he set off and went to Hebron.
Today's NIV	The king answered, 'You may go'; so he set off and went to Hebron.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the king said to him, Go in peace. So he got up and went to Hebron.
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Complete Jewish Bible	The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he set out and went to Hebron.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So the king replied, "God in peace!"
	He therefore arose and went.
NET Bible®	The king replied to him, "Go in peace." So Absalom [Heb "he"; the referent (Absalom) has been specified in the translation for clarity] got up and went to Hebron.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Emphasized Bible	And the king said unto him—Go and prosper! So he arose and went to Hebron.
English Standard Version	The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron.
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign says to him, Go in shalom.
	And he rises and goes to Hebron:...
Syndein	{Criminal Manipulation}
	And the king replied to him, "Go in peace/prosperity." So he {Absalom} got up {quwm - indicates 'action under motivation' - so he stated one motivation but he had another motivation}, and went to Hebron..
Young's Updated LT	And the king says to him, "Go in peace;" and he rises and goes to Hebron.

The gist of this verse: King David allows Absalom to go to Hebron.

2Samuel 15:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) or shâlôm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: So the king said to him, "Go in peace [and prosperity]." There does not appear to be any healthy suspicion in what David says here. He simply tells Absalom to go in peace.

Think about this for a moment. Absalom has been in Jerusalem for 4 years now; and now, he is getting around to fulfilling some vow he made perhaps 5 years ago? Really? David should have been extremely suspicious about this request.

You will notice that, again, like the last chapter, we do not have David's name, but the title, *the king* instead. David, at this point, ought to be thinking like a king, and not like a father.

So the king said to Absalom, "Go in peace [and prosperity]." These will be the last words that David ever says to Absalom.

2Samuel 15:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קום) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
Cheb ^e rôwn (חברון) [pronounced <i>khe^bv-ROHN</i>]	<i>association, league, joined; transliterated Hebron</i>	proper noun; location with the locative hê	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: Therefore, Absalom [lit., he] rose up and went to Hebron. This is what Absalom wanted, so he got up and went to Hebron. The verb qûwm (קום) [pronounced *koom*] literally means *to stand up, to get up*; but this does not mean that Absalom was sitting or laying on the ground before David. This word is often used before a person going off to do what he intends to do.

And so sends Absalom spies in all tribes of Israel, to say, "In your hearing a sound of the trumpet, and you have said, 'Reigned Absalom in Hebron.' "

2Samuel
15:10

He [lit., Absalom] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling [them] [lit., to say], "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will say, 'Absalom reigns at Hebron.' "

He then sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling them, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then cry out, 'Absalom reigns as king at Hebron.' "

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Absalom sent spies into all the tribes of Israel, saying: As soon as you shall hear the sound of the trumpet, say ye: Absalom reigns in Hebron.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sends Absalom spies in all tribes of Israel, to say, "In your hearing a sound of the trumpet, and you have said, 'Reigned Absalom in Hebron.' "
Peshitta (Syriac)	But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, Absalom reigns in Hebron.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, <u>When</u> you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shall you say, Absalom has become king in Hebron.
Significant differences:	The differences are quite slight.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But Absalom sent secret agents throughout the tribes of Israel with this message: "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, `Absalom has become king in Hebron!'"
Contemporary English V.	He took two hundred men from Jerusalem with him, but they had no idea what he was going to do. Absalom offered sacrifices in Hebron and sent someone to Gilo to tell David's advisor Ahithophel to come. More and more people were joining Absalom and supporting his plot. Meanwhile, Absalom had secretly sent some messengers to the northern tribes of Israel. The messengers told everyone, "When you hear the sound of the trumpets, you must shout, 'Absalom now rules as king in Hebron!' "
Easy English	Then Absalom secretly sent men to all the *tribes of *Israel with a message. The men said, `When you hear the *trumpets you must say, "Absalom is the king in Hebron." ' '
Easy-to-Read Version	But Absalom sent spies through all the family groups of Israel. These spies told the people, "When you hear the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom has become the king at Hebron!'"
Good News Bible (TEV)	But he sent messengers to all the tribes of Israel to say, "When you hear the sound of trumpets, shout, 'Absalom has become king at Hebron!' "
<i>The Message</i>	Then Absalom sent undercover agents to all the tribes of Israel with the message, "When you hear the blast of the ram's horn trumpet, that's your signal: Shout, 'Absalom is king in Hebron!'"
New Life Bible	But Absalom sent men to go in secret through all the families of Israel. He said to them, "As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, then say, 'Absalom is king at Hebron.' "
New Living Translation	But while he was there, he sent secret messengers to all the tribes of Israel to stir up a rebellion against the king. "As soon as you hear the ram's horn," his message read, "you are to say, `Absalom has been crowned king in Hebron.'" "

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Now, AbSalom had sent spies among all the tribes of IsraEl, who were told, 'When you hear the sound of trumpets blowing, you must shout: <i>AbSalom is now reigning as king in HebRon.</i> '
Beck's American Translation	But secretly Absalom sent messengers to all the tribes of Israel, saying: "When you hear the sound of the horn, say, 'Absalom is now king in Hebron.' "
Christian Community Bible	Absalom sent spies through - out the tribes of Israel with this instruction, "As soon as you hear the trumpet sound, proclaim: 'Absalom is king in Hebron!'"
NIRV	Then Absalom sent messengers secretly to all of the tribes of Israel. They said, "Listen for the sound of trumpets. As soon as you hear them, say, `Absalom has become king in Hebron.'" "

New Jerusalem Bible Absalom sent couriers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, 'When you hear the trumpet sound, you are to say, "Absalom is king at Hebron!" '

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear But Absalom sent spies in all the staffs of Israel, saying, "When you hear the voice of the shofar, you say, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!'"

Bible in Basic English But Absalom at the same time sent watchers through all the tribes of Israel to say, At the sound of the horn you are to say, Absalom is king in Hebron.

Complete Jewish Bible But Avshalom sent spies through all the tribes of Isra'el to say, "The moment you hear the sound of the shofar, then start proclaiming, 'Avshalom is king in Hebron.'" "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then exclaim, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!'"

Ferar-Fenton Bible Absalom then sent secret agents to all the Tribes of Israel to say, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then exclaim, 'Absalom reigns in Hebron!'"

JPS (Tanakh—1985) But Absalom sent agents to all the tribes of Israel to say, "When you hear the blast of the horn, announce that Absalom has become king in Hebron."

NET Bible® Then Absalom sent spies through all the tribes of Israel who said, "When you hear the sound of the horn, you may assume [Heb "say."] that Absalom rules in Hebron."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version ...and Absalom sends spies through all the tribes of Israel, saying, `At your hearing the voice of the trumpet, then you have said, Absalom has reigned in Hebron.

Darby Translation And Absalom sent emissaries into all the tribes of Israel, saying, When ye hear the sound of the trumpet, ye shall say, Absalom reigns in Hebron.

English Standard Version But 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!'"

exeGesés companion Bible ...and Abi Shalom sends spies throughout all the scions of Yisra El, saying, As soon as you hear the voice of the shophar, say, Abi Shalom reigns in Hebron.

Green's Literal Translation And Absalom sent spies among all the tribes of Israel, saying, When you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron.

LTHB And Absalom sent spies among all the tribes of Israel, saying, When you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron.

Syndein {Hebron Strategy for Revolution}
Meanwhile Absalom sent slanderers/propagandists {ragal - hiphil stem} throughout all the tribes of Israel, commanding, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will shout, 'Absalom is king in Hebron'." {Note: To start a revolution slander must start it. But unless the people are in arrogance, the slander will not be believed. People must accept the lie as truth, for the revolution to occur. Legitimate systems of establishment are the victims of the slander - here David and his legal system.}.

World English Bible But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron.

Young's Updated LT And Absalom sends spies through all the tribes of Israel, saying, "At your hearing the voice of the trumpet, then you have said, Absalom has reigned in Hebron."

The gist of this verse: Absalom sends out messengers to all the tribes of Israel, so that where a trumpet was sounded, they will call out, "Absalom reigns in Hebron."

2Samuel 15:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
râgal (לָגַר) [pronounced <i>raw-GAHL</i>]	<i>spies, explorers; those who move about by foot; secret messengers; slanderers</i>	masculine plural, Piel participle	Strong's #7270 BDB #920
A more modern take on this word might be <i>propagandists, revolutionaries, political operatives</i> .			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kôl (לֵכ) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
shêbet (שֵׁבֶט) [pronounced <i>SHAY^B-vef</i>]	<i>rod, staff, club, scepter and figuratively for a tribe, subdivision of a tribe or family and for a ruler (scepter-bearer), governor</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #7626 BDB #986
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: He [lit., *Absalom*] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel,... The common translation for the masculine plural Piel participle of râgal (לָגַר) [pronounced *raw-GAHL*] is, *spies, explorers*. This is a fairly commonly used word in the Old Testament, being found 24 times (Gen. 42:9, 11 Joshua 6:23 Judges 18:2, 14). However, these men are not primarily sent out by Absalom to gather information. We might call them *political operatives*. They have a very specific responsibility, which is described below.

2Samuel 15:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHÇ]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered *when [such and such happens]*. It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.

'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
shôwphâr (שׁוֹפָר) (also שֹׁפָר) [pronounced shoh-FAWR]	<i>horn, trumpet; transliterated shophar</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7782 BDB #1051

Translation: ...telling [them] [lit., to say], “When you hear the sound of the trumpet,... This tells us how information was broadcast over a distance. Since most of them could not afford an iPhone, a trumpet was used instead to communicate over a distance. There was probably a particular code used here as well.

This would imply that, at some point in time, trumpeters would also be sent throughout the land, and, at a particular time, they would trumpet, and these revolutionaries would be there waiting to hear the trumpet. The sound of the trumpet could be heard at distances far away. No doubt a strategic time would be chosen, so that a maximum number of people would hear this announcement.

Some commentator said he was not sure how one trumpet could be heard throughout the land. Duh! When given the signal, one trumpeter sounds his trumpet from Hebron; then 3 or 4 others who hear this sound their trumpets; then 15 or 20 can hear that in cities further away, and they sound their trumpets. I don't know how far a distance the sound of a trumpet can travel, but, my guess is, within 10 sets of trumpet blasts, all of Israel has heard these trumpets, and, within a period of 5–10 minutes, many people have heard the refrain, “Absalom is king in Hebron.”

2Samuel 15:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
mālak ^e (מָלַךְ) [pronounced maw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
'Ābîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁוֹלֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Cheb ^e rôwn (חֶבְרֹן) [pronounced khe ^b -v-ROHN]	<i>association, league, joined; transliterated Hebron</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #2275 BDB #289

Translation: ...then you will say, 'Absalom reigns at Hebron.' The revolutionaries would then cry out, "Absalom reigns at Hebron." So, for everyone who can hear (and they would be at every major village and there would be an opportune time when most could hear it), they would all say this.

He [lit., *Absalom*] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling [them] [lit., *to say*], "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will say, 'Absalom reigns at Hebron.'" One trumpet out of Hebron would be all that would be necessary to begin this process. Then, those who could hear that trumpet blast would blow their trumpets as well—many of these trumpeters on mountains and in high places—and so on and so forth throughout all of Israel, using the trumpet as sort of a telegraph system.⁴³ So, within perhaps 20 minutes or less, all Israel will have heard this cry: "Absalom is now king in Hebron."

These men, sent out throughout the cities of Israel, could gauge by the reaction, if Absalom had widespread support. Although the Bible does not tell us, this message would have been well-received throughout much of Israel, because *Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel*. There may have been a trumpet blast returned, to indicate how this was received (that is not recorded in Scripture but is conjecture on my part).

Guzik: *Absalom counted on the **hope** that most of Israel would see this as **succession not treason**.*⁴⁴
Or, as we called it in 2008, *hope and change*.

Essentially, Absalom is offering an alternative to his father, and he will gather up malcontents from all of these town and villages to join him, as well as those who are just ready for a change—we may want to call this, *hope and change*. The men sent throughout Israel to make this proclamation would listen to the people to see what sort of a response they got, and this would likely be reported back to Absalom.

Bear in mind, there are several things that would cause the people to support Absalom over David.

⁴³ Clarke suggested the analogy to a telegraph. Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:10.

⁴⁴ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:7–10.

How Can Israel Support Absalom over David?

1. In God's view, David was the gold standard, and all kings who followed were compared to him. 1Kings 15:1–3, 11 2Kings 14:1–3 16:1–2 18:1–3 22:1–2
2. Based upon God viewing David is the gold standard, we know that he was the greatest king of Israel.
3. However, Absalom is the newer model. David is the old.
4. People knew that, while his troops were at war, David used to chase skirt around Jerusalem (he has since stopped doing that). They knew about Bathsheba; and they most certainly knew about Uriah, her husband. They were suspicious of him dying in battle right when David takes his wife. It is very likely that most people put all of these things together and understood the narrative as well as we do.
5. Also, David did nothing when Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar. She wandered through the streets in a daze wearing some clothing which identified her as the king's daughter. Women sympathized with her; men could not understand how David could not punish a man who would do this.
6. The people of Israel knew that Absalom killed Amnon, and this provided them with a certain romanticism about Absalom. What David would not do, Absalom would. Even though vigilantism is wrong, when you kill someone as awful as Amnon, who had received no punishment at all, it is hard not to cheer on the vigilante.
7. Then Absalom spend day after day outside the courthouse (which was actually an open-air type forum where court cases were adjudicated), and he would find the loser in the case and sympathize with them and say, "If I were in charge, you would have won that case. You cause is obviously just. Anyone can see that."
8. And then there was this entourage. Absalom was in his chariot riding around the city of Jerusalem. He just looked kingly. He just looked like a man in charge.
9. Absalom had no record to run on; he just had his promises and that one act of vigilantism. He was not old enough to have accumulated some awful sins.

These are the things that we know about.

Even for us, who have been studying these chapters of Samuel have developed a very negative attitude toward David. However, this failing in David's life—and God took it very seriously—was dealt with by God. For 10 years, God will kick David's butt all over the place for his lechery and for his murder, to a point that, he would never do anything like this again. And the amazing grace part of this is, the son of David by Bathsheba will rule in his stead.

Application: When a believer has sinned, and you are not in charge of handling that sin (assuming that you are not the parent or the teacher or the law officer or whatever), then you step aside and you let God handle the problem. When your child sins, you deal with the problem; if you are a police officer, and someone has broken a law, you deal with the problem; if you have someone who has worked for you, and an appraisal is needed, you give an honest appraisal. There are legitimate instances where another person's sin becomes your business (as a parent, teacher, coach, police officer, etc.); but if it is just two independent believers and Charlie Brown does something that you do not like, then just step aside and let the justice of God deal with him. His sins are none of your business, even if they offend you in some way. Newsflash: God is capable of handling his own.

Now, there are times that you might act. A Christian couple that you know asks you to join a sex club with them; under those circumstances, you might stop seeing that couple. Or they offer your drugs. You learn from Bible doctrine how to deal with a myriad of situations. If you simply think that maybe the husband is cheating in business, but you have no direct proof, then you do not necessarily get involved (apart from maybe mentioning it to him personally). It is Bible doctrine in your soul that guides you in your actions. However, there is no justification for some member of the church following up on another member of the church specifically to criticize his life or to tell him what to do with his life. Everyone sins, and you must take that into account; and everyone stands or falls before God. There are many times when you may want to put yourself in between God and that person, and that would be a mistake.

Revolution is always wrong (a topic that we will deal with). The people should not have supported Absalom for this reason.

Application: We say this in the 2008 presidential election. For about 7 years, I received email from people who disparaged President Bush, and in a variety of ways. Sometimes, he or the vice president would be in cartoons, or there would be some sort of a movie—some of them obscene, and every thing that he did that was portrayed as questionable, and there would be a flurry of emails go out saying what was wrong with what he did. By the time that 2007 rolled around, there was a heavy sentiment in favor of the Democratic candidate, no matter who that person was going to be. It just turned out that this candidate was Barack Obama, who was well-spoken and kept to the simplest and vaguest of messages. So, despite the fact that this man had never run a lemonade stand before, he became the most powerful man in the world, running the largest bureaucracy on earth, with absolutely no experience whatsoever in running any sort of corporate body of any size before. There were a series or reasons why Obama was victorious, but one of them was this constant attack of President Bush, which went on for most of the time that he was in office. Such email campaigns were specious and unchristian. Now, this does not mean that you cannot have political discussions with your friends; but they should be honest discussions, based upon the facts as much as possible. And your political leanings should never overshadow your spiritual leanings.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

He [lit., *Absalom*] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling [them] [lit., to say], “When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will say, ‘Absalom reigns at Hebron.’” The Bible says nothing more about the trumpeters being sent throughout; so there are likely many things which Absalom did which are not recorded in Scripture.

I made such a good case against David as king, so I need to make an equally good case in his favor:

How is David a Good King?

1. First and foremost, David was God’s chosen man to be king. 1Sam. 16:7–13
2. Secondly, he was the king by which all other kings would be measured. 1Kings 15:1–3, 11 2Kings 14:1–3 16:1–2 18:1–3 22:1–2
3. Thirdly, the reason that the Jews wanted a king is to protect them from outside powers who wanted to plunder Israel; to judge their disputes; and so that they could be like other nations. 1Sam. 8:4–6, 19–20
4. David performed the duties the people required of him; and his record as a war hero was indisputable. 1Sam. 18:7 2Sam. 5 8 10
5. Despite what is alleged, David, for the most part, did administer justice and good judgment as king over Israel. **And David reigned over all Israel, and David executed justice and righteousness to all his people** (2Sam. 8:15; LTHB). That is God’s appraisal of his record.
6. David studied and knew the Word of God. 1Chron. 15:2 (one man died when David first had the Ark moved; so he studied the Scriptures in order to figure out how to move it properly).
7. David had the original thought of building a Temple for God in Israel. This was a very big deal. 1Chron. 17:1–12
8. God had a covenant which He made with David, which included that his line would eventually lead us to the Lord Jesus Christ. 2Sam. 7:8–17
9. David was dedicated in the worship of Y^ehowah. 2Sam. 12:20 15:31–32
10. David wrote most of the psalms and possibly much of Samuel.
11. David continued in a relationship with God, from being a young boy watching the sheep, to his final years as his body began to give way.
12. It should be pointed out that even the greatest of leaders have been rejected by the public:
 - 1) Moses was reject on many occasions by the Exodus generation. Num. 16:3, 13–14
 - 2) Winston Churchill, one of the greatest men of all time, was defeated in a democratic election held right after WWII. On May 8th, 1945, he announced Germany’s surrender to his nation; and then was

How is David a Good King?

defeated in a reelection bid on July 5th of that same year.

13. And the public has chosen many lousy leaders.
 - 1) FDR is a prime example. He was not a bad man; nor were his motives wrong. And there were some things that he was very right about (like publically declaring that the United States is where the Word of God is taught). But, what he did for our economy was to take a recession and turn it into the Great Depression. He was reelected 3x.
 - 2) Hitler and Mao were both popular leaders. I know one adult person to this day who thinks that Mao was a great leader and does not believe that he killed millions of people.

Clarke:⁴⁵ *"Behold a king, the greatest that ever lived, a profound politician, an able general, a brave soldier, a poet of the most sublime genius and character, a prophet of the Most High God, and the deliverer of his country, driven from his dominions by his own son, abandoned by his fickle people."*

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Guzik approaches this in a slightly different way:

Guzik on How Israel Became Dissatisfied with David and Allowed Absalom to Steal Their Hearts

- Because David was getting older
- Because David's sins diminished his standing
- Because people like change and Absalom was exciting
- Because Absalom was very skilled and cunning
- Because David had to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, and be rejected like the Son of David would later be rejected

From *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:1–37.

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And since we are looking at, essentially, a choice between David and Absalom, we ought to examine Absalom's credentials as a king.

How is Absalom Potentially a Lousy King?

1. Absalom is clearly impatient, and is not willing to wait for much of anything. He was logically next in line to be king; however, he was not willing to wait for his father to die.
2. Absalom was willing to use God's name in order to deceive his father. 2Sam. 15:7–8
3. Because Israel is a nation formed by God and ruled over ultimately by God, having an unbeliever in the throne is the wrong way to go.
4. Absalom was willing to glad-hand and deceive the people in order to gain their support. 2Sam. 15:2–6
5. Absalom had one plank in his platform, and that was to reform the judicial system in Israel. This is something that he could have done as the king's son. If this was an issue near and dear to his heart, then Absalom should have come to his father David and said, "Here is what the problem is with our judicial system and here is how I propose to fix it." He did not do that. He simply used the problems in the judicial system for his own benefit.
6. All that Absalom focused on was superficial in order to gain him what he wanted. He was a man who

⁴⁵ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:1–37.

How is Absalom Potentially a Lousy King?

skated through life mostly based upon his good looks and winning personality. 2Sam. 14:25–26 15:5

7. At no time did Absalom ever consult God or a prophet of God.
8. Absalom is good at three things: lying, manipulation and plotting. This makes him an effective revolutionary, but not a good king.
9. Absalom desires the power, but he is not willing to be trained or guided by his father. With power or authority comes responsibility, and Absalom has no clue as to what responsibility is.

Does this sound modern to you? Are there politicians who bring forward a parade of victims to “prove” there are problems that they can solve? Do they themselves champion issues that they will not solve? Are the candidates themselves superficial and attempt to get your vote because they look attractive and sound good? Are there candidates for high office who lack any training in that area?

Absalom is the epitome of the *hope and change* candidate. This chapter of the Bible should have been taught in the pulpits of all churches in October of 2008.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

So, are the people of Israel really that stupid and superficial to support Absalom? In a word, yes. This is the nature of the electorate. People support candidates and politicians for a number of reasons, most of them being very superficial.

Application: In the year 2008, the United States elected the least qualified person ever to the office of president as opposed to a man who had served the country faithfully over a very long period of time, a man who was fiscally conservative, which is exactly what America needed at this time. Why? Well, you put the two men next to each other: Candidate Obama and candidate McCain, the Mr. Obama is far more attractive; he is new, he is fresh, and so many kids saw him as cool and someone who was more like them. His policies will negatively impact the people who voted for him for decades, because, although he looked good and sounded smart, President Obama never had a clue as to how to lead or how to lead opposing parties on a path to some sort of compromise. Furthermore, he himself was unwilling, if not unable, to compromise—or even moderate—his own views.⁴⁶ Now, I do not write this out of sour grapes, or simply because Obama is a liberal. He simply had no experience whatsoever to prepare him for the office of presidency; and that combined with his anti-establishment ideas made for a disastrous presidency. We could not have expected anything else.

Application: However, so there is no confusion on this issue, we as Americans got the president that we deserved. God sees to it that appropriate rulers rule over their own countries. Not just a few times have inferior candidates won the presidency in the United States. This is because, we, as a corporate entity had turned away from God. In the 2008 presidential debates, one of the most important issues was healthcare, and how government was going to improve and even fix healthcare. Many people voted for candidate Obama because they believed that he would simply provide them with “free” healthcare. Most had no idea that, not only would he mandate that every person buy the expensive insurance policy that he mandated, but that, potentially, you would be thrown in jail if you did not (as a result of refusing to pay the penalty). When a people think that government is going to give them something for nothing and that government can provide them with their every need, then they are making government into God, and violating the commandment, “**You will have no gods before Me.**” So we deserved Barack Obama as a corporate entity and we deserved his healthcare plan, which **hired more IRS agents** to enforce it, but no new doctors.

Application: My point here is not to go off on some conservative rant, but to show how we, as a nation, deserved President Obama as our president. People looked to the government as a way of fixing our healthcare insurance problems, without ever considering that government was not necessarily able to fix something like healthcare.

⁴⁶ I write this in 2012 a month or so before the upcoming election.

Government is not a god; government is not omnipotent. If we treat government as an entity which is like a god to us, then we reap what we have sown.

He [lit., *Absalom*] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling [them] [lit., *to say*], “When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will say, ‘Absalom reigns at Hebron.’” So, for 4 years, Absalom had this concerted effort going on to supplant David as king, and David either did not realize it or he ignored it. As we have seen already, David had a blind spot when dealing with his own children. He was the parent that when I called and told him of the evil his child was doing, would exclaim, “Oh, no! Not my little Johnny! He’s an angel. He does well in all of his classes. He gets along with all of his teachers except you. So, the problem must be with you.” The problem was, the parents did not view their son objectively; and David’s problem is, he is not able to view his own son objectively. This is David’s chief weakness at this time, and he will endure a great many trials and difficulties because he is not objective about Absalom. Remember that David has a plethora of sons, and many of them want to rule over Israel when he is gone (and Absalom wants this before David is gone). So David has to deal with this problem.

And with Absalom, two hundred a man from Jerusalem called ones and travelers to their simplicity. And they did not know any word.

2Samuel
15:11

Two hundred men from Jerusalem [went] with Absalom, those who had been invited. And those going, [went] in innocence; they did not know anything.

Absalom also invited two hundred men from Jerusalem who were ignorant of his plot.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Now there went with Absalom two hundred men out of Jerusalem that were called, going with simplicity <u>of heart</u> , and knowing nothing of the design.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And with Absalom, two hundred a man from Jerusalem called ones and travelers to their simplicity. And they did not know any word.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And with Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem, but they went innocently, not knowing anything of the plot.
Septuagint (Greek)	And there went with Absalom two hundred chosen men from Jerusalem; and they went in their simplicity, and knew not anything.

Significant differences: The English translation from the Syriac lacks *chosen*, *called ones*. The English translation of the Latin adds in *of heart*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Two hundred invited guests went with Absalom from Jerusalem. They were innocent and knew nothing of this matter when they went.
Contemporary English V.	He took two hundred men from Jerusalem with him, but they had no idea what he was going to do.
Easy English	Then Absalom invited 200 men from Jerusalem and they went with him. But they were innocent. They did not know what he was going to do.
Easy-to-Read Version	Absalom invited 200 men to go with him. Those men left Jerusalem with him, but they did not know what he was planning.
Good News Bible (TEV)	There were two hundred men who at Absalom's invitation had gone from Jerusalem with him; they knew nothing of the plot and went in all good faith.
<i>The Message</i>	Two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem. But they had been called together knowing nothing of the plot and made the trip innocently.

New Berkeley Version	With Absalom, however, there went two hundred men from Jerusalem who had been invited and accompanied him innocently, knowing nothing of the plot.
New Century Version	Absalom had invited two hundred men to go with him. So they went from Jerusalem with him, but they didn't know what he was planning.
New Living Translation	He took 200 men from Jerusalem with him as guests, but they knew nothing of his intentions.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, AbSalom left JeruSalem along with two hundred men, who really didn't suspect anything.
Christian Community Bible	Two hundred men from Jerusalem had left with Absalom as invited guests. But nothing of his purpose dawned on them.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Two hundred men invited from Jerusalem went with Absalom. They went innocently, knowing nothing about Absalom's plans.
NIRV	Absalom had taken 200 men from Jerusalem with him to Hebron. He had invited them to be his guests. They went without having any idea what was going to happen.
New Jerusalem Bible	With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem; they had been invited and had gone in all innocence, unaware of what was going on.
New Simplified Bible	Absalom had two hundred men who at his invitation traveled from Jerusalem with him. They knew nothing of the plot and went in good faith.
Revised English Bible	Two hundred men accompanied Absalom from Jerusalem; they were invited as guests and went in all innocence, ingoing nothing of the affair.
Today's NIV	Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Two-hundred men called from Jerusalem went with Absalom. They went with integrity, not knowing any word.
Bible in Basic English	And with Absalom, at his request, went two hundred men from Jerusalem, who were completely unconscious of his designs.
Complete Jewish Bible	With Avshalom went 200 men from Yerushalayim who had been invited; they went innocently, knowing nothing about the scheme.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	There went also two hundred persons from Jerusalem with Absalom, invited guests and honest men, who knew nothing about all the affair.
HCSB	Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom. They had been invited and were going innocently, for they knew nothing about the whole matter.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Two hundred men of Jerusalem accompanied Absalom; they were invited and went in good faith, suspecting nothing.
NET Bible®	Now two hundred men had gone with Absalom from Jerusalem. Since they were invited, they went naively and were unaware of what Absalom was planning [Heb "being invited and going naively and they did not know anything."].
NIV – UK	Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And with Ab?shalom went two hundred men from Yerushalayim who were invited, and they went along unsuspectingly, and did not know the matter at all.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	With Absalom went 200 men from Jerusalem, who were invited [as guests to his sacrificial feast]; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not a thing.
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English Standard Version With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem who were invited guests, and they went in their innocence and knew nothing.

exeGesés companion Bible And two hundred men from Yeru Shalem who are called go with Abi Shalom; and they go in their integrity and they know not a word.

The Geneva Bible And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, [that were] called [And bid to his feast in Hebron]; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

LTHB And two hundred men went out of Jerusalem with Absalom, chosen ones. And they went out in their simplicity and did not know anything.

New RSV Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom; they were invited guests, and they went in their innocence, knowing nothing of the matter.

Syndein Incidentally, two hundred men/'aristocratic men' from Jerusalem who had been invited . . . followed Absalom. {Note: These were 200 aristocrats who were impressed with Absalom's personality - the 'who you know' crowd - they were 'special' - Absalom invited 'them' - and this arrogance was their downfall.}. And they {the 200} followed in the sphere of their sincerity {tom} {sincerity is never a virtue - it can be hypocrisy, arrogance, stupidity} and they knew absolutely nothing {about the revolution}.

Young's Literal Translation And with Absalom have gone two hundred men, out of Jerusalem, invited ones, and they are going in their simplicity, and have not known anything.

The gist of this verse: Absalom will get 200 men to join him in Hebron who are not allied with him and are not aware of the plot he is hatching.

2Samuel 15:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
mâ'thayim (מֵאֲתַיִם) [pronounced <i>maw-thah-YIM</i>]	<i>two hundred</i>	feminine dual numeral (not certain about the spelling)	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

2Samuel 15:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced y ^{oo} -shaw-LAH-yim]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location	Strong's #3389 BDB #436
qârâ' (אָרָק) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>the called ones, the assembled [summoned] ones; the chosen ones; those who have been invited</i>	masculine plural, Qal passive participle	Strong's #7121 BDB #894

Translation: Two hundred men from Jerusalem [went] with Absalom, those who had been invited. Although we do not know the exact circumstances, in the past, Absalom threw a huge bbq at his ranch in order to kill his half-brother Amnon. So, this was probably going to be a religious celebration—that is what was written on the invitation. “Absalom fulfills his vows to God in Hebron; you have been invited to attend.”

Last chapter, we studied Absalom inviting his half-brothers to his ranch in order to kill Amnon, so that is still fresh in our minds. However, since then, Absalom spent 2+ years living in Geshur and then four years have passed since he returned. The people who knew about this thought that Amnon had it coming to him, so that plot was not that big of a deal to most people. And, it was 6 years ago! Furthermore, many people, knowing to some degree what had happened, did not mind that Amnon was killed. In fact, many people were glad to hear that Amnon got his just rewards for his evil deed.

As of late, Absalom had been making quite a splash in the celebrity circles with his entourage going about. So, this first overt religious act is to be celebrated, and Absalom invites many people to attend this with him.

2Samuel 15:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וָ, וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlak ^e (הָלַק) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>those walking, those going, those who are departing; walkers, travelers</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The meanings of the lâmed preposition broken down into groups: ❶ <i>to, towards, unto</i>; it is used both to turn one's heart <i>toward</i> someone as well as to sin <i>against</i> someone; ❷ <i>to, even to</i>; in this sense, it can be used with a number to indicate the upper limit which a multitude might approach (<i>nearly</i>). ❸ Lâmed can be equivalent to the Greek preposition eis (εις), meaning <i>into</i>, as in transforming <i>into</i> something else, changing <i>into</i> something else (Gen. 2:7). This use of lâmed after the verb hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>] (Strong's #1961 BDB #224) is one thing <i>becoming</i> another (Gen. 2:7). ❹ Its fourth use is the mark of a dative, after verbs of giving, granting, delivering, pardoning, consulting, sending, etc. This type of dative is broken down into several categories, but one includes the translation <i>by</i>, which would be apropos here. ❺ <i>With regards to, as to</i>. Similar to the Greek preposition eis (εις) plus the dative. [Numbering from Gesenius]. ❻ <i>On account of, because, propter</i>, used of cause and reason (<i>propter</i> means <i>because</i>; Gesenius used it). ❼ <i>Concerning, about</i>, used of a person or thing made the object of discourse, after verbs of saying. ❽ <i>On behalf of anyone, for anyone</i>. ❾ As applied to a rule or standard, <i>according to, according as, as though, as if</i>. ❿ When associated with time, it refers to <i>the point of time at which</i> or <i>in which</i> anything is done; or it can refer to <i>the space of time during which</i> something is done (or occurs); <i>at the time of</i>.</p>			
tôm (תּוֹם) [pronounced <i>tohm</i>]	<i>integrity, completeness, innocence; safety, prosperity; fulness [for number and measure]</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person plural suffix	Strong's #8537 BDB #1070
<p>Various translators, in 2Sam. 15:11, suggest these alternate meanings: <i>unsuspectingly, naively, in good faith</i>.</p>			

Translation: *And those going, [went] in innocence;...* No one of this group of 200 men thought that there was some nefarious plot afoot. This was Absalom growing up and turning toward the worship of Y^ehowah. This was something to be celebrated; he was following in his father's footsteps. So, those of this 200 who were invited had no idea what Absalom really had planned.

Our society has become quite secularized, but there are certain holidays which are special to most Americans: Christmas, Thanksgiving and the 4th of July. These men had been invited to a holiday celebration, of sorts—at least to a celebration that might be like gathering with a large group of people on the 4th of July (for us).

2Samuel 15:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâda' (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHḶ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn; to recognize [admit, acknowledge, confess]</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393

2Samuel 15:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

Translation: ...they did not know anything. Absalom played his cards close to the vest. If there was one thing he was good at, it was plotting and scheming. He was capable of putting together great schemes, and those who needed to know, knew; and those who should not know, knew nothing.

You may wonder, what are these 200 men all about? What is the deal here? These 200 men are some of David's top aides and most trusted confidants. They did not go with Absalom because they were a part of this plot; they had been invited for a feast, and that is why they went. But, when it becomes clear that Absalom is taking David's crown, these men are stuck in the middle. David is in castle Zion and he looks around, and these men are not there. Suddenly, his position appears very precarious to him, thinking that he has lost these 200 men. He does not realize that Absalom simply got them to join him for this feast in Hebron; but they did not go in opposition to David. You see, David has authorized this trip, so their going down there is on David's authorization. So, no matter what they think of David or of Absalom, they are suddenly in the middle of all this. And David will leave castle Zion before they or Absalom return. In fact, David's decision to leave castle Zion was probably based in part on these men being with Absalom. When "Absalom reigns in Hebron" is announced in the streets of Jerusalem, David no doubt assumes that these 200 men are with him.

Here is an interesting proposition: what if Joab is among these 200? Joab will not be named in 2Sam. 15–17 (except in passing in 2Sam. 17:25), but he does become a clear part of the picture in 2Sam. 18. Joab would be a logical person to go down with Absalom. He advocated on Absalom's part, and, although Absalom burnt down his field, Absalom could have come to him, head in hand, and asked forgiveness. And it is now 4 years later, so some hard feelings tend to become placated with time. Now, if Joab is with Absalom, David would surely be panicked militarily, worried that Joab has allied himself with Absalom. This is pure speculation; but there are certainly men like Joab who went with Absalom down to Hebron, not knowing that Absalom was organizing a revolt against David.

We do not hear about these men again. So we do not know what Absalom did. Did he, at the proper time, say, "Are you with me or against me?" We do not know if these men were slaughtered or if Absalom let them quietly return to Jerusalem (after David had left). In any case, their chief purpose was to simply make David think that they had followed Absalom.

And so sends Absalom [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor of David from his city, from Giloh, in his slaughter of the slaughtered animals. And so is the conspiracy strong and the people are departing and [becoming] large with Absalom.

2Samuel
15:12

Furthermore, Absalom sent [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor [to] David from his city [of] Giloh, while he was offering up [lit., slaughtering] animal sacrifices. Consequently, the conspiracy became strong, while people are departing [from David] and [becoming] great with Absalom.

Furthermore, Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh, while he was making a show of offering up sacrifices in Hebron. Ahithophel had been a brilliant counselor for David. Consequently, the conspiracy grew in strength as people departed from David and went in large numbers to Absalom.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Absalom also sent for Achitophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city Gilo. And while he was offering sacrifices, there was a strong conspiracy, and the people running together increased with Absalom.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sends Absalom [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor of David from his city, from Giloh, in his slaughter of the slaughtered animals. And so is the conspiracy strong and the people are departing and [becoming] large with Absalom.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, and brought him from his city, from Giloh, while he was offering sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong; and the people increased continually on the side of Absalom.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Absalom sent to Ahithophel the Gilonite, the counselor of David, from his city, from Giloh, where he was sacrificing. And there was a strong conspiracy; and the people with Absalom were increasingly numerous.

Significant differences: The English translation from the Syriac adds the words *and brought him*. The English translation from the Latin associates *while he was offering sacrifices* to the sentence which follows, rather than to what has come before. The final few phrases appear to be a summary of what has gone before. In the Syriac and Greek, there does not appear to be a parallel verb for *departing*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he summoned David's advisor Ahithophel, who was from Giloh, to come from his hometown. So the conspiracy grew stronger, and Absalom's following grew.
Contemporary English V.	Absalom offered sacrifices in Hebron and sent someone to Gilo to tell David's advisor Ahithophel to come. More and more people were joining Absalom and supporting his plot.
Easy English	Absalom gave *sacrifices. He also sent for Ahithophel from Giloh. He came from his own town, called Giloh. Ahithophel used to give wise advice to King David. More and more people joined Absalom's group. His plot was getting stronger.
Easy-to-Read Version	Ahithophel was one of David's advisers. Ahithophel was from the town of Giloh. While Absalom was offering sacrifices, [83] he called Ahithophel to come from his city (Giloh). Absalom's plans were working very well and more and more people began to support him.
Good News Bible (TEV)	And while he was offering sacrifices, Absalom also sent to the town of Gilo for Ahithophel, who was one of King David's advisers. The plot against the king gained strength, and Absalom's followers grew in number.
<i>The Message</i>	While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he managed also to involve Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's advisor, calling him away from his hometown of Giloh. The conspiracy grew powerful and Absalom's supporters multiplied.
New Berkeley Version	At the time of his offering the sacrifices, Absalom also summoned Ahithophel of Giloh, David's counselor, from Giloh, his city. Thus the conspiracy spread and the people with Absalom kept increasing. Both Ahithophel and his opponent, Hushai, had been members of David's "cabinet" [1Chron. 27:33]. Possibly Ahithophel's

turning against David was because he was Bathsheba's grandfather; see 2Sam. 11:3 23:34.

New Century Version	While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, one of the people who advised David, to come from his hometown of Giloh. So Absalom's plans were working very well. More and more people began to support him.
New Life Bible	While Absalom was giving gifts on the altar in worship, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, from his city Giloh. He was the man who talked with David about what to do. The plans against David became strong. For more and more people joined Absalom.
New Living Translation	While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, one of David's counselors who lived in Giloh. Soon many others also joined Absalom, and the conspiracy gained momentum.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then, while he was offering his sacrifices, Absalom sent and called for Ahithophel the Gilonite (David's advisor) from his city of Gila. And there he formed a strong confederation, and many people started following Absalom.
<i>God's Word™</i>	While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, David's adviser, to come from his home in Giloh. Meanwhile, the conspiracy grew stronger, and the number of people siding with Absalom kept getting larger.
New American Bible	Absalom also sent to Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, an invitation to come from his town, Giloh, for the sacrifices he was about to offer. So the conspiracy gained strength, and the people with Absalom increased in numbers. 2Sam. 16:23
NIRV	While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel. Ahithophel was David's adviser. He came to Absalom from Giloh, his hometown. The number of people who followed Absalom kept growing. So he became more and more able to carry out his plans against David.
New Jerusalem Bible	Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from Giloh his town, and had him with him while offering the sacrifices. The conspiracy grew in strength, since Absalom's supporters grew in number.
Revised English Bible	Absalom also sent to summon Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from Giloh his town, where he was offering the customary sacrifices. The conspiracy gathered strength, and Absalom's supporters increased in number.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's advisor, from his city, Giloh, and sacrificed sacrifices. The conspiracy was encouraged, and the people went in legions with Absalom.
Bible in Basic English	And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, one of David's helpers, from Giloh his town, while he was making the offerings. And the design against David became strong, for more and more people were joined to Absalom.
Complete Jewish Bible	Avshalom sent for Achitofel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from his town Giloh and be with him while offering the sacrifices. The conspiracy grew strong, because the number of people favoring Avshalom kept increasing.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But Absalom had sent for Akhitophel, the Gilonite, the Counselor of David, from the town of Gihon, for him to sacrifice the sacrifices; —so there was a powerful conspiracy, and the people came and crowded to Absalom.
HCSB	While he was offering the sacrifices, Absalom sent for David's adviser Ahithophel the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh. So the conspiracy grew strong, and the people supporting Absalom continued to increase.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Absalom also sent [to fetch] [Some Septuagint manuscripts and 4QSam ^a read "sent and summoned."] Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his town, Giloh, when the sacrifices were to be offered. The conspiracy gained strength, and the people supported Absalom in increasing numbers.
New Advent Bible	Absalom also sent for Achitophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city Giloh. And while he was offering sacrifices, there was a strong conspiracy, and the people running together increased with Absalom.
NET Bible®	While he was offering sacrifices, Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's adviser [Traditionally, "counselor," but this term is more often associated with psychological counseling today, so "adviser" was used in the translation instead.], to come from his city, Giloh [Heb "Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, the adviser of David, from his city, from Giloh, while he was sacrificing." It is not entirely clear who (Absalom or Ahithophel) was offering the sacrifices.]. The conspiracy was gaining momentum, and the people were starting to side with Absalom.
NIV – UK	While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, to come from Giloh, his home town. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Darby Translation	And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, from Giloh, while he offered the sacrifices. And the conspiracy gathered strength; and the people increased continually with Absalom.
English Standard Version	And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Abi Shalom sends for Achiy Thophel the Gilohiy the counsellor of David from his city - from Giloh as he sacrifices sacrifices: and the conspiracy is strong; for many people walk with Abi Shalom.
NASB	And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom.
Syndein	While Absalom offered sacrifices, {very pious, very religious looking - inwardly he is reversionistic and arrogant} he {Absalom} sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's 'secretary of state'/counselor, from his hometown of Giloh {about 5 miles from Hebron}. {Note: Ahithophel is the grandfather of Bathsheba and the true brains behind Absalom's revolt just beginning his counsel was so good it was referred to 'as from God' (2Samuel 16:23). Ahithophel had a son who was one of David's generals. He most likely introduced Bathsheba to Uriah the Hittite and never forgave David for the rape of his granddaughter and murder of his son-in-law.} Therefore the conspiracy gained momentum/strength and the people kept coming to Absalom in constantly increasing numbers. {Note: If politics (like unfair government - 'taxation without representation' or 'states rights verse national tyranny') is the cause of a civil war, the issue is freedom. If revolution (evil turnover of legitimate government) is the cause, then the issue is truth. Here the issue is truth.} {Note: David wrote 3 conspiracy psalms. Psalm 39 fits here.}
World English Bible	Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. The conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

Young's Updated LT

And Absalom sends Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor of David, out of his city, out of Gilo, in his sacrificing sacrifices; and the conspiracy is strong, and the people are going and increasing with Absalom.

The gist of this verse:

Absalom also sent to bring Ahithophel to him, a former aide to David. A great number of people became aware of what Absalom was doing and agree with him.

2Samuel 15:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shālach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁוֹן) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾĀchîythôphel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
Gîylônîy (גִּילֹנִי) [pronounced <i>ghee-loh-NEE</i>]	<i>an inhabitant of Giloh; transliterated Gilonite</i>	masculine singular gentilic adjective	Strong's #1526 BDB #162

Translation: Furthermore, Absalom sent [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite,... There is a lot which is going on in this verse. First of all, it appears that Ahithophel is probably Bathsheba's grandfather. We know this from two passages: 2Sam. 11:3 *David send and inquired after the woman. One said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?* Now, interestingly enough, despite what David did, Eliam, Bathsheba's father, remained faithful to David. Eliam, which means *God is my people*, was named as one of the great soldiers in David's army (2Sam. 23:34b). But we are told something else in that verse: *...Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,...* It would be logical for the daughter of a great soldier to marry a soldier; after all, Bathsheba did not want to feel as though she was tougher than some non-soldier, so she married Uriah the Hittite, one of David's great soldiers (2Sam. 23:39). So, Bathsheba was the daughter of Eliam (who remained allied with David) and the granddaughter of Ahithophel, who turned against David.

So, what we have here is, Bathsheba was taken by David and David had her husband killed (2Sam. 11). David impregnated Bathsheba, so he took her as his wife. Eliam, at some point, accepted this, and remained faithful to David; thus his citation in 2Sam. 23. However, Ahithophel, his father, a brilliant strategist (which will become apparent as this narrative is developed), could not take the immorality of David, and he has held a grudge against David ever since.

Absalom actually knows about this. Probably not from observation, but from being told by one of his new followers. Whatever, Absalom calls for Ahithophel to come to him.

The New Advent Bible note on Achitophel: Achitophel was an able and honoured counsellor of David, who joined the rebellion of Absalom. The King was much affected by this desertion. Hearing that the man on whose word he had been wont to rely as "on an oracle of God" was giving his advice to the enemy, he prayed the Lord to "infatuate the counsel of Achitophel." Some have seen in Psalms 54:13-15 and 40:10, reflections of David on this faithless friend. It was on the advice of Achitophel that Absalom took possession of his father's harem, thus cutting off all hope of reconciliation. Understanding the need of energetic measures, he urged that 12,000 men be sent from Jerusalem in pursuit of the King. He offered to lead them himself. Chusai, a secret friend of David, defeated his purpose. Thereupon he proudly withdrew to his town of Gilo, put his house in order, and strangled himself. (See 2 Samuel 15:12; 17:23; 1 Chronicles 27:33.) It would seem from a conjunction of 2 Samuel 23:34, and 11:3, that Achitophel was the grandfather of Bethsabee, and it has been suggested, as an explanation of his conduct towards David, that he had kept a secret grudge against the King for the way he had treated Bethsabee, and her first husband, the unfortunate Urias. This, or some motive of ambition, would be in keeping with the haughty character of Achitophel. Dryden has used this name in the title of his famous satire against the Protestant Party, "Absalom and Achitophel."⁴⁷

2Samuel 15:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâ'ats (אֵץ) [pronounced yaw- ÇAHTS]	<i>counselor, consultant; counseling; making a determination [based upon counseling]</i>	masculine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #3289 BDB #419
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw- VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

This is the first occurrence of David's name since chapter 13.

Translation: ...a counselor [to] David... At one time, Ahithophel had been a great counselor to David, and part of what will save David in this upcoming war is, he will see to it that Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom will be frustrated. David will use counterinsurgency in order to neutralize Ahithophel's advice to Absalom. It is pretty simple: David cannot have Ahithophel advising Absalom. Absalom, by himself, is not a great man of war. He has no experience whatsoever, insofar as we know, on the battlefield. He was not as bad as Amnon when it came to being a layabout, but he just did not have the experience. However, his lack of experience can be compensated for if he has a secretary of war who knows what he is doing.

Application: When an incumbent is running against a challenger for president of the United States, the incumbent often runs on his experience in world affairs and in overseeing the greatest military in the world. Now, 3 years previous to this, the incumbent often had little or no military experience. However, what is key is, what is the philosophy of the challenger and can the challenger oversee a large organization—meaning, can he choose great men to work for him (which is one of the most important and underrated components of a political race). So, this novice, Absalom, can be a great leader—theoretically speaking—if he has divine establishment thinking and knows how to hire and listen to great people.

⁴⁷ From <http://www1000.newadvent.org/cathen/01102e.htm> accessed September 28, 2012. Something ought to be said concerning the Catholic church, as this is a Catholic Bible. There are certainly problems within the Catholic church and many problems with their doctrines. However, we cannot equate today's Catholic church with the church of the Dark Ages or the church which opposed the reformation. There seems to be a renewed interest in the teaching of Scripture within the Catholic church and in the resources which they make available. That is a good thing, despite the fact that they hold to a few horrible doctrines.

Application: We have an election coming up between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney (by the time I have completed this chapter of 2Samuel, the election will probably be over with). There are a few ignorant Christians who have struggled between avowed Christian Barack Obama and Mormon Mitt Romney (who believes that there are additional revelations made by God to Joseph Smith, who wore magic glasses and used them to translate “reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics” from sheets of malleable gold (at least in appearance) which have disappeared.⁴⁸ Now, this is some goofy stuff that the Mormons believe, no doubt about it; and their theology is, as a result, cultic.⁴⁹ However, all of the Mormons I have known have establishment values. If you started going over the **Laws of Divine Establishment** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) with them, they would, in nearly every area, say, “I agree with that. Our church teaches that.” So, when you compare someone who is against the basic principles of divine establishment in the Bible (the free function of the soul, the importance of work, the unique family unit of a mother, father and so many children) and they reject the greatness of the United States, because it is based upon establishment values; to someone who favors establishment values, you vote for the man with establishment values.

Application: Now, this does not mean that electing a Mormon is not without its problems. Just as President Bill Clinton changed a generation’s views on oral copulation, Mitt Romney could turn millions of people toward Mormonism, not based upon what he says, but based upon his function as president (whether he is a poor, mediocre, good or great president).

Back to Absalom and his lack of military experience. Absalom does not have to directly fight. He just has to tell his troops what to do. Now, if he gives them good advice and good training (also under someone else’s direction), then Absalom has a shot at beating David and Joab at war.

As an aside, you may wonder, why doesn’t God just let Absalom take over? Hasn’t David sucked lately as a king? Didn’t God give David and chance and his chances are long gone after bedding Bathsheba and having her husband killed?

Here is the difference: Absalom is using God for cover. He is going through some religious motions in order to hide what he is doing. He has no real thought for God; he has no interest in the Word of God. He just wants power. If you could imagine President Obama leading a revolutionary army against the present powers-that-be, that would give you a good idea of what is going on here. Obama knows knowing about the military; but he has good generals to advise him.

David, on the other hand, recognizes what he did was wrong. He has confessed that sin to God. He might not be in the best spiritual shape right now, but he intends to grow spiritually. Absalom has no interest in growing spiritually. He may not even be a believer in Y^ehowah Elohim.

David also has a lot of writing to do. He still has to record much of what has happened to him in the book of Samuel, the very words we are studying (at least, I believe that this is what David wrote). He has many psalms still to write.

David is a failure; a big fat failure with a capital F. And yet, David gets up, dusts himself off, and he is moving forward in the spiritual life. For Absalom, there is no spiritual life. There is Absalom, his lust for power, and his determination to have that power.

Application: Try to imagine your own son turning against you, lying to your face for years, and then taking everything from you in an instant. This is what David faced. As, as you will recall, David turned to God. He will quickly pray to God about Ahithophel, and he will be worshiping God when his prayer is answered.

⁴⁸ There are claims that others saw these golden plait. The glasses are no longer available to us either.

⁴⁹ However, I should point out that their behavior as a religious organization is not cultic in the sense that we often think. That is, they do not “kidnap” people and convert them; they do not isolate people from their family and friends; and they do not get weird with people who leave the Mormon church. They are simply cultic in doctrine, taking other books as being inspired by God; and teaching doctrines which contradict the Bible (e.g., God the Father as being a corporal being; there being no hell, but different levels of existence).

2Samuel 15:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Gîlôh (גִּלּוֹחַ) [pronounced <i>ghee-LOH</i>]	<i>exile; transliterated Giloh</i>	proper singular noun/location	Strong's #1542 BDB #162

Translation: ...[from his city \[of\] Giloh](#),... Giloh is a town in the hills of Judah (Joshua 15:51); the native place of Ahithophel (2Sam. 15:12 17:23).

2Samuel 15:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
zâbach (זָבַח) [pronounced <i>zaw^b-VAHKH</i>]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]; to sacrifice [an animal]; to slay, to immolate [an animal sacrifice]</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2076 BDB #256
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
zebach (זָבַח) [pronounced <i>ZEH^B-vakh</i>]	<i>slaughtered animal [used in a sacrificial offering], slaughter, sacrifice, slaughterings, sacrificial animal</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #2077 BDB #257

Translation: ...[while he was offering up](#) [lit., *slaughtering*] [animal sacrifices](#). Although the text does not make it clear who is offering up animal sacrifices, Absalom told David that is what he was going to do down in Hebron, and there are 200 guests who have gone with Absalom to Hebron, people who are unaware of what Absalom has planned. Therefore, Absalom cannot just go to Hebron and just sit around and work out his plots and machinations. He has to make it look like he is doing something. He said he was going to offer up some animal sacrifices, so that is what he is doing.

The words here focus on the actual slaughtering of the animals more than their being offered up to God. Although these are legitimate words, the emphasis is upon the slaughtering. That is all that Absalom was doing—slaughtering animals. This was just a show. He did this while bringing his plans together. This thinking is spoken of in Prov. 21:27 **The sacrifice of the wicked [= unregenerate or reversionistic] is an abomination, how much more when he brings it with an evil intent!** This describes exactly what Absalom was doing. He was either unregenerate or reversionistic and, when offering up these animals, he was filled with evil intent (revolution). **Such men profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good work** (Titus 1:16).

The first sentence reads: **Furthermore, Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh, while he was making a show of offering up sacrifices in Hebron.** Most sources say that Giloh is close to Hebron, and this may have had something to do with Absalom going down to Hebron (it is certainly a city in Judah—Joshua 15:51). What we have seen so far shows a brilliant set up for the revolution that will follow. It seems reasonable that Ahithophel was on Absalom’s radar for some time now, as a good man to get to counter Joab’s military ability.

If you have ever seen *The Godfather*, Francis Ford Coppola (the director) would have inter-cut the offering of the animals, with the various moving parts of the revolution which were going on simultaneously (as he did at the end of *The Godfather* with the infant baptism ceremony⁵⁰). So, as Absalom offers up this animal and then that, the trumpeters and the spies spreading out across the land; the messenger that goes to Ahithophel and tells him that Absalom wants to meet him in Hebron, the 200 who are gathered there and discussing the ceremonies; David is walking and crying up the mountain range just outside of Jerusalem; and the priests and Levites, are returning from these mountains, going back to Jerusalem.

The big problem with Absalom’s offering up these sacrifices is, it is all phoney. It is all a cover. Absalom is in Hebron to gather up his forces and strengthen himself militarily before revolting against David.

2Samuel 15:12e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #1961 BDB #224
qesher (קֶשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>KEH-sheer</i>]	<i>conspiracy, treason, unlawful alliance</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #7195 BDB #905
This is the first time this word occurs in Scripture.			
’ammits (אָמַץ) [pronounced <i>ahm-MEETS</i>] (with an alternate spelling)	<i>strong, firm, mighty</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong’s #533 BDB #55

Translation: **Consequently, the conspiracy became strong,...** Absalom’s conspiracy increased in strength. There were the people on the inside, and they knew what he was doing. Many came to him. The 200 just figured these were more people in share in the celebration of these animal sacrifices, but Absalom used that as a cover, so that he could interact with the conspirators without that being noticed.

⁵⁰ This was too gory and salacious to link to.

Furthermore, as already noted, David does not know that these 200 men are not with Absalom. That is what he will assume, and they likely represent some of his closest staff.

2Samuel 15:12f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
The wâw conjunction can be used to mean <i>at the same time, when, while, simultaneously</i> . ⁵¹			
‘am (אָמ) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>is walking, is going, is departing, is advancing, is traveling</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Two wâw conjunctions may continue the thought of a compound conditional sentence. When this happens, then this will occur is the idea here.			
rab (רַב) [pronounced <i>rah^bv</i>]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed)</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
’Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבוּשִׁיבָא) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...while people are departing [from David] and [becoming] great with Absalom. People kept departing; and we may reasonably understand this to mean that they were departing from being loyal to David, and walking to Absalom to show their allegiance to him. The number of people who came to Absalom kept increasing in size.

We have already gone over some of the reasons back in v. 10, but one of them might be self-preservation. People look at the two leaders, make a determination as to who will be standing at the very end, and ally themselves with that person. Absalom certainly looks younger and more powerful; and he is like the David that David used to be—at least superficially.

⁵¹ *At the same time* comes from *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 252; I added in the synonyms.

You may remember that when David exiled himself from Saul, many, many people began to come to him while he was hiding out. The same is true for Absalom, but he is not hiding out. He is in Hebron, out in the open, offering up sacrifices, and receiving people who will support him in his revolution against David.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown sums up why this change of allegiance continued to grow: *The rapid accession of one place after another in all parts of the kingdom to the party of the insurgents, shows that deep and general dissatisfaction existed at this time against the person and government of David. The remnant of Saul's partisans, the unhappy affair of Bath-sheba, the overbearing insolence and crimes of Joab, negligence and obstruction in the administration of justice--these were some of the principal causes that contributed to the success of this widespread insurrection.*⁵²

The two doctrines were taken from elsewhere on the internet, but they appear to be reasonably accurate.

Introduction: We seem to have this **romanticized view** of revolution in our culture, which is probably a result of the communist conspiracy and the mislabeling of our own War for Independence as the American Revolution. Therefore, when we saw the so-called Arab Spring, many **newsmen spoke** of it and a **Jeffersonian Democracy** in the same breath (even though many warned, "It is not going to be a Jeffersonian Democracy right off the bat"). However, the Bible teaches that revolution is anti-establishment and anti-God; and many Christians (and **non-Christians**) recognize that the events in the Muslim world simply represent a shift in power from one evil dictator to an even more evil dictator, under a thin veneer of democracy. The **Doctrine of Revolution** takes a look at revolution from a more Biblical perspective, so that, when you observe such things taking place, you do not mistakenly think that, things are going to get better because the people are revolting against tyranny. It's not like that at all.

This comes from pastor Robert H. Kreger of the **Metropolitan Bible Church**. Because of some of the vocabulary, it is likely that pastor Kreger has studied under R. B. Thieme, Jr.

The Doctrine of Revolution

1. Definition of revolution: revolution is the overthrow by violence of duly constituted authority resulting in fundamental change in political organization, constitution, or government. Revolution is a form of conspiracy to overthrow establishment-type government to remove the authority of establishment by means of violence.
2. The Word of God does not justify revolution under any circumstances. The French and Russian Revolutions were not justified, and God did not condone them. Rom 13:1-7 sums up best the attitude of God. "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." 1Peter 2:13-17 "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king." Daniel 2:21 "He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them..."

⁵² Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 15:12.

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3. If revolution is wrong, the most common question that comes up is "What about the American Revolution?" Technically the American Revolution was not a revolution. It was a war for independence. It was a fight for freedom, not an overthrow of establishment. Those who favored independence hoped for a good relationship with mother England; they did not seek to destroy the English government or power structure. They did not seek to supplant England's government. This does not mean that there was no sin in the American War for Independence; it simply means that it was not, strictly speaking, a revolution.
4. The American Civil War, or the War Between the States was not a rebellion, or a revolt. The Confederacy was fighting against northern aggression, and fighting for its independence. It did not attempt nor did it desire to overthrow the government in Washington. Revolution, on the other hand, has as its objective the destruction of an organized government. That is why the French and Russian Revolutions were evil and wrong. Their entire purpose was the destruction of existing governments. But a war for independence, or a fight for freedom, is honorable and just, and is not against God's standards.
5. Revolution involves both apostasy and a lack of Bible doctrine. Isa. 1:3-5 **"The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manager, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand. Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption. They have forsaken the Lord; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him."** Isa. 59:13 **"Rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning your backs on your God, fomenting oppression and revolt, uttering lies your hearts have conceived."**
6. Revolution is anti-God. Isa. 31:6 **"Return to him(Literally,'Return to the One')you have so greatly revolted against, O Israelites."**
7. Revolution is caused by failure in the thought patterns of those involved. Jer. 5:23 **"But these people have stubborn and rebellious hearts;(thinking) they have turned aside and gone away."** Therefore, the revolutionist always suffers from mental attitude sins and/or emotional revolt of the soul. These conditions make one mentally ill and very sinful.
8. Jealousy and power lust are primary motivators in revolution. Isa. 11:13 compared to 1Kings 12:19. Isa. 11:13 says **"Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's enemies will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim."** 1Kings 12:19 **"So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day."** See also 2Chron 10:19.
9. Revolution involves two kinds of people: the criminals, who want to seize power; and the true believers and idealists, who are duped into supporting the revolution. We saw this in **Egypt** and Libya over the past couple of years (I write this in 2012). In Egypt, there were all these young people in Tahrir Square, posting on Facebook, tweeting and uploading videos to YouTube. They wanted freedom and self-determination, and many people in the United States saw this and just thought it was the most wonderful thing. However, as this revolution gained momentum, and as the people overran Mubarak, their leader; then the criminals—the hardcore revolutionaries—stepped in—the Muslim Brotherhood. Up until the time when it became clear that Egypt was going to develop a new government, this organization hung back and did not take any credit for what was going on. However, when preliminary elections were held, then, suddenly, **they stepped up their game**. Libya was much the same way. The true believer, the crusader, actually provided the momentum and the overthrow of Ghaddafi; as well as the **propaganda**. However, once the government was overthrown, then the criminal revolutionaries stepped in, attempting to take power and **demonizing and attacking** the very United States who helped them in their revolution. There was an outpouring of support in America for these and other *Arab Spring* revolutions, particularly from the left, who think that revolutions are a good thing.
10. Criminal arrogance + crusader arrogance = revolution against an establishment government. The end result is nearly always a government which follows fewer establishment principles.
11. In other words, people in a revolution, no matter whether they are hardcore criminal revolutionaries or sincere do-gooders, they are motivated by arrogance.
12. After a certain point, those who are criminals will assume the power and, if need be, crush those who are the crusaders.
13. Although the general population needs to go along with a revolution, if the revolution is achieved and there are large swaths of population who do not like it, sometimes they are incarcerated or killed, as has

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- occurred in most communist countries.
14. In the middle of any revolution are the people in the country in which this revolution takes place. Here, the hardcore revolutionaries produce propaganda and they depend upon the crusaders to convince the general population as well.
 15. There are several examples of revolution in the Bible.
 - a. Absalom revolting against his father David. Absalom was clearly a criminal. He destroyed property, he will rape David's mistresses, and he desires to kill his father. 2Sam. 15–17
 - b. The revolt of Dathan and Abiram against Moses. Num. 16
 - c. Israel, a theocracy, frequently sought to depose God as their ultimate ruler. Isa. 1:2–5 Listen, heavens, and pay attention, earth, for the LORD has spoken: "I have raised children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's feeding-trough, but Israel does not know; My people do not understand." Oh--sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, brood of evildoers, depraved children! They have abandoned the LORD; they have despised the Holy One of Israel; they have turned their backs on Him. Why do you want more beatings? Why do you keep on rebelling? The whole head is hurt, and the whole heart is sick. (HCSB)
 16. Satan is the original revolutionist, revolting against God and taking a third of the angels with him. Isa. 14:12–15 Rev. 12:4
 17. Mental attitude sins on the part of leaders have a tendency to cause mental attitude sins among the citizens. Daniel 3–4
 18. The communication of Bible doctrine is designed to stop revolution. Ezek. 2:3-10 "He said to me, 'Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you.' As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. He said: 'Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their fathers have been in revolt against me to this very day. The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, This is what the Sovereign Lords says, And whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are a rebellious house, they will know that a prophet has been among them. And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house. You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.'" (God gave Ezekiel Bible doctrine.)
 19. Heathenism is the result of revolution. Rom. 1:19-26 "Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator, who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones." The result of this revolution is degeneration. Rom 1:27-31 "In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decrees and those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them."

The Doctrine of Revolution

20. Mental attitude sins on a national level leads to instability and unrest in that nation. Daniel chapter 4.
21. In revolution, approbation and power lust seek to gain power by the destruction of freedom, rights, privacy, and personal property.
22. Therefore, revolution is a Satanic device that is used to establish his cosmic kingdom and to superimpose his will over mankind. A government can be destroyed in one of two ways:
 - a. By those in power who abuse that power and end up destroying the economy, the military, or the judicial system.
 - b. By those who are suppressed by the government, and then rise up with weapons and violence and overthrow those in power.
23. But even though the citizens may have bona fide grievances against the government, the Lord still does not condone revolution. There is no perfect system of government or corporate organization because men all have sin natures. So, no matter what system of government is in place, there is always a potential for corruption and victims.

From: <http://www.angelfire.com/mi/universe/jude.glossary3.html> and edited and appended.

Some material from the R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, Lesson 631_0365 as well as other lessons from this era.

1. Revolution Is Forbidden: Rom. 13.1-7 1Peter 2.13-14
2. God's Attitude Toward Revolution: Num. 16
3. Revolution Is Apostasy: Isa. 1.3-5
4. Revolution Is Anti-God: Isa. 31.6
5. It Comes From A Wayward Heart: Jer. 5.23-24
6. Revolution Is Caused By Jealousy: Isa. 11.13
7. God's Word Can Stop Revolution: Ezek. 2.3-10

Taken from <http://www.bibleteacher.org/MISELOUT.htm>

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Let's apply some of these principles to Absalom and the revolution he is fomenting.

The Absalom Revolution

1. Absalom, and his inner circle, are the criminals. Some of them can be true believers.
2. However, Absalom must build public support for his revolution. He must convince large numbers of people to fight for his cause, which people are the true believers or the dupes of the revolutionaries.
3. At no time does Absalom actually suggest a new set of policies which are superior to the policies of David. He simply cultivates the victims of Israel's judicial system and hopes that they will carry back the news of Absalom's sincerely expressed sympathies with their cause. 2Sam. 15:1-4
4. Absalom offered up a new kind of equality, in the sense of, the citizens were equal to the leader. 2Sam. 15:5
5. Those who hope to seize power often suffer from **criminal arrogance**. At the heart of their revolution is not a better life for the people over whom they hope to rule; but an insatiable desire for power. Absalom has an insatiable lust for power.
6. Those who are duped into supporting the revolutionaries are those suffering from **crusader arrogance**. They become revolutionaries themselves.
7. It is not necessary for criminal arrogance to exist first and to stir up crusader arrogance (which is what Absalom did). Crusaders can reject the present system of government, which opens up a power vacuum, which will suck in, generally speaking, a person, persons or organizations which are far more evil than that which is already in power.
8. Many men believe, that by a new person coming in and taking over *the system*, that they can effect true and meaningful change which will improve life immeasurably.

The Absalom Revolution

9. Many men have unrealistic faith in various man-made systems of government and organization when they key is the souls of the people within that system.
10. Absalom preyed on the disenchantment of some with justice in Israel, even though it was probably good (David's weakness already noted). Those out of power often parade victims before the public, implying that, if they were in power, these victims would not exist.
11. Absalom presented himself as a king, riding around in a chariot with horses and an entourage of personal guards.
12. Absalom has set up a network of supporters who, at the sound of a trumpet, will proclaim him king in Hebron. This will be repeated in cities throughout all Israel. There are also those who do not have strong political leanings, who simply want to get along. They will support whomever seems stronger to them, so that they can be on the right side of history.

Some of these principles come from the teaching of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson 631_0365.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Our verse reads: Furthermore, Absalom sent [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor [to] David from his city [of] Giloh, while he was offering up [lit., *slaughtering*] animal sacrifices. Consequently, the conspiracy became strong, while people are departing [from David] and [becoming] great with Absalom.

The Citizens of Israel and the Revolution

1. We incorrectly identify revolution as a good thing in our country. However, it is a sign that the people of that country have taken a wrong turn.
2. God allows a revolution here for several reasons; and one of those reasons is, the people of Israel have rejected one or more of these truths: the gospel, Bible doctrine, and/or the laws of divine establishment.
3. We know this because some of the people support Absalom. They were easily swayed away from David. That shows a clear rejection of God's authority over them.
4. David was rejected, in part, because of his sins; but also, because the people of Israel clearly gossiped about him and maligned him and thought vicious things about David. The greatest king in Israel's history, and the people of Israel think that they are better than he is.
5. When they reject David, they also reject David's God. David clearly repented of his sin and of the way that he was acting.
6. It should also be pointed out that these people are choosing Absalom as their man. Now, if David is a bad king in their eyes, what is it that Absalom offers that is somehow better? He has nothing better to offer them.
7. There is nothing a client nation can benefit from a revolution.
8. For many people, they must switch from norms and standards which apply in a routine; to norms and standards which apply in a disaster.
9. The people who have followed David have left everything behind. They stepped out of their house and walked away from all they had worked for all of their lives. These people have loyalty to David and loyalty to God, which is honor.

It is only because of the honor of King David that many of Absalom's supporters will not be destroyed in this revolution.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

The key to a good government is the souls of the people under that government. In some ways, this is what Benjamin Franklin meant, when he **said** the United States was "A Republic, if you can keep it."

No matter what form of government there is, the people must have integrity; otherwise, that system will not work. We saw this in Afghanistan and Iraq. The people were very enthusiastic about voting, but if their souls are filled with the false doctrine of Islam, nothing good can come of it. You cannot reject truth and expect to thrive.

There are 3 categories of truth: the gospel of Jesus Christ, Bible doctrine; and the laws of divine establishment. If these are all rejected by a population, no matter what form of government is in place, their lives will be miserable. George W. Bush thought that the key to a great Iraq would be installing a democracy. But the key to Iraq becoming a great country again would have been the gospel and the protection of the liberties of the people, to accept or reject the gospel and to freely hear the teaching of the Word of God. What good is majority rule, if the majority of people have souls filled with hate and falsehood?

One more thing needs to be said. If the gospel of Jesus Christ and Bible doctrine are rejected, then the laws of divine establishment will be rejected as well. Men whose souls have rejected truth have a vacuum in their souls which such in false doctrine, which, for the unbeliever, are laws which are against divine establishment. Eph. 4:17–18 **Therefore, I communicate this, and because of the Lord, I insist that you no longer walk as Gentiles [unbelievers] walk in the vacuum of their mind. They are darkened in their way of thinking; they have been alienated from the life of God because of ignorance which is in them, because of the scar tissue of their right lobes.** Unbelievers have a vacuum in their mind, which, when it rejects the truth (the gospel or the laws of divine establishment), it then sucks in false doctrine. Their thinking becomes darkened with **cosmic system thinking**. They reject the gospel of Jesus Christ and either choose religion, humanism, atheism or agnostic humanism. They reject the doctrine of the Bible as silly, old fashioned, out-of-date, and inapplicable to today's world. They reject the laws of divine establishment. This can come in many forms. For instance, they can believe in government stealing from its citizens, which is excessive taxation. They can support greed of the poor, who want to have what their rich neighbor has. They reject the family unit, instead supplanting it with both parents working and the child being brought up by government workers in pre-schools; or they reject traditional marriage, believing that any combination of people is fine, so long as there is love involved. And, on point with our study, they believe that revolution is a good thing; and the destruction of the present-day rulers will bring about change which is good. They look to change that which is on the exterior, when the key to life is on the interior (salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; and then spiritual growth).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

King David Leaves Jerusalem

And so comes in a messenger unto David, to say, "Is a heart of a man of Israel after Absalom."

2Samuel
15:13

And a messenger came into David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are [gone] after Absalom."

Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The men of Israel have had their hearts swayed by Absalom."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And there came a messenger to David, saying: All Israel with their whole heart follows Absalom.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so comes in a messenger unto David, to say, "Is a heart of a man of Israel after Absalom."

Peshitta (Syriac)

And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom.

Septuagint (Greek) And there came a messenger to David, saying, the heart of the men of Israel has gone after Absalom.

Significant differences: Although there are differences in the singular and plural forms of *heart* and *man*, in English, we would never use the singular of these words as the Hebrew does.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Easy English	A messenger came and told David, "Everyone in Israel is on Absalom's side!" David escapes from Jerusalem A man came and he gave David a message. 'All the *Israelites have become loyal to Absalom', he said.
Easy-to-Read Version	A man came in to tell the news to David. The man said, "The people of Israel are beginning to follow Absalom."
Good News Bible (TEV)	A messenger reported to David, "The Israelites are pledging their loyalty to Absalom."
<i>The Message</i>	Someone came to David with the report, "The whole country has taken up with Absalom!"
New Century Version	A messenger came to David, saying, "The Israelites are giving their loyalty to Absalom."
New Life Bible	David Runs From Jerusalem Then a man came to David with news, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."
New Living Translation	David Escapes from Jerusalem A messenger soon arrived in Jerusalem to tell David, "All Israel has joined Absalom in a conspiracy against you!"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, when the report came to David that the hearts of the men of IsraEl had turned toward AbSalom,...
Christian Community Bible <i>God's Word</i> ™	A messenger came to report to David that the Israelites were siding with Absalom. Someone came to tell David, "The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom."
New American Bible	<i>David Flees Jerusalem.</i> An informant came to David with the report, "The Israelites have given their hearts to Absalom [Psalm 3], and they are following him."
NIRV	David Runs Away From Absalom A messenger came and spoke to David. He told him, "The hearts of the people are turned toward Absalom."
New Jerusalem Bible	A messenger came and told David, 'The men of Israel have shifted their allegiance to Absalom.'
New Simplified Bible	A messenger told David: »Absalom has the hearts of the people of Israel.«
Revised English Bible	A messenger brought the news to David that the men of Israel had transferred their allegiance to Absalom.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	A teller came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." And one came to David and said, The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.
Complete Jewish Bible	A messenger came to David saying, "The men of Isra'el have aligned themselves with Avshalom."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Information, however, came to David, reporting, "The heart of the people of Israel is gone after Absalom."

HCSB	Then an informer came to David and reported, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Someone came and told David, "The loyalty of the men of Israel has veered toward Absalom."
New Advent Bible	And there came a messenger to David, saying: All Israel with their whole heart follows Absalom.
NET Bible®	David Flees from Jerusalem Then a messenger came to David and reported, "The men of Israel are loyal to Absalom!" Heb "the heart of the men of Israel is with Absalom."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And he who is declaring tidings comes in unto David, saying, `The heart of the men of Israel has been after Absalom.
English Standard Version	And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom."
exeGesés companion Bible	DAVID FLEES YERU SHALEM And a teller comes to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Yisra El are after Abi Shalom.
New King James Version	David Escapes from Jerusalem Now a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."
Syndein	{Verses 13-37: David's 3 Wise and Great Decisions} Now the 'intelligence agent'/G2 came to David and he reported, {probably a man sent out by Joab to keep tabs on Absalom} "It has happened. The 'right lobes'/hearts of the men of Israel follow Absalom." {means a revolution has begun}.
World English Bible	There came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.
Young's Updated LT	And he who is declaring tidings comes in unto David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel has been after Absalom."

The gist of this verse: A messenger tells David that the loyalty of the people was toward Absalom.

2Samuel 15:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בֹּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
nâgad (נֹגֵד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>a messenger, one who makes known, an informant; one who expounds [explains, declares]</i>	masculine singular, Hiphil participle with the definite article	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
'el (עַל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

2Samuel 15:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: [And a messenger came into David,...](#) It is not clear whether David had a G2 force out watching Absalom, having an idea what he was up to; or whether this is someone from Hebron, who was loyal to David, and he observed what was going on. Or, as Gill⁵³ suggests, this may have been one of the 200 who realized what Absalom was doing, and wanted to give David a head's up. Given David's blinders with regards to his own children, I would assume the latter was the case.

As we have observed on other occasions, when someone wanted to find David, they could; however, his enemies could not easily find him. Those loyal to Absalom were also able to find him. The idea is, if a person is positive toward knowing God, then he will be able to find God—that is, he will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ to him will be like David out in the desert-wilderness; those who desire to find Him, can. See the **Doctrine of Heathenism** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

2Samuel 15:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ℓ ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced lay ^b]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking; midst</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced ah-KHAHR]	<i>after, following, behind; afterwards, after that</i>	preposition/adverb	Strong's #310 BDB #29
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִי־שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

⁵³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:13.

Translation: ...saying, “The hearts of the men of Israel are [gone] after Absalom.” Absalom had been working on this for 4 years in Jerusalem, and only for a few weeks, apparently, in Hebron. However, it became quite clear that he had a tremendous following. They did not care that Absalom was skin deep; that he had not even the slightest clue as to how to rule or how to engage his troops in battle (remember, this is why Israel wanted a king over them in the first place—1Sam. 8:19–20). He was just so handsome and dynamic and smart; and he showed that he cared about the people. And he was new and hip and cool.

Although some of these reasons might be a bit iffy, for the most part, this explains how the people of Israel could reject the greatest king of Israel’s history to take on a poor substitute.

Clarke’s Reasons Why the People’s Heart was with Absalom

1. David was old or afflicted, and could not well attend to the administration of justice in the land.
2. It does appear that the king did not attend to the affairs of state, and that there were no properly appointed judges in the land; see 2Sam. 15:3.
3. Joab’s power was overgrown; he was wicked and insolent, oppressive to the people, and David was afraid to execute the laws against him.
4. There were still some partisans of the house of Saul, who thought the crown not fairly obtained by David.
5. David was under the displeasure of the Almighty, for his adultery with Bath-sheba, and his murder of Uriah; and God let his enemies loose against him.
6. There are always troublesome and disaffected men in every state, and under every government; who can never rest, and are ever hoping for something from a change.
7. Absalom appeared to be the real and was the undisputed heir to the throne; David could not, in the course of nature, live very long; and most people are more disposed to hail the beams of the rising, than exult in those of the setting, sun.

From Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:13.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Even under great kings, people have the ability to be incredibly shallow and stupid.

Although we do not know who this messenger is, he has confirmed many of David’s worst fears. David knows all that he has done wrong; and he certainly realizes that the people are aware of these things as well. So David’s appraisal of this situation is based upon far more than this one messenger.

And so says David to all his servants who [are] with him in Jerusalem, “Rise up and let us flee for is not to us an escape from faces of Absalom. And hasten to go lest he hasten and has overtaken us and has thrust upon us the evil and has struck the city to a mouth of a sword.”

2Samuel
15:14

Then David said to all of his servants that [were] with him in Jerusalem, “Rise up and let us flee for [there] will not be to us an escape from the face of Absalom. And let us go quickly so that he does not hasten and overtake us, and thrust evil upon us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”

Then David commanded all of his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, “Rise up as we must move quickly or there may not be a way to escape the attack of Absalom. We must leave quickly or he may hasten and overtake us, and bring evil upon us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And David said to his servants, that were with him in Jerusalem: Arise and let us flee: for we shall not escape else from the face of Absalom: make haste to go out, lest he come and overtake us, and bring ruin upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says David to all his servants who [are] with him in Jerusalem, "Rise up and let us flee for is not to us an escape from faces of Absalom. And hasten to go lest he hasten and has overtaken us and has thrust upon us the evil and has struck the city to a mouth of a sword."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Arise and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom; make haste to depart, lest he overtake us <u>suddenly</u> and bring evil upon us and smite the city with the edge of the sword.
Septuagint (Greek)	And David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, Rise, and let us flee, for we <u>have no refuge</u> from Absalom. Make haste and go, lest he overtake us <u>speedily</u> , and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.
Significant differences:	The Greek has <i>we have no refuge from Absalom</i> , which is similar to <i>there is no escape to us from the face of Absalom</i> . There are two verbs for <i>hasten</i> in the Hebrew; this is ignored in the English translation from the Latin, but incorporated as adverbs in the English translations of the Syriac and Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then David told all the servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come on! We have to run for it, or we won't be able to escape Absalom. Hurry, or he will catch up with us in no time, destroy us [Heb uncertain; LXXL bring the city down on top of us], and attack the city with the sword."
Contemporary English V.	David's officials were in Jerusalem with him, and he told them, "Let's get out of here! We'll have to leave soon, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Hurry! If he moves fast, he could catch us while we're still here. Then he will kill us and everyone else in the city."
Easy English	Then David spoke to all the officials who were with him in Jerusalem. 'We must run away from Absalom. We must leave quickly so that we escape from him. Otherwise, he will catch us and he will destroy our city. And he will kill the people in Jerusalem.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Then David said to all of his officers who were with him in Jerusalem, "We must escape! {If we don't escape}, then Absalom will not let us get away. Let's hurry before Absalom catches us. He will destroy us all. And he will kill the people of Jerusalem."
Good News Bible (TEV)	So David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "We must get away at once if we want to escape from Absalom! Hurry! Or else he will soon be here and defeat us and kill everyone in the city!"
<i>The Message</i>	"Up and out of here!" called David to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem. "We've got to run for our lives or none of us will escape Absalom! Hurry, he's about to pull the city down around our ears and slaughter us all!"
New Century Version	Then David said to all his officers who were with him in Jerusalem, "We must leave quickly! If we don't, we won't be able to get away from Absalom. We must hurry before he catches us and destroys us and kills the people of Jerusalem."
New Living Translation	"Then we must flee at once, or it will be too late!" David urged his men. "Hurry! If we get out of the city before Absalom arrives, both we and the city of Jerusalem will be spared from disaster."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	...David said to all his servants in JeruSalem, 'Let's get up and run from here, because nothing can save us from AbSalom! Hurry, let's go, so he doesn't overtake us and do bad things to us, then destroy the city with swords.'
Beck's American Translation	"Up and let's flee," David told all his men who were with him in Jerusalem, "otherwise we'll not escape from Absalom. Hurry and get away, or he'll catch up with us and bring disaster on us when he puts the city to the sword."
Christian Community Bible	Then David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Let us flee, for we cannot resist Absalom. Go quickly, lest he come hurriedly and overtake us. Surely he will put the city to the sword if he can bring disaster upon us."
God's Word™	David told all his men who were with him in Jerusalem, "Let's flee immediately, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Let's leave right away, or he'll catch up to us and bring disaster on us when he massacres the city."
New American Bible	At this, David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem: "Get up, let us flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Leave at once, or he will quickly overtake us, and then bring disaster upon us, and put the city to the sword."
NIRV	Then David spoke to all of his officials who were with him in Jerusalem. He said, "Come on! We have to leave right away! If we don't, none of us will escape from Absalom. He'll move quickly to catch up with us. He'll destroy us. His men will kill everyone in the city with their swords."
New Jerusalem Bible	David said to all his retinue then with him in Jerusalem, 'Up, let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom! Leave as quickly as you can, in case he mounts a sudden attack, overcomes us and puts the city to the sword.'
New Simplified Bible	David told all his men who were with him in Jerusalem: »We must run away quickly, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Leave right away or he will catch up to us and bring ruin upon us when he massacres the city.«
Revised English Bible	The king said to those who were with him in Jerusalem, 'We must get away at once, or there will be no escape from Absalom for any of us. Make haste, or else he will soon be upon us, bringing disaster and putting the city to the sword.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David said to all his servants with him in Jerusalem, "Rise and disappear, for we will not be refugees in front of Absalom. Hasten to go, otherwise he will overtake us, and outcast us in haste and do evil over us, smiting the city with the mouth of the sword."
Bible in Basic English	And David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Come, let us go in flight, or not one of us will be safe from Absalom: let us go without loss of time, or he will overtake us quickly and send evil on us, and put the town to the sword.
Complete Jewish Bible	David said to all his servants with him in Yerushalayim, "Get up! We must flee! Otherwise none of us will escape from Avshalom. Hurry, and leave; or he will soon overtake us, attack us and put the city to the sword."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Consequently David said to all his ministers who were with him in Jerusalem, "Let us arise and fly, for there will be no safety for us before Absalom. Expedite the journey, for fear he should hasten and rush, and drive on to us with ferodicty, and assail the city with the sword."
HCSB	David said to all the servants with him in Jerusalem, "Get up. We have to flee, or we will not escape from Absalom! Leave quickly, or he will overtake us, heap disaster on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Whereupon David said to all the courtiers who were with him in Jerusalem, "Let us flee at once, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must get away quickly, or he will soon overtake us and bring down disaster upon us and put the city to the sword."
New Advent Bible	And David said to his servants, that were with him in Jerusalem: Arise and let us flee: for we shall not escape else from the face of Absalom: make haste to go out,

lest he come and overtake us, and bring ruin upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

NET Bible® So David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come on [Heb "Arise!"]! Let's escape [Heb "let's flee."!] Otherwise no one will be delivered from Absalom! Go immediately, or else he will quickly overtake us and bring [Heb "thrust."!] disaster on us and kill the city's residents with the sword [Heb "and strike the city with the edge of the sword."]."

NIV – UK Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, 'Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version And David said to all his servants who [are] with him in Jerusalem, 'Rise, and we flee, for we have no escape from the face of Absalom; haste to go, lest he hasten, and have overtaken us, and forced on us evil, and smitten the city by the mouth of the sword.

A Conservative Version And David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee, for otherwise none of us shall escape from Absalom. Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

Darby Translation And David said to all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Rise up and let us flee; for we shall not [else] escape from Absalom. Be quick to depart, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

exeGesés companion Bible And David says to all his servants with him at Yeru Shalem, Rise! Flee! For in escaping, we escape not the face of Abi Shalom. Hasten to go, lest he hasten and overtake us and drive evil on us and smite the city with the mouth of the sword.

The Geneva Bible 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 [Whose heart he saw that Satan had so possessed that he would leave no mischief unattempted.]: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

LTHB And David said to all his servants who were with him in Jerusalem, Rise up, and we will flee; for we have no escape from the face of Absalom. Hurry to leave, that he not overtake us and bring evil down on us, and strike the city with the mouth of the sword.

Syndein {Verses 14-16: David's 1st Wise and Great Decision} Then David commanded {'amar} {'amar is used when thought precedes decision - he thought about it and thought about it and came to the conclusion that he needed to retreat and organize} all his 'loyal officials'/servants who were with him in Jerusalem, "Get up!/Arise {Red Alert!}, because we must retreat/withdraw/flee for 'none of us will escape from Absalom'. {idiom: literally 'there will not be to us an escape from the face of Absalom} Be ready to move out rapidly . . . lest he {Absalom} pursues rapidly and overtakes us 'and bring disaster to our cause'. {idiom: literally 'and bring down on us the evil} and massacre/'be caused to strike/smite' {nakah} the city with violence/'the edge of the sword'." {Note: If David stays in his castle, the battle will be fought in Jerusalem at the base of the castle

Updated Bible Version 2.11	and will cause much civilian death and destruction of personal property. David knows his cause is right and he will win in the end. He has all it takes to meet the challenge - he just needs time to organize. He moves out with thousands and thousands of citizens faithful to him - this is not just a movement of David's army.}.
World English Bible	And David said to all his slaves who were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for else none of us will escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, or else he will overtake us quickly, and bring down evil on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.
Young's Updated LT	David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for else none of us shall escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down evil on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.
	And David says to all his servants who are with him in Jerusalem, "Rise, and we flee, for we have no escape from the face of Absalom; haste to go, lest he hasten, and have overtaken us, and forced on us evil, and smitten the city by the mouth of the sword."

The gist of this verse:

David decides to leave Jerusalem with those who are faithful to him, in part because he is worried about what a war would do to the city.

2Samuel 15:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE^b-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

2Samuel 15:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced y ^{oo} -shaw-LAH-yim]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

Translation: Then David said to all of his servants that [were] with him in Jerusalem,... There was obviously more in the report than is recorded in the Bible (And a messenger came into David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are [gone] after Absalom."). The Bible gives us the gist of the report. David gathers all of those who are faithful to him, and speaks to them. These would be his officials and his soldiers, which would include the palace guard and anyone else who was stationed in Jerusalem. This would be a formidable army, but David is not quite ready to go to war against his own son. Furthermore, he does not know exactly what sort of support that Absalom has nor does he know how passionate they are about his cause.

2Samuel 15:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced koom]	<i>stand, rise up, get up</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bârach (בָּרַח) [pronounced baw-RAHKH]	<i>to go [pass] through, to flee [away]; to hasten, to come quickly; to reach across</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #1272 BDB #137
The hê at the end of a 1 st person verb is called a cohortative hê. We often add a word like <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô ³ (לֹא or אֵל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pelēyṭâh (פֶּלְיָטָה) [pronounced <i>pehl-ay-TAW</i>] (there is an alternate spelling)	<i>escape; deliverance; escaped remnant; who or what has escaped</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #6413 BDB #812
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, min pānîym mean <i>from before the face of; out from before the face, from the presence of</i> . However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered <i>because of, because that; by</i> .			
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבוּשָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation:...“Rise up and let us flee for [there] will not be to us an escape from the face of Absalom. Although the gist of this verse may sound like, “Get up, run for your lives; every man for himself;” it is much more organized than that. First of all, they had to rise up (this is the word which indicates that they would all participate in a set of actions—in other words, it does not mean that everyone is sitting, but it means that they will now move with a purpose). R. B. Thieme, Jr. said that David would organize a **flying column**, which is *a force of troops equipped and organized to move swiftly and independently of a principal unit to which it is attached*.

What David does here reveals that he is recovering from his arrogance.

David's Retreat

- David is the legitimate king of Israel. However, with what is going on, David decides to retreat, which is a great decision.
- David does not hold onto his throne, his seat of power, growling, “If Absalom wants this crown, then let him come take it from my cold dead hands.”
- Bear in mind that David, as king, has a great many material things as well, which he will leave behind.
- However, David is a flexible person. Most of us lead lives of routine, which is normal. However, we have to be smart enough and aware enough to look at varying circumstances and make decisions which match the changing circumstances.
- As things stand, David is 100% right and Absalom is 100% wrong; and yet David is still flexible enough to leave all his possessions behind. Being right does not mean that you get things your way.
- David is being disciplined, flexible and thoughtful of the people in Jerusalem.
- Revolutionary armies are often half-trained and lacking in discipline. Even though David could likely defeat this revolutionary army, many innocent civilians would suffer or die because of Abraham's army. They would have been all over town raping and pillaging. Revolutionary armies can be very brutal.
- David's men are disciplined, and he will organize them before they move. They must be organized in order to move quickly and under David's direction.
- Arrogant people are inflexible. When they face circumstances that they do not like, they react in

David's Retreat

- inappropriate ways. Sometimes someone enforces a clause they don't like on a contract that they have signed. They argue and complain. Someone cuts them off in traffic, and they drive like idiots so that they might cut off the person who cut them off. We all face circumstances that we do not like; and we all face difficult circumstances. God has promised us that He will not test us more than we can bear.
10. Most of us have been fired at one time or another. I have been fired on several occasions; sometimes I deserved it and sometimes I did not. However, I had to become flexible at that point. Being fired represents a break in the routine. Just because the routine has come to a halt, that does not mean that you stop thinking. It is because of the break in the routine that you need to be able to think and to make appropriate decisions.
 11. Although we do not see into David's brain for this decision, we are going to observe, throughout the rest of the chapter, that David is making excellent decisions, despite the fact that everything has changed.
 12. Bible doctrine in the soul allows a person to think under pressure and to think under unusual circumstances. David's brain is firing on all 12 cylinders.
 13. David, because he has doctrine in his soul, is able to think during this crisis. You do not wait for the crisis to occur, and then open your Bible to a miscellaneous page and drop your finger down and read whatever verse you land upon. Doctrine needs to be in your soul; not tucked away safely in the Bible.
 14. David takes many things into consideration. Fighting a revolution in the middle of Jerusalem would potentially destroy his palace and the lives of the 1000's of people who live in Jerusalem. So David, thinking of people other than himself, makes the decision to leave Jerusalem, and to regroup outside of Jerusalem.
 15. Recall that these people are David's subjects and, as king, he is responsible for them. Therefore, it is better for him to withdraw from Jerusalem so that they might live in peace. On the other hand, Absalom, who wants to assume David's throne, just walks right into Jerusalem, leading his army. He shows no concern for the people over whom he desires to rule. If David is hole up in his palace, Absalom will attack.
 16. Finally, even though David has never read Rom. 8:28, he knows by means of **doctrinal rationales** that **All things work together for good to those who love God.**
 - 17.

Only a man with great humility and flexibility can do what David is doing here.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Most believers will face a national, geographical or personal disaster at some time in our lives.

God's Plan for the Believer in National Disaster

1. Most of our lives are routine, and there is nothing wrong with this. It is God's plan for us to work and it is generally His plan for us to get married, have children, and obey the law. And, so that we understand what we are doing, it is God's plan for us to learn Bible doctrine.
2. A national or regional disaster (e.g., war, recession, riots, revolution, widespread disease, earthquakes, floods or storms) does not mean that we set the plan of God aside until that disaster has subsided. That is a part of God's plan and we are to function within the framework of that disaster.
3. What often changes is the believer's scale of values. That is, what used to be important has to be set aside. When Hurricane Katrina headed for the Louisiana coast, the people of that area were to hop in the cars and leave. There was not enough time to pack up your life and leave. An approaching hurricane is treated differently than people going on vacation or people going to move to another city.
4. Many times, in a disaster, people must abandon material things which they enjoy. People must abandon them physically, mentally and emotionally.
5. You may lose some material blessings, but you still have the source of those blessings in God.
6. People who are destroyed in a disaster are often destroyed because they are inflexible. Also, God

God’s Plan for the Believer in National Disaster

- removes some people from life by disaster.
- 7. Shifting gears in a local or national disaster is flexibility.
- 8. David left behind a palace and 10 of his mistresses and a huge amount of stuff. When Absalom declared himself king in Israel, David’s scale of values had to dramatically change.
- 9. However, Bible doctrine remains a constant; it needs to be at the top of you scale of values in times of tranquility and times of disaster. It is Bible doctrine which helps you to be objective and flexible.
- 10. For the unbeliever, the laws of divine establishment help to guide them. So, the honorable unbeliever, when there is a riot in his city, he does not use this excuse to get worked up and go steal electronics equipment from a local store that is being broken into during the rioting. The believer or unbeliever with principles understands that stealing is wrong; and just because a riot gives you cover does not make the stealing right.

Now, there are times, even during a national disaster, when routine is important, particularly with young children. Prayers at mealtime, Bible study, or reading the child a book before sleep often provide a confused child with some structure or some continuity.

Some of these points came from R. B. Thieme, Jr.’s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0423.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

First thing is, they have to get out of Jerusalem before Absalom arrives with whatever army he has. Now, remember those 200 men who went with Absalom, who did not know what was going on (v. 11)? That is, they were not part of Absalom’s supporters; but he made them a part of his grand plot. Absalom would have taken with him some of David’s greatest military men and advisors—probably a lot of young men closer in age to Absalom—so that David thinks that these men are all with Absalom. David does a quick head count, and he knows many of the men who are gone, who went with Absalom to Hebron, and he assumes that these men are with Absalom. This is what Absalom wanted. He wanted David to think that these men left with him because they were following Absalom as a military leader and in rebellion against David.

This is how this plot went: Absalom went down to Hebron, ostensibly to offer up some sacrifices to fulfill some vows which he made. He took with him men who were loyal to him and knew that Absalom was plotting against David. But he also took 200 men with him who did not know that there was any plot. The idea is, at whatever point David realizes what is going on, he will look around and 200 of his best soldiers, administrators and friends are with Absalom. 200 of his most loyal men are with Absalom. This is key; this is what tilted the scales in Absalom’s favor. This is why David is somewhat panicked. After all, if Absalom has these men, who doesn’t he have in nation Israel?

David has to step back; he has to get the big picture and see who Absalom’s supporters are. Therefore, he has to leave Jerusalem in order to regroup and figure out if Absalom can be defeated or not.

2Samuel 15:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (l) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

2Samuel 15:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâhar (מָחַר) [pronounced <i>maw-HAHR</i>]	<i>to hasten, to hurry, to make haste; its transitive use is to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #4116 BDB #554
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ⁵⁴ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall or must</i> . ⁵⁵			
pen (פִּנּוּ) [pronounced <i>pen</i>]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mâhar (מָחַר) [pronounced <i>maw-HAHR</i>]	<i>to hasten, to hurry, to make haste; its transitive use is to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #4116 BDB #554
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâsag (נָשַׁג) [pronounced <i>naw-SAHG</i>]	<i>to reach, to attain, to overtake; to cause to reach; to be able to be secure; to have enough</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5381 BDB #673

Translation: *And let us go quickly so that he does not hasten and overtake us,...* David tells his officers that they need to move quickly enough, so that Absalom, with his army, does not follow them and strike them from behind. David needs to gather information before confront Absalom militarily. At this point, David believes that Absalom is probably stronger than he is.

Application: Part of being a great leader is being able to surround yourself with people who are brilliant, understand their area of expertise, and are loyal to you. The most intelligent, charismatic president in the world is nothing without an excellent staff.

This is probably what Absalom had in those 200 men he invited was an excellent staff. David knew that Absalom was not inherently a military man. He had done nothing in this particular realm, insofar as we know. However,

⁵⁴ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

⁵⁵ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

if he has some brilliant military minds with him—and we may reasonably assume that he does, even if they are not actually *with* Absalom—then David knows that Absalom could be a formidable military foe.

2Samuel 15:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâdach (נָדַח) [pronounced <i>naw-DAHKH</i>]	<i>to thrust [out, away, aside], to expel; to move to impel; to banish; to draw away, to seduce; to bring down; to draw down</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5080 BDB #623
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ʾeth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
râʾâh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #949

Translation: ...and thrust evil upon us... Absalom is potentially capable of bringing great injury, misery, distress and disaster upon David and his army. He could come from any direction, he is possibly ruthless, and would do anything to defeat David in battle. His army and supporters are an unknown to David, and therefore, David is smart enough not to immediately face off Absalom in battle.

2Samuel 15:14e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i>]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʾîyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:14e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced <i>peh</i>]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6310 BDB #804
chereb (חֶרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE^BV</i>]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #2719 BDB #352

Translation: ...and strike the city with the edge of the sword.” What is extremely important in understanding David’s motivation is with this final portion of v. 14, which is tied with a wāw conjunction to the previous portion. The evil that Absalom would bring down upon David and his men would be to strike this city with the edge of the sword. David’s wives and family are all here; his friends are all here; there are people in Jerusalem who depend upon David for protection; and there is no telling what Absalom might do in order to gain an advantage. There is no telling how many innocent lives would be lost if Absalom attacked.

Again, recall that many of David’s key men are gone, with Absalom, not knowing that Absalom is using them. So David has a military there, but many of the key men are gone, which is what Absalom wanted. There are enough key men gone where David sees nothing but bloodshed in the city of Jerusalem if he remains.

This suggests to us that David has a clear head, that he is thinking of the lives of those in his city, and that he needs to get out of the city in order to make his next move.

David oversees one of the greatest armies of all time, commanded by one of the greatest generals of all time (Joab). Why doesn’t he march into Hebron? Why doesn’t he keep and hold Jerusalem?

Why David Retreats

1. Although the Bible does not give us any information on David’s suspicions, at some point, he must have been able to begin to put together all of Absalom’s schemes to some degree.
2. David has a messenger who has come to him and told him that the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.
3. 200 of David’s top and most trusted aides appear to be with Absalom (they aren’t, necessarily, but David does not know this).
4. Normally, a revolutionary army is quite inferior to the establishment’s army. They reject discipline, cannot handle logistic, and are easily confused by strategy and tactics. However, like a wounded bear, that may make a revolutionary army more dangerous. If there are some of David’s military men among this 200 (like Joab), David would have reason to fear that this revolutionary army might be more formidable than one would assume at first.
5. All over the countryside, David has probably received reports of the proclamation, “Absalom is king in Hebron.” David would have personally heard the trumpet blast, and it would have been ominous, as it would not be indicative of codes that Joab has previously devised (this is reasonable conjecture).
6. Although Jerusalem is an easy place to defend, David does not know how many Absalom supporters live within the city. That would have a great effect upon their ability to defend the city.
7. David did not want to put the people of Jerusalem right in the middle of a revolution. Again, he had no idea how many people within Jerusalem supported Absalom. Therefore, a civil war of brother against brother could break out right in the middle of Jerusalem.
8. Probably, David did not want to see his palace and the city of Jerusalem destroyed in the revolution itself.
9. David appears to recognize that Absalom is prepared and ready for a fight; and that he probably is not. His own troops have never been involved in counterinsurgency warfare before.

Why David Retreats

10. Leaving Jerusalem gives David a chance to step back and take an overall view of the situation. It is likely that David wanted to make an assessment of his army and Absalom's army before committing to war. Despite Absalom's theatrics, with the trumpets going off, David really has no idea how many people support him. Intelligence is vitally necessary for any war effort. The enemy's strength and weaknesses must be ascertained. As we will see, David will set up a spy network in Jerusalem. David will use information coming out of Jerusalem to determine what his next move will be.
11. As Clarke put it, *He sees the storm, and he yields to what he conceives to be the tempest of the Almighty.*¹

Although there is much emotion in what David is doing (he is crying as he ascends the mountain), there is a point at which he takes control of his emotions and he starts thinking. He will need intelligence to figure out what he should do next.

This is, by the way, David's way of doing things. We saw this 3 decades ago when he returned to his camp in Ziklag and it has been raided by the Amalekites, with all of the women and children taken. There was a lot of emotion felt by all of the people there, but David got everyone calmed down, formed a plan, and then they acted on it. 1Sam. 30

¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:14.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

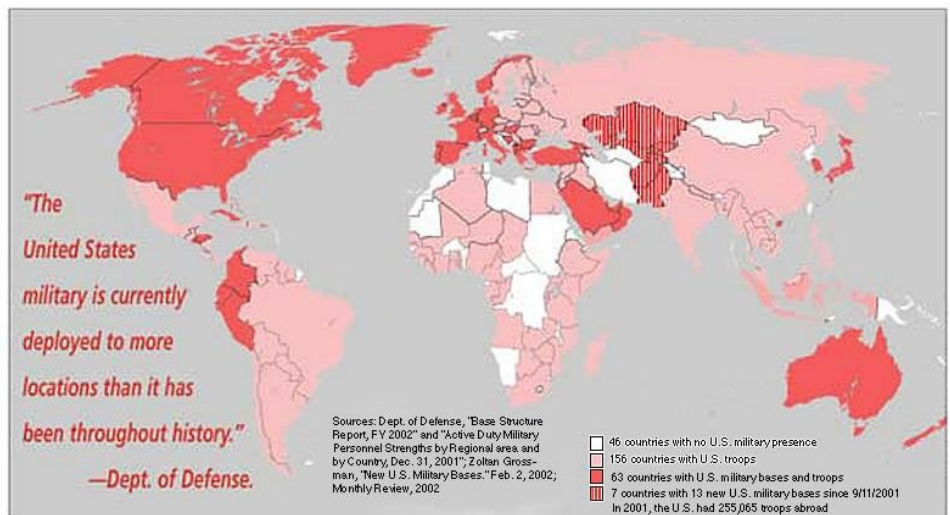
Application: The purpose of a military, ideally speaking, is to keep harm from coming to the population of a country. They want to meet the enemy on the enemy's territory or far away from where population centers are. The military of the United States has been wonderful in this regard over the past century or so. We have set up military bases all over the world, so that we could meet and defeat the enemy on their land.

Map of U.S. bases all over the world, taken from:

http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-dd_I_aHTZcE/Tfw5YZoRIHI/AAAAAAAAAp4/7NRNf8k7Eh8/s1600/aa-American-empire-map-of-bases-around-world.jpg

Application: This is exactly the sort of thing that we, as Americans, out to see and be proud of—that we have military bases scattered throughout the world, because it is these military bases which keep us safe. It is these bases which quell small problems before they become major problems. It is these bases which have prevented World War III. There is all kinds of

propaganda out there that we need to cut back on our military, and that we need to bring men back from Europe, from the Middle East, or wherever; but these viewpoints are propaganda from communists and from radical Islam. It is these military bases that have put out this little fire and that little fire, and say to our enemies, "We will bring hellfire down upon you if you start anything." It is because of these military bases that Americans sit at home and worry very little about a military attack on their city.



Application: When you view a map like this, your inclination ought to be, if you understand the Word of God, to give thanks to God for what you see. There have only been a few limited occasions when war has been waged in our own cities because the United States has bases all over the world. It is the men and women in these bases who have tamped down problems throughout the globe, and provided safety and security for us here at home.

Application: However, key to this is the spiritual condition of the United States. We have had a high percentage of believers and a number of believers who understand much of the Word of God. Without this, our bases all over the world are meaningless, and subject to attack.

Then David commanded all of his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, “Rise up as we must move quickly or there may not be a way to escape the attack of Absalom. We must leave quickly or he may hasten and overtake us, and bring evil upon us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.” So, David is going to pull his close aids and his military out of Jerusalem, so that there is not a war in the midst of Jerusalem, which would bring great harm to the innocent population there.

We know that David is a great leader because he leaves Jerusalem with his staff intact. We do not hear of desertions; we do not read about people who thought about joining David, but then, changed their minds. Now, David will send a few people back to Jerusalem, but as intelligence gatherers.

It should be pointed out that, God has promised David’s throne to him: This is what the LORD of Hosts says: “I took you from the pasture and from following the sheep to be ruler over My people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you. I will make a name for you like that of the greatest in the land. I will establish a place for My people Israel and plant them, so that they may live there and not be disturbed again. Evildoers will not afflict them as they have done ever since the day I ordered judges to be over My people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD Himself will make a house for you. When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a human rod and with blows from others. But My grace will never leave him as I removed it from Saul; I removed him from your way. Your house and kingdom will endure before Me forever, and your throne will be established forever.” (2Sam. 7:8b–16; HCSB mostly). So, ideally speaking, David knows this; but he also realizes that he has greatly sinned against God, so that he must sort these things out away from Jerusalem, so that no civilian is harmed in this war with Absalom.

And so says servants of the king unto the king, “As all that chooses my lord the king, behold, [we are] your servants.”

2Samuel
15:15

Then the servants of the king said to David [lit., *the king*], “According to all that my lord the king chooses, observe, [we are] your servants.”

Then the servants of the king said to David, “Listen, whatever you want us to do, that we will do. We are your obedient servants.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the king’s servants said to him: Whatsoever our lord the king will command, we your servants will willingly execute.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so says servants of the king unto the king, “As all that chooses my lord the king, behold, [we are] your servants.”

Peshitta (Syriac)

And the king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king wants to do.

Septuagint (Greek) And the king's servants said to the king, In all things which our lord the king chooses, behold, we are your servants.

Significant differences: The English translation of the Latin has *him* rather than the second mention of *the king*. The final sentence is elliptical, so the English translation from the Latin and Syriac complete the thought.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king's servants said to him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our master the king decides."
Contemporary English V. Easy English	The officials said, "Your Majesty, we'll do whatever you say." The king's officials answered, "We are your servants. You are our master and king. We will do whatever you tell us."
Easy-to-Read Version	The king's officers told him, "We will do anything you tell us."
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Yes, Your Majesty," they answered. "We are ready to do whatever you say."
<i>The Message</i>	The king's servants said, "Whatever our master, the king, says, we'll do; we're with you all the way!"
New Berkeley Version	The king's servants then responded to their ruler, "Whatever my master the king decides, we are at your service."
New Century Version	The king's officers said to him, "We will do anything you say."
New Living Translation	"We are with you," his advisers replied. "Do what you think is best."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king's servants replied, 'We'll do whatever our lord the king says, because {Look!} we are your servants.'
Christian Community Bible	The king's servants answered him, "Your servants are with you in whatever my lord the king decides."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	The king's servants told him, "No matter what happens, we are Your Majesty's servants."
NIRV	The king's officials answered him, "You are our king and master. We're ready to do anything you want."
New Jerusalem Bible	The king's retinue replied, 'Whatever my lord the king decides, we are at your service.'
New Simplified Bible	The king's servants told him: »No matter what happens, we are Your Majesty's servants.«
Revised English Bible	The king's servants said to him, 'Whatever your majesty thinks best; we are ready.'
Today's NIV	The king's officials answered him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the king's servants said to the king, See, your servants are ready to do whatever the king says is to be done.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And the King's ministers answered the king, "Whatever his Majesty the King chooses, his ministers will do it."
HCSB	The king's servants said to him, "Whatever my lord the king decides, we are your servants."
New Advent Bible	And the king's servants said to him: Whatsoever our lord the king shall command, we your servants will willingly execute.
NET Bible [®]	The king's servants replied to the king, "We will do whatever our lord the king decides [Heb "according to all that my lord the king will choose, behold your servants!"]."

The Scriptures 1998

And the sovereign's servants said to the sovereign, "Look, your servants *shall do* according to all my master the sovereign chooses."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV	And the king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king shall appoint.
Concordant Literal Version	And the servants of the king say unto the king, `According to all that my lord the king chooses--lo, your servants [do].
Context Group Version	And the king's slaves said to the king, Look, your slaves are ready to do whatever my lord the king shall choose.
English Standard Version	And the king's servants said to the king, "Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides."
LTHB	And the king's servants said to the king, According to all that my lord the king desires, behold, your servants <i>will do</i> .
New King James Version	And the king's servants said to the king, "We are your servants, ready to do whatever my lord the king commands."
Syndein	{Response to Establishment Authority} And the king's staff replied to the king, "Behold, your loyal staff are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides." {idiom: literally 'According to all which my lord the king shall decide, here are your loyal subjects'}.
World English Bible	The king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king shall choose.
Young's Updated LT	And the servants of the king say unto the king, "According to all that my lord the king chooses—lo, your servants do ."

The gist of this verse: Those who are with the king pledge their loyalty to him.

2Samuel 15:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ebed (עבד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: Then the servants of the king said to David [lit., *the king*],... David is surrounded by his top officials. Probably several of them speak, but this is the gist of what is said.

2Samuel 15:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
K ^e kôl asher (כֹּל אֲשֶׁר) appears to mean <i>as all, according to all that, just as all that, exactly as all which</i> .			
bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced baw-KHAHR]	<i>to choose; Gesenius also lists to prove, to try, to examine, to approve, to choose, to select; to love, to delight in [something], to desire</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #977 BDB #103
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced uh-doh-NEE].			
This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יִם) [pronounced eem], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1 st person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i>).			
There are points of grammar which speak to the options above, but not so that we may unequivocally choose between the three. (1) When we find ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAH] (note the difference of the vowel ending), it always means <i>my lords</i> . (2) Jehovah calls Himself ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY] in Job 28:28 Isa. 8:7; however, many of the Job manuscripts read <i>Y^ehowah</i> and 8 ancient Isaiah manuscripts read <i>Y^ehowah</i> instead. This suggests, that either ancient Scribes were confused about this form of <i>Adonai</i> or that they simply substituted <i>Adonai</i> for <i>Y^ehowah</i> , which was not an abnormal practice (in oral readings, the ancient Tetragrammaton was not spoken, but <i>Lord</i> was said instead). And even if every manuscript read <i>Adonai</i> , then we may also reasonably conclude that one member of the Trinity is addressing another member of the Trinity (although the idea of God saying <i>my Lord</i> would be theologically confusing, even if addressing another member of the Trinity; although Jesus did refer to God the Father as <i>our Father</i>).			
Almost every single translator renders this <i>Lord, the Lord, or Adonai</i> . On occasion, however, this is rendered <i>my Lord</i> .			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation:...“According to all that my lord the king chooses,... Although we do not have a complete thought here, there is the implication that, *whatever the king asks us to do, that we will do*. This is known as an ellipsis. A complete thought or sentence is not given, but its intent is clear. You tell your kid to clean his room and he responds, “Whatever.” That is an ellipsis. It is not a complete thought or a complete answer, but you know pretty much how he feels about that directive.

David’s servants do not respond with, “Whatever.” They respond with, “What the king determines...” indicating that, they would do whatever David asked them to do. They do not say, “We stand here ready to do whatever it is that you ask of is.” However, the elliptical nature of this phrase indicates that is the meaning.

2Samuel 15:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong’s #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
‘ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #5650 BDB #713

Translation: ...*observe, [we are] your servants.*” These are great military men and palace staff; Joab is among them. By saying, “Look, we are your servants” they are both speaking elliptically, because David wants them up and making an organized retreat immediately, and indicating where they stand: with David.

The KJV has had a tremendous effect upon all other translations. The KJV reads: *And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.* Notice the 3 words in italics; that means they are not found in the Hebrew. However, this shaped nearly every literal translation to follow. Only a smattering of these literal translations (the CLV, the MKJV, the LTHB and a few others) actually list those three words or their approximation as not in the text. In fact, the most accurate translation of this verse is the HCSB: *The king's servants said to him, "Whatever my lord the king decides, we are your servants."*

David says, “Quickly we need to leave Jerusalem.” The response is elliptical, clear as to its meaning, but short in length, because David is in a hurry. *Then the servants of the king said to David [lit., the king], “According to all that my lord the king chooses, observe, [we are] your servants.”* He is not looking for a roll call vote as to who is with him and who is not; there is not time for that. So these men respond quickly so that they can act quickly. The clear statement is, they will do whatever David asks of them. Quite obviously, I have spent a far longer time trying to explain this statement than they took making it.

And so goes out the king and all his house in his feet and so leaves the king ten women—mistresses to keep the house.

2Samuel
15:16

Therefore, the king went out with all his household at his feet, but he [lit., the king] left [behind] [his] ten mistresses [lit., 10 women mistresses] to keep the palace.

Therefore, the king left quickly with all of his household behind him, but he left behind his 10 mistresses to keep and watch over the palace.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king went forth, and all his household <u>on foot</u> : and the king left ten women <u>his</u> concubines to keep the house.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so goes out the king and all his house in his feet and so leaves the king ten women—mistresses to keep the house.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So the king went forth and all his household after him. And the king left ten women who were concubines to keep <u>his</u> house.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king and all his house went out <u>on foot</u> . And the king left ten women from among <u>his</u> concubines to keep the house.
Significant differences:	All those of David's palace go out at his feet; the English translation from the Latin and Greek both have <i>on foot</i> . There is no 3 rd person masculine singular suffix in the second sentence.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So the king left, with his entire household following him, but he left ten secondary wives behind to take care of the palace.
Contemporary English V.	David left behind ten of his wives to take care of the palace, but the rest of his family and his officials and soldiers went with him.
Easy English	So the king, his family and his officials all set out. The king left 10 *concubines in the palace to look after it.
Easy-to-Read Version	King David went out with all of the people in his house. The king left ten of his wives [Literally, "concubines," women servants that were like wives.] to take care of the house.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So the king left, accompanied by all his family and officials, except for ten concubines, whom he left behind to take care of the palace.
<i>The Message</i>	So the king and his entire household escaped on foot. The king left ten concubines behind to tend to the palace.
New Century Version	The king set out with everyone in his house, but he left ten slave women to take care of the palace.
New Life Bible	So the king left with all those of his house. But he left ten of his women to take care of the house.
New Living Translation	So the king and all his household set out at once. He left no one behind except ten of his concubines to look after the palace.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, the king and his whole house just walked away. but he left ten of his concubines behind to guard the house.
New American Bible	Then the king set out, accompanied by his entire household, except for ten concubines whom he left behind to care for the palace. 2Sam. 16:21-22; 20:3.
NIRV	The king started out. Everyone in his whole family went with him. But he left ten concubines behind to take care of the palace.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king set out on foot with his whole household, leaving ten concubines to look after the palace.
Today's NIV	The king set out, with his entire household following him; but he left ten concubines to take care of the palace.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king proceeded with all his house on foot. The king left ten women concubines to keep the house.
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Bible in Basic English	So the king went out, taking with him all the people of his house, but for ten of his women, who were to take care of the house.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The king and all of his family, therefore went out on their feet, but the king left ten of his slave-wives to take care of the palace.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	So the king left, followed by his entire household, except for ten concubines whom the king left to mind the palace.
NET Bible®	So the king and all the members of his royal court [Heb "and all his house."] set out on foot, though the king left behind ten concubines [Heb "women, concubines."] to attend to the palace.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the sovereign went out, and all his household at his feet. But the sovereign left ten women, concubines, to look after the house.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign goes forth with all his household at his feet: and the sovereign leaves ten women concubines to guard the house:...
LTHB	And the king went out, and all his household at his feet. And the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house.
Syndein	And the king departed with all of his family and his train except the king left behind ten women, who were his former concubines/mistresses, to keep the palace.
World English Bible	The king went forth, and all his household after him. The king left ten women, who were concubines, to keep the house.
Young's Updated LT	And the king goes out, and all his household at his feet, and the king leaves ten women—concubines—to keep the house.

The gist of this verse: David quickly leaves the palace with his staff and soldiers with him. He leaves behind his 10 mistresses to watch over the palace and to act as caretakers.

2Samuel 15:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i>]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 15:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
regel (לֶגֶר) [pronounced REH-ge]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

Translation: [Therefore, the king went out with all his household at his feet...](#) Although there are no words here to indicate that David left in a hurry, the previous few verses suggest that he did. The verbiage here suggests that David led this retreat out of the city, and that all who were with him followed. It is possible that this huge procession drew followers along as they traveled.

Remember, this was a big event, marked by trumpets and people crying out that Absalom is king. So, everyone in town has some idea as to what is going on. They have heard the trumpets, and if they missed the announcement, then someone relayed the message to them.

2Samuel 15:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâzab (עָזַב) [pronounced ʿaw-ZA ^{BV}]	<i>to loosen ones bands; to let go [one from being in bonds]; to leave [forsake, desert]; to leave off, to cease from [anything]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5800 BDB #736
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿeser (עָשָׂר) [pronounced GEH-ser]	<i>ten</i>	masculine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
nâshîym (נָשִׁים) [pronounced naw-SHEEM]	<i>women, wives</i>	feminine plural noun; irregular plural of Strong's #802	Strong's #802 BDB #61

2Samuel 15:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pīylegesh (פִּיִּלְגֶשׁ) [pronounced pee-LEH-gesh]	<i>mistress, paramour, illicit lover, live-in lover, concubine</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #6370 BDB #811
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>to keep, to guard, to protect, to watch, to preserve</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: ...but he [lit., the king] left [behind] [his] ten mistresses [lit., 10 women mistresses] to keep the palace. It probably never occurred to David what might happen. He simply assumed that Absalom would leave the palace and the women alone. He did not think that his son Absalom would be so callous as to harm them.

These mistresses were not quite wives; but they were known to everyone as David's mistresses. They were not secret lovers or anything like that. However, these were, in essence, additional wives, and this was a great problem to David, as has been discussed on other occasions. See the **Doctrine of Polygamy** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

David is going to make the wrong assumption that Absalom would not harm innocent women. We know, from the woman from Tekoa trial, that David will bend over backwards to protect women who may not be able to protect themselves. He is assuming that his son Absalom will have the same values. David's assumption here will turn out to be mistaken. Absalom will rape these women in order to show his disdain for his father (2Sam. 16:21–22). So, this is another area where David misjudges his own son and does not grasp the depths of his depravity.

Let me remind you of what Nathan the prophet said to David, speaking as if God: "Why have you despised the Word of Jehovah, to do evil in His sight? You have stricken Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. And therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. So says Jehovah, Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house, and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your intimate [friend]. And he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun." (2Sam. 12:9–11). The wives that would be given to David's *intimate*; that is, Absalom, who would publically rape all 10 of them.

And goes out the king and all the people at his feet. And so remained [at] Beth-merhak [or, the house of the distance].

2Samuel
15:17

And the king went out with all the people at his feet. They later remained [at] Beth-merhak [possibly, the house of the distance].

And the king went out with all the people behind him. They later stopped at Beth-merhak (or, the last house).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the king going forth and all Israel on foot, stood afar off from the house.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And goes out the king and all the people at his feet. And so remained [at] Bethmerhak [or, <i>the house of the distance</i>].
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king went forth and all the people <u>after him</u> , and they halted in a place at a distance from the city.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king and all his servants went out <u>on foot</u> ; and abode in a distant house.
Significant differences:	The English translation from the Syriac, <i>after him</i> , is probably closer to the meaning of the Hebrew than <i>on foot</i> . The final few words are difficult and will be discussed in the Hebrew and English exegesis.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Easy English	They stopped at the last house at the edge of the city. So the king set out. All the people were following him. They stopped after they had gone a short distance.
Easy-to-Read Version	The king went out with all of his people following him. They stopped at the last house.
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	As the king and all his men were leaving the city, they stopped at the last house. And so they left, step by step by step, and then paused at the last house...
New Berkeley Version	But as the king and all the people that were at his heels left, they paused at the last house.
New Century Version	The king left with all his people following him, and they stopped at a house far away.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

<i>God's Word</i> TM	As the king and his troops were leaving the city on foot, they stopped at the last house.
New American Bible	As the king left the city, with all his officers accompanying him, they halted opposite the ascent of the Mount of Olives, at a distance,...
NIRV	So the king and all those who were with him left. They stopped at a place that wasn't very far away.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king set out on foot with everyone following, and they halted at the last house.
New Simplified Bible	The king and his troops left the city on foot. They stopped at the city limits.
Revised English Bible	At the Far House the king and all the people who were with him halted.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the king went out, and all his servants went after him, and made a stop at the Far House.
Complete Jewish Bible	The king set out with all the people after him, but they waited at the last house...
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Thus the king with all his forces went out on their feet, and halted at Beth Merkhak,...
HCSB	So the king set out, and all the people followed him. They stopped at the last house...
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The king left, followed by all the people [Septuagint reads "his courtiers."], and they stopped at the last house [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain].
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the king went forth, and all the people were right behind him: and they remained standing at the farthest house.
New Advent Bible	And the king going forth and all Israel on foot, stood afar off from the house:...
NET Bible [®]	The king and all the people set out on foot, pausing [Heb "and they stood."] at a spot [Heb "house."] some distance away.
NIV – UK	So the king set out, with all the people following him, and they halted at the edge of the city.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV	And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.
Darby Translation	And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and stayed at the remote house.
English Standard Version	And the king went out, and all the people after him. And they halted at the last house.
The Geneva Bible	And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off [That is, from Jerusalem.].
LTHB	And the king went out, and all the people at his feet. And they stood still at the house farthest away.
New King James Version Syndein	And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts. {Verses 17-18: Orderly Withdraw and Review of Brigade of Guards} Therefore the king departed/moved out, with all the {loyal} people in his train. And they halted 'the last outpost/fort'. {idiom: literally: 'at the house of the distance'} {Note: Before David could depart from the Mount of Olives, he had the people stop at the Eastern fort in the valley of Kidron. He set up an organized system for moving out of the land with flanks and rear guarded. That is why he stopped her at the last fort. This small fort guards the ford at the river/brook of Kidron - its depth depends on the season of the year - we don't know the season here.}.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And the king went forth, and all the people after him; and they tarried in Bethmerhak.
A Voice in the Wilderness	And the king went out with all the people at his feet, and stopped at the last house of the settlement.
World English Bible Young's Updated LT	The king went forth, and all the people after him; and they stayed in Beth Merhak. And the king goes out, and all the people at his feet, and they stand still at the farthest off house.

The gist of this verse: The king and the people with him stop at the last house on the edge of Jerusalem.

2Samuel 15:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i>]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) (1, or 1) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 15:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced <i>REH-gel</i>]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

Translation: *And the king went out with all the people at his feet.* This is a very odd thing; we have exactly the same construction and words as we found in v. 16a, but instead of *all his household*, we have *all the people*. I do not know if this change is significant; apparently, both sets of people set out with him: those from his household and those citizens who were loyal to David. It is unusual to have exactly the same words like this, but it may not mean anything.

These would be soldiers, their families perhaps, other families sympathetic to David or who do not want to live under Absalom.

Remember, this is a very sudden thing. One moment, the messenger tells David, and the next moment, David is leaving (he probably leaves within 2–3 hours). What is most likely is, David is informed, and then he tells those of his household, and they gather up some belongings and they follow him. Well, people from all over notice this; besides the soldiers who guard David, and they begin to join with David as well, all of them following at his feet (following behind him).

There are some soldiers who might go home to fetch a few possessions or their loved ones, so that David's retreat is quietly made known throughout Jerusalem.

2Samuel 15:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘amad (אָמַד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i>]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand; to stop</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

2Samuel 15:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mer ^e châq (מֶרְחָק) [pronounced mehr- KHAWK]	<i>distant place, distance, far country, a place far off</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4801 BDB #935
Or, this could be a proper noun, referring to a city or village:			
Bêyth Hammer ^e châq (תֵּיב קְהַמֶּרְחָק) [pronounced bayth-hahm-mer-khehk]	<i>a house afar off, remote house; transliterated Beth-hammerhaq, Beth-merhak</i>	masculine singular, proper noun; location	Strong's #1023 BDB #112

Translation: They later remained [at] Beth-merhak [possibly, the house of the distance]. It is unclear whether they came to a dead halt or whether they stopped, being far enough out, in order to assess the situation.

There is some confusion here as to whether the final two words refers to a city or whether we are talking about the last house on the outskirts of Jerusalem. We do not find this city named anywhere else.

Occasionally, there are places which have great meaning to those who are there, and this is the last place where David would see one of the houses of Jerusalem, so perhaps, this became somewhat of a proper name, just to signify what he was going through. After all, David does not know if he will come back this way again; he may not ever enter into Jerusalem again. And this would be a very big deal to David, as he loved Jerusalem and Mount Zion. A portion of 2Sam. 5 is devoted to David taking this city on the hill.

The Pulpit Commentary on this: *The Far House...was probably not a dwelling, but a pavilion overlooking the Kidron valley; and here David halted his household until all were assembled, and arrangements made for their journey. Here, too, the bodyguard would gather, and they would cross the Kidron only when everything was ready for their orderly progress. Confusion at such a time would breed a panic and invite an attack.*⁵⁶

Probably, this is simply a place that they stop at, outside of Jerusalem, where David can see exactly who is with him. He will have the troops pass in review while considering his situation. They are essentially on the outskirts of Jerusalem and about to enter into the wilderness east of Jerusalem. There were people coming from all over the city of Jerusalem, to join David, and it appears that David made a stop here, perhaps for a few hours, to review the troops, to think about his situation, and to speak to those who have come to follow him.

In other words, this is not some "Run for your lives; every man for himself." This is a very orderly exit, and when on the outskirts of Jerusalem, David will organize the people who are with him. An army unit of 100 of the roughest, toughest men there ever was cannot last 15 minutes in a battle unless they have been trained, organized, and taught to take orders. David does not have much time, but many of those who are with him are military types, so getting everyone into formation is not difficult to do over, say, an hour or two.

It is interesting that David and not Joab will take charge at this point. We do not know if Joab is among the 200 or if David believed that this was his right move under the circumstances. We do know that Joab was never anxious to take any credit for what he did, and even brought David in to complete a battle, so that David would get the credit instead of him (2Sam. 12:26–31).

⁵⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:17.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

King David and His Immigrant Supporters

And all his servants those passing upon his hand; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundreds a man who advanced at his feet from Gath, those passing upon faces of the king.

2Samuel
15:18

And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and they stand by the olive tree in the desert wilderness. And all the people pass by clinging to him, and all those around him, and all the court personnel, and all those [who] fight, 600 men, and they are arriving by his help; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath; those passing before the king.

All of the king's military passed by him as per his command: the Cherethites, the Pelethites and the Gittites (600 men who had followed David from Gath); all of these men passed before the king.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And all his servants walked <u>by him</u> , and the <u>bands</u> of the Cerethi, and the Phelethi, and all the Gethites, <u>valiant warriors</u> , six hundred men who had followed him from Geth on foot, went before the king.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And all his servants those passing upon his hand; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundreds a man who advanced at his feet from Gath, those passing upon faces of the king.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And all his servants passed on <u>beside him</u> ; and all his <u>noblemen</u> and all his <u>army</u> and all the Gittites who had followed him from Gath passed on before the king.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all his servants passed on by <u>his side</u> , and every Cherethite, and every Pelethite, <u>and they stood by the olive tree in the wilderness</u> . <u>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</u> . <u>And every Cherethite, and every Pelethite</u> , and all the six hundred Gittites that came on foot out from Gath, and they went on before the king.

Significant differences: The phrase *passing upon his hand* is variously translated. It is very likely that David is giving hand signals which call for various military maneuvers and movement. Instead of Cherethites and Pelethites, the English of the Syriac calls them *nobleman* and *army*.

The Latin appears to tell us that the 3 groups are *valiant warriors*, which is not found in the Hebrew text.

The LXX appears to have a sentence or more slipped in between all of this. Unfortunately, this verse is not found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (meaning it was unreadable). However, it is easy to see how a scribe could exclude these phrases. The read and copy "every Cherethite and every Pelethite" and then look up again, and go to those same words, but a couple of sentences later. This suggests that the words of the Greek are probably valid and belong there. This will be given a complete exegesis below, from both the Greek and the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Then David stood there and watched while his regular troops and his bodyguards marched past. The last group was the six hundred soldiers who had followed him from Gath. Their commander was Ittai.
Easy English	Then all the king's officials walked past David. All the men called Kerethites and Pelethites walked past him. Then the 600 men from Gath walked past. These men from Gath had been with David when he returned from Gath.
Easy-to-Read Version	All of his officers passed by the king. And all of the Kerethites, all of the Pelethites, and the Gittites (600 men from Gath) passed by the king.
Good News Bible (TEV)	All his officials stood next to him as the royal bodyguards passed by in front of him. The six hundred soldiers who had followed him from Gath also passed by,...
New Berkeley Version	While all his attendants were passing along beside him, and all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath were marching in advance of the king,... Originally, the 600 men that had made up David's outlaw band and fled with him to the Philistine city of Gath to escape Saul (1Sam. 27:2), and then continued with him in Ziklag, Hebron, and Jerusalem (1Sam. 30:1 2Sam. 2:3 5:6). Now, 30 years later, there must have been changes in personnel; but "the 600 Gittites" maintained itself as a specially honored unit of faithful veterans.
New Living Translation	...to let all the king's men move past to lead the way. There were 600 men from Gath who had come with David, along with the king's bodyguard [Hebrew the Kerethites and Pelethites.].

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, while the king and his servants were on the way to the desert, they [met up with some] Chelethites and Phelethites who were waiting on the Mount of Olives. So, along with all the people who came with [David], there were now six hundred great men and warriors from the Chelethites, Phelethites, and Gethites, because six hundred men had walked from Gath to join the king.
God's Word™	All his mercenaries passed by him; all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, Ittai, and all 600 men who had followed him from Gath were marching past the king.
New American Bible	...while the whole army marched past him. <i>David and Ittai.</i> As all the Cherethites and Pelethites, and the six hundred Gittites who had entered his service from that city, were passing in review before the king, ... 2Sam. 8:18
New Jerusalem Bible	All his officers stood at his side. All the Cherethites and all the Pelethites, with Ittai and all the six hundred Gittites who had come in his retinue from Gath, marched past the king.
New Simplified Bible	All his mercenaries passed by him. The Cherethites, all the Pelethites, Ittai, and all six hundred men who had followed him from Gath marched past the king.
Revised English Bible	His own servants then stood at his side, while the Kerethite and Pelethite guards and Ittai with the six hundred Gittites under him marched past the king.
Today's NIV	All his men marched past him, along with all the Kerethites and Pelethites; and all the six hundred Gittites who had accompanied him from Gath marched before the king.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	All his servants passed by his hand: All from Chereth, all from Peleth, and all from Gath, 600 men which came on foot from Gath, and passed in front of the king.
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Bible in Basic English	And all the people went on by his side; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the men of Ittai of Gath, six hundred men who came after him from Gath, went on before the king.
Complete Jewish Bible	...for all his servants to pass by him in review; all the K'reti and P'leti and all the Gittim (600 men who had accompanied him from Gat) passed in review before the king.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and all his ministers walked at his side, with the guards and courriers. And the six hundred gardeners who came on foot from the garden, marched along before the face of the king.
HCSB	...while all his servants marched past him. Then all the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and the Gittites--600 men who came with him from Gath--marched past the king.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	All his followers [Septuagint reads "the people."] marched past him, including all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites; and [Emendation yields "and Ittai and."] all the Gittites, six hundred men who had accompanied him from Gath, also marched by the king.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And all his servants passed on beside him, and all the archers and all the slingers, and all the Gittites, six hundred men that came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.
New Advent Bible	And all his servants walked by him, and the bands of the Cerethi, and the Phelethi, and all the Gethites, valiant warriors, six hundred men who had followed him from Geth on foot, went before the king.
NET Bible®	All his servants were leaving with him [Heb "crossing over near his hand."], along with all the Kerethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites — some six hundred men who had come on foot from Gath. They were leaving with [Heb "crossing over near the face of."] the king.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And all his servants were passing on at his side. And all the Kerēthites, and all the Pelēthites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, were passing on before the sovereign.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	And all his slaves passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men that came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and all his servants pass on at his hand; and all the executioners and all the couriers and all the Gittiy - six hundred men who come at his feet from Gath, pass on at the face of the sovereign.
The Geneva Bible	And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites [These were as the kings guard, or as some write, his counsellors.], and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.
Hebrew Names Version	All his servants passed on beside him; and all the Kereti, and all the Peleti, and all the Gitti, six hundred men who came after him from Gat, passed on before the king.
LTHB	And all his servants were passing on by his side, and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who came at his feet from Gath. <i>These</i> were passing on before the king.
Syndein	Then all his loyal servants {civilians plus 3 regiments of the Royal Guard} 'passed in review' including all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites . . . six hundred {Gittite} men {the Gittites acted as the police force of Jerusalem - a special police force} who accompanied him from Gath, 'passed in review' before the king.

World English Bible

All his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

Young's Literal Translation

And all his servants are passing on at his side, and all the Cherethite, and all the Pelethite, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who came at his feet from Gath, are passing on at the front of the king.

The gist of this verse:

David stood while his men marched in review before him, which includes the detachment of Pelethites and Cherethites, and the company of Gittites.

2Samuel 15:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘ebed (עֲבֵד) [pronounced <i>GE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
‘âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>passers by, those passing through; those passing over</i>	masculine plural, Qal participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah!</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand; strength, power (figuratively); side (of land), part, portion (metaphorically) (figuratively); (various special, technical senses); sign, monument; part, fractional part, share; time, repetition; axle-trees, axle; stays, support (for laver); tenons (in tabernacle); a phallus, a hand (meaning unsure); wrists</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Together, these mean *upon his hand, on [at] his hand; under his hand; under [at] his guidance.*

Translation: *And all of his servants passed under his guidance:...* What is happening here is great military discipline under David. These men have not sided with Absalom; they are not running for their lives, every man on his own. David is telling them exactly how they are going to line up and march. *Upon his hand* is an idiom which means *under his guidance* or *at his command*.

They are at the eastern (or northeastern) edge of the plateau that Jerusalem sits upon. It begins to drop down into the Kidron Valley and then there is a sharp rise on the other side. David appears to have taken a place over the troops so that they might pass in review before him, from a lower area; possibly in the Kidron Valley.

David has not led an army for sometime. He ruled over Israel and Joab handled that for him. One time, in recent memory, he fought along side Joab against the Aramæans, probably changing history at that time. However, this is a comfortable shoe that David easily slips into, and his men follow his orders with military precision.

2Samuel 15:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
K ^e rêthîy (כִּרְתִּי) [pronounced <i>k^eray-THEE</i>]	a collective noun which means <i>executioners; life guardsmen</i> (which could be its primary meanings); and is transliterated <i>Cherethite, Cherethites</i>	gentilic adjective used as a proper noun; possibly a singular collective noun; with the definite article	Strong's #3774 BDB #504
This is a word which may stand for the Philistines, or a portion of them. This noun may be associated with the island of Crete, referring to those Philistines associated with Crete (either as an origin or as conquered territory).			
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
P ^e lêthîy (פִּלְתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lay-THEE</i>]	a collective noun which means <i>couriers; messengers</i> (which could be its primary meanings); transliterated <i>Pelethites</i>	masculine singular noun; possibly a gentilic adjective used as a proper noun; with the definite article	Strong's #6432 BDB #814

Translation: ...and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites... The Cherethites and the Pelethites were covered in great detail back in 2Sam. 8:18. These men appeared to be his bodyguards (it was very common for a sovereign to be guarded by men from a different country) and his couriers; and, possibly, when the time arose, his executioners.

There are several theories as to who the Cherethites and Pelethites are. However, so that you do not go off on the wrong track in your thinking, these words are in the singular, and we generally use the singular (in the Hebrew) to refer to this or that group of people.

This doctrine was originally presented in **1Sam. 8** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). No dramatic changes have been made to it since that time.

Who are the Cherethites and the Pelethites?

Commentator	Opinion
Barnes	<i>It would seem from this that the Cherethites and Philistines were two kindred and associated tribes, like Angles and Saxons, who took possession of the seacoast of Palestine. The Philistines, being the more powerful, gave their name to the country and the nation in general, though that of the Cherethites was not wholly extinguished. Many persons connect the name Cherethite with that of the island of Crete.⁵⁷ Clarke adds: The כרתִי (kerethi), without the points, might be read Creti, were not only at this time Philistines, but that they were aborigines of Crete, from which they had their name Cherethites or Cretans.⁵⁸</i>
Contemporary English Version	<i>The Cherethites and the Pelethites...were foreign soldiers hired by David to be his bodyguard.⁵⁹</i>
Clarke	<i>The Cherethites supposed to be those who accompanied David when he fled from Saul; the Pelethites, those who came to him at Ziklag. But the Targum translates these two names thus, the archers and the slingers; and this is by far the most likely. It is not at all probable that David was without a company both of archers and slingers. The bow is celebrated in the funeral lamentation over Saul and Jonathan; and the sling was renowned as the weapon of the Israelites, and how expert David was in the use of it we learn from the death of Goliath. I take for granted that the Chaldee paraphrast is correct. No weapons then known were equally powerful with these; the spears, swords, and javelins, of other nations, were as stubble before them. The bow was the grand weapon of our English ancestors; and even after the invention of firearms, they were with difficulty persuaded to prefer them and leave their archery.⁶⁰</i>
Easy to Read Version	<i>These were David's special bodyguards. An ancient Aramaic translation has "the archers and stonethrowers." This would mean these men were specially trained in using bows and arrows and slings.⁶¹</i>
Edersheim	<i>These are executioners and runners, [which is] the most rational interpretation of the terms, though not a few have regarded them as the names of nationalities, in which case, they would represent a guard of foreign mercenaries.⁶²</i>
The Geneva Bible	<i>The Cherethites and Pelethites were as the king's guard, and had charge of his person.⁶³</i>

⁵⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 30:14.

⁵⁸ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 330:14.

⁵⁹ *The Promise* (The Contemporary English Version); Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1995; p. 335 (footnote).

⁶⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 8:18.

⁶¹ *Holy Bible: Easy-to-Read Version*, ©2001 by World Bible Translation Center; taken from e-Sword, 2Sam. 8:18 (footnote).

⁶² Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 536.

⁶³ Geneva Bible Translation Notes; courtesy of e-sword; 1599; 2Sam. 8:18.

Who are the Cherethites and the Pelethites?

Commentator	Opinion
Gill	<p><i>These, according to Josephus, were the king's bodyguards, and this man is expressly said to be set over his guards (2Sam. 23:22—this passage does not really say that) Some think these were of the nation of the Philistines, famous for archery, and slinging of stones; and so the Targum renders it, "was appointed over the archers and slingers." David had observed, and therefore got a select company of these men, partly to teach Israel, and partly to guard himself. Others are of opinion that David would never suffer such as were heathen to be so near his person, and therefore take them to be Israelites [remember that David rode side-by-side the Philistines and had a reasonable relationship with one of their kings]. Some Jewish writers say they were two families in Israel; which is much better than to interpret them as others do of the Sanhedrin, and even of the Urim and Thummim, as in the Targum on 1Chron. 18:17</i></p> <p><i>It is most probable that they were Israelites, who were David's guards, consisting of the chiefs that were with him in Philistia, and particularly at Ziklag, which lay on the south of the Cherethites (1Sam. 30:14); and so had their name from thence; and among the chief of those that came to him at Ziklag there was one named Peleth, from whence might come the Pelethites, and they were all of them archers (1Chron. 12:2).⁶⁴</i></p>
Gordon	<p>These were royal bodyguards made up of foreigners. The Cherethites probably originated in Crete and moved to Palestine as part of the migration of the sea peoples. There Pelethites are probably Philistines, their name bearing nothing more than a dialectical difference.⁶⁵</p>
Guzik	<p><i>The Cherethites and Pelethites: These were hired soldiers from Crete. "By employing foreign guards to ensure the safety of the king David would minimize the possibility of becoming the victim of inter-tribal rivalries; these men from Crete could give whole-hearted allegiance to him." (Quoting Baldwin).⁶⁶</i></p>
Henry	<p><i>The Cherethites and Pelethites...were either the archers and slingers (as per the Chaldee), or a standing force, that attended the king's person (the king's pretorian band or militia). They were ready to do service at home, to assist in the administering of justice, and to preserve the public peace. We find them employed in proclaiming Solomon (1Kings 1:38).⁶⁷</i></p>
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	<p>The Cherethites are Philistines (Zep. 2:5) and the Pelethites are from Pelet (1Chron. 12:3). The Pelethites were the valiant men who, having accompanied David during his exile among the Philistines, were made his bodyguard.⁶⁸</p>

⁶⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 8:18 (heavily edited with several comments inserted). Gill takes from Josephus, *Antiquities* I. 7. c. 5. sect.4.

⁶⁵ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 247.

⁶⁶ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 8:1–18.

⁶⁷ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 8:15–18 (edited).

⁶⁸ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 2Sam. 8:18.

Who are the Cherethites and the Pelethites?

Commentator	Opinion
Kukis	I see two possibilities: (1) Benaiah is over two sets of families or foreigners who are in David's army: the Cherethites and Pelethites (although, there is no indication that David necessarily segregated his army in this way); or (2) Benaiah pulled double-duty as an executioner and as a courier, which appears to be the meaning of these words. Given that the former duty takes only a few minutes and probably did not occur that often (once a week or less often?); and the latter duty as courier would also be a part-time duty, it is reasonable to have one responsible man in charge of both. The problem with this second explanation is, such a position would not seem to be preparation for someone to become chief-of-staff, as Benaiah would under Solomon. On the other hand, these could be positions of authority which Benaiah held, as well as being a warrior. However, the primary problem with the second explanation is, the form of these words. These words are written in what is known as the gentilic adjective form, which means, this is how we refer to a particular nationality or to a particular family or clan. For this reason, translating these words rather than transliterating them is a mistake.
NIV Study Bible	<i>Under the leadership of Benaiah, they formed a sort of special royal guard for David (2Sam. 23:22–23). "Pelethite" is probably an alternate form of "Philistine."</i> ⁶⁹
Poole	<i>The Cherethites and Pelethites were undoubtedly soldiers, and were eminent for their valour and fidelity to the king, as is evident from 2Sam. 15:18 20:7 1Kings 1:38, 44; and most probably they were the king's guards, which consisted of these two bands, who might be distinguished either by their several weapons, or by the differing time or manner of their service. They are supposed to be thus called, either, first, from their office, which was upon the king's command to cut off or punish offenders, and to preserve the king's person, as their names in the Hebrew tongue may seem to imply; or, secondly, from some country or place to which they had relation. As for the Cherethites, it is certain they were either a branch of the Philistines, or a people neighbouring to them, and confederate with them, as is manifest from 1Sam. 30:14 Ezek. 25:16 Zep. 2:4,5. And so might the Pelethites be too, though that be not related in Scripture. And these Israelites and soldiers of David might be so called, either because they went and lived with David when he dwelt in those parts; or from some notable exploit against or victory over these people; as among the Romans the names of Asiaticus, Africanus, etc. were given for the same reason. One of their exploits against the Cherethites is in part related 1Sam. 30:14. And it is likely they did many other against them, and against other people, amongst which the Pelethites might be one.</i> ⁷⁰
R. B. Thieme Jr.	<i>The Cherethites were Achaean Greek sea peoples who became the Philistines. They were pirates for centuries and became traders and adventures. They formed the 1st battalion of David's Royal Guards. The Pelethites formed the 2nd battalion of the Royal Guards. They also were Achaean Greeks we call Philistines who were mercenaries that David recruited from his old headquarters at Ziklag. They were very efficient and troops totally loyal to David. They had a choice of being killed or join David. They chose to give their allegiance to David, and once doing so, they never let him down.</i> ⁷¹

⁶⁹ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 432 (footnote).

⁷⁰ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 8:18 (edited). Wesley's commentary is almost word-for-word equivalent to Poole's and it appears that Wesley relied heavily on Poole's commentary.

⁷¹ From http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_08.html accessed May 2, 2009.

With regards to these various opinions, I would tend to lean more toward Thieme’s opinion as he had a encyclopedic knowledge of ancient history.

We may be lacking in some specifics here, but it is clear that David has a carefully organized hierarchy below him. Any person in authority must have those beneath him that he can delegate responsibility to.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

So far, this is what we have: **And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites...** At this point, a scribe appears to have left out some text, which is supplied from the Greek Septuagint. This sort of error is called a homeoteleuton [pronounced *hoh-mee-oh-TEL-yuh-ton*]. This is where the scribe looked up and copied *and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites*; and then they looked up again, found the same words, and began copying after that point. However, the problem is, this phrase is repeated in this verse, so when the scribe looked up again, he said the second occurrence of that phrase and began writing from that point.⁷²

As an aside, not everyone is of the mindset. Keil and Delitzsch, for instance, write: *But in the Septuagint text, as it has come down to us, another paraphrase has been interpolated into the literal translation, which Thenius would adopt as an emendation of the Hebrew text, notwithstanding the fact that the critical corruptness of the Alexandrian text must be obvious to every one.*⁷³ Essentially, they are saying, the someone just added a bunch of text as a paraphrase.

2Samuel 15:18c Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong’s Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong’s #2532
histēmi (ἵστημι) [pronounced <i>HIHS-tay-mee</i>]	<i>to stand [up, by]; to set up; to place, to make firm; to keep intact</i>	3 rd person plural, aorist active indicative	Strong’s #2476
<p>The full set of Thayer meanings: 1a) to bid to stand by, [set up]; 1a1) in the presence of others, in the midst, before judges, before members of the Sanhedrin; 1a2) to place; 1b) to make firm, fix establish; 1b1) to cause a person or a thing to keep his or its place; 1b2) to stand, be kept intact (of family, a kingdom), to escape in safety; 1b3) to establish a thing, cause it to stand; 1b3a) to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything; 1c) to set or place in a balance; 1c1) to weigh: money to one (because in very early times before the introduction of coinage, the metals used to be weighed); 2) to stand; 2a) to stand by or near; 2a1) to stop, stand still, to stand immovable, stand firm; 2a1a) of the foundation of a building; 2b) to stand; 2b1) continue safe and sound, stand unharmed, to stand ready or prepared; 2b2) to be of a steadfast mind; 2b3) of quality, one who does not hesitate, does not waiver</p>			
ἐπί (ἐπί) [pronounced <i>eh-PEE</i>]	<i>on, upon; at, by, over</i>	preposition of superimposition; a relation of rest and distribution with the dative case	Strong’s #1909

⁷² The definition is somewhat different **online** as compared to Geisler and Nix’s definition. Norman Geisler and William Nix; *A General Introduction to the Bible*; Chicago; Moody Press, ©1986, p. 469.

⁷³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:18.

2Samuel 15:18c Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
tês (τῆς) [pronounced tayc]	<i>of the; from the</i>	feminine singular definite article; genitive and ablative cases	Strong's #3588
elaia (ἐλαία, ας, ῆ) [pronounced el-AH-yah]	<i>olive, olive tree, olive fruit</i>	feminine singular noun, genitive case	Strong's #1636
en (ἐν) [pronounced en]	<i>in, by means of, with; among</i>	preposition with the locative, dative and instrumental cases	Strong's #1722
tê (τῇ) [pronounced tay]	<i>to the, for the; in the; by the, by means of the; for the benefit [advantage] of; for the disadvantage of</i>	feminine singular definite article; dative, locative and instrumental cases	Strong's #3588
erêmos (ἔρημος) [pronounced EHR-ay-moss]	<i>desert-wilderness, a solitude, an uninhabited region [land, area], a waste</i>	feminine singular adjective used as a substantive; dative case; irregular form	Strong's #2048

Thayer definitions: 1a) used of places; 1a1) a desert, wilderness; 1a2) deserted places, lonely regions; 1a3) an uncultivated region fit for pasturage; 1b) used of persons; 1b1) deserted by others; 1b2) deprived of the aid and protection of others, especially of friends, acquaintances, kindred; 1b3) bereft; 1b3a) of a flock deserted by the shepherd; 1b3b) of a woman neglected by her husband, from whom the husband withholds himself

The form is a little odd here. It has a feminine singular definite article, but it appears to be in a masculine singular dative form. However, several sources identify it as the feminine singular form.

Translation: ...and they stand by the olive tree in the desert wilderness. Together, the Greek and the Hebrew give us: **And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and they stand by the olive tree in the desert wilderness.** David has to get some organization in this mass of men who have joined him. They cannot just wander about sort of together. He is a leader, and therefore, he must function as a leader. So, David motions for the Cherethites and the Pelethites to gather by the olive tree, and, no doubt, they would be standing in formation. These are soldiers, so they are not going to just wander over there and hang out, some of them sitting, some of them in small groups talking to one another, some listening to their iPods. In any military situation, organization is absolutely necessary, and that is what David is doing here. The verb suggests that these men stand in military formation. They look like soldiers; they do not look like a crowd of people milling about. We know this because of the verb *histêmi* (ἵστημι) [pronounced HIHS-tay-mee], which means *to stand [up, by]; to set up; to place, to make firm; to keep intact*. Strong's #2476. They are standing there at attention and they are quiet.

David looks over the various groups of men that he has with him.

2Samuel 15:18d Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
kaí (καί) [pronounced kī]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532

2Samuel 15:18d Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
pas (πάς, πάσα, πᾶν) [pronounced <i>pahs, PAH-sah, pahn</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine singular adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
ho (ὁ) [pronounced <i>hoh</i>]	<i>the; this, that, these</i>	definite article for a masculine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #3588
laos (λαός) [pronounced <i>lah-OSS</i>]	<i>people, people group, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock and language; of a great part of the population gathered together anywhere</i>	masculine singular noun; nominative case	Strong's #2992
paraporeuomai (παραπορεύομαι) [pronounced <i>par-ap-or-YOO-om-ahee</i>]	<i>to proceed at the side, go past, pass by</i>	3 rd person singular, imperfect middle indicative	Strong's #3899
echô (ἔχω) [pronounced <i>EHKH-oh</i>]	<i>to have [and/or] hold; to own, to possess, to adhere to, to cling to</i>	present middle participle; singular nominative?	Strong's #2192
Thayer: 1) to have, i.e. to hold 1a) to have (hold) in the hand, in the sense of wearing, to have (hold) possession of the mind (refers to alarm, agitating emotions, etc.), to hold fast keep, to have or comprise or involve, to regard or consider or hold as 2) to have, i.e. own, possess 2a) external things such as pertain to property or riches or furniture or utensils or goods or food etc. 2b) used of those joined to any one by the bonds of natural blood or marriage or friendship or duty or law etc, of attendance or companionship 3) to hold one's self or find one's self so and so, to be in such or such a condition 4) to hold one's self to a thing, to lay hold of a thing, to adhere or cling to 4a) to be closely joined to a person or a thing			
autou (αὐτοῦ) [pronounced <i>ow-TOO</i>]	<i>his, of him; for him, to him</i>	3 rd person masculine singular pronoun; genitive/ ablative case	Strong's #846
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
pas (πάς, πάσα, πᾶν) [pronounced <i>pahs, PAH-sah, pahn</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine plural adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
hoi (οἱ) [pronounced <i>hoy</i>]	<i>the; this, that, these</i>	masculine plural definite article; nominative case	Strong's #3588
peri (περί) [pronounced <i>per-EE</i>]	<i>about, concerning, on account of, because of, around, near</i>	preposition	Strong's #4012

2Samuel 15:18d Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
auton (αὐτόν) [pronounced ow-TAHN]	him	3 rd person masculine singular pronoun, accusative case	Strong's #846
καί (καί) [pronounced kī]	and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but	conjunction	Strong's #2532
pas (πάς, πάσα, πάν) [pronounced pahs, PAH-sah, pahn]	each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]	masculine plural adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
hoi (οἱ) [pronounced hoy]	the; this, that, these	masculine plural definite article; nominative case	Strong's #3588
hadpos (ἄδπός) [pronounced had-POSS]	court	masculine plural adjective; used as a substantive; nominative case	Strong's #none
καί (καί) [pronounced kī]	and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but	conjunction	Strong's #2532
pas (πάς, πάσα, πάν) [pronounced pahs, PAH-sah, pahn]	each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]	masculine plural adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
hoi (οἱ) [pronounced hoy]	the; this, that, these	masculine plural definite article; nominative case	Strong's #3588
machomai (μάχομαι) [pronounced MAH-khoh-maī]	to fight, to quarrel	3 rd person singular, present middle/passive subjunctive	Strong's #none
There is no little confusion about the previous word. I went to http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph for the information above and confirmed with http://lexicon.katablbn.com/inflect.php . This problem is, this word is not found in the New Testament. E-sword resources say that this is masculine plural noun, nominative case. ⁷⁴			
hexakosioi (ἑξακόσιοι) [pronounced hex-ak-OSS-ee-oy]	six hundred	masculine plural adjective; nominative case	Strong's #1812
anēr (άνήρ) [pronounced ah-NAIR]	man, male; adult male; husband, betrothed; [a group of] men and women [generic use]	masculine plural noun; nominative case	Strong's #435
καί (καί) [pronounced kī]	and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but	conjunction	Strong's #2532

⁷⁴ From E-sword's Septuagint LXX Greek Old Testament keyed to Strong's Numbers with complete parsing information. Version 1.1 Compiled by thechan.com. Their other source agreed: Septuagint LXX Greek Old Testament keyed to Strong's numbers with complete parsing information, and Wescott and Hort 1881 Greek New Testament with NA26/27 variants keyed to Strong's numbers with complete parsing information.

2Samuel 15:18d Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
pareimi (πάρειμι) [pronounced PAR-i-mee]	<i>to be by, be at hand, to have arrived, to be present; to be ready, in store, at command</i>	3 rd person plural, imperfect active indicative	Strong's #3918
ἐπί (ἐπί) [pronounced eh-PEE]	<i>on, upon; at, by, over</i>	preposition of superimposition; a relation of rest and distribution with the dative case	Strong's #1909
cheir (χείρ) [pronounced khire]	<i>1) by the help or agency of any one, by means of any one; 2) fig. applied to God symbolizing his might, activity, power; 2a) in creating the universe; 2b) in upholding and preserving (God is present protecting and aiding one); 2c) in punishing; 2d) in determining and controlling the destinies of men</i>	feminine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #5495
More literally, this appears to mean <i>by the hand [of someone]</i> .			
αυτου (αὐτοῦ) [pronounced ow-TOO]	<i>his, of him; for him, to him</i>	3 rd person masculine singular pronoun; genitive/ ablative case	Strong's #846

Translation: *And all the people pass by clinging to him, and all those around him, and all the court personnel, and all those [who] fight, 600 men, and they are arriving by his help,...* There are civilians who just want to be with David; they pass before him and they are said to be clinging to him, but they are not physically grabbing David and holding onto him; they are clinging to him emotionally. This would probably be his wives and younger sons, and perhaps some close friends.

Then there are *those who are around him*, which probably refers to David's immediate staff.

The word which I translated *court personnel*, the meaning was only found in **one place**. So, I assume that this is the auxiliary staff, those who have occasional contact with David, but he is their highest human authority.

Those who fight was quite difficult to unravel, and there is some discussion within the Greek exegesis about this.

Here, I would like to translate the final phrase *and those who are arriving by the power of God*. The noun here can be used in that manner. However, this is affixed to the 3rd person masculine singular pronoun, which, throughout most of this passage, is going to refer back to David. We might understand this not to indicate that David is somehow helping these people to arrive, but that they are drawn to him, perhaps as their help or perhaps as the man with the authority over them.

I should point out, at this time, that this is not the original text, but a translation from the original text. Therefore, we need to be careful as to how exacting we can be on the translation.

I believe, what is going on is, men are being drawn to David just as men were drawn to Jesus. David is a type of Christ, so, throughout his life, there were periods of time when men would be drawn to him, even when he was in hiding. This is further representative of our Lord drawing men to Him for salvation.

2Samuel 15:18e Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
pas (πάς, πάσα, πάν) [pronounced <i>pahs, PAH-sah, pahn</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine singular adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
ho (ὁ) [pronounced <i>hoh</i>]	<i>the; this, that, these</i>	definite article for a masculine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #3588
Chereththi (Χερεθθι) [pronounced <i>chē-reth-thī</i>]	transliterated <i>Cherethites</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #none
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
pas (πάς, πάσα, πάν) [pronounced <i>pahs, PAH-sah, pahn</i>]	<i>each, every, any; all, entire; anyone, all things, everything; some [of all types]</i>	masculine singular adjective, nominative case	Strong's #3956
ho (ὁ) [pronounced <i>hoh</i>]	<i>the; this, that, these</i>	definite article for a masculine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #3588
Pheleththi (Φελεθθι) [pronounced <i>phe-leth-thee</i>]	transliterated <i>Pelethites</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #none

Translation: ...and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites... This is the likely phrase that caused words to be missing in the Hebrew. The copyist looked up, copied these words; and then looked up, saw these words (but saw them when they occurred for the second time) and began copying from there.

When we get to the end of this verse, there will be a side-by-side comparison of this translation from the Greek and several others.

2Samuel 15:18f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 15:18f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Gittîy (גִּתַּי) [pronounced <i>git-TEE</i>]	<i>inhabitant of Gath and possibly wine press; and transliterated Gittite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1663 BDB #388
shêsh (שֵׁשׁ) [pronounced <i>shaysh</i>]	<i>six</i>	masculine form of numeral	Strong's #8337 BDB #995
mê'ôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced <i>may-OHTH</i>]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural absolute; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced <i>REH-ge</i>]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Gath (גַּת) [pronounced <i>gath</i>]	<i>wine-press and is transliterated Gath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1661 BDB #387

Translation: ...and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath;... You will recall, David came to Gath on a couple of occasions, and was actually given somewhat of a break by their king. However, while living on Gittite territory, 600 men went with David from Gath, and joined the large entourage that he had.

Barnes on the Gittites: *During David's residence in the country of the Philistines he attached such a band to himself; and after the settlement of his kingdom, and the subjugation of the Philistines, the band received recruits from Gath, perhaps with the king of Gath's consent. They were now under the command of Ittai the Gittite, a foreigner (2Sam. 15:19), and "his brethren" (2Sam. 15:20). The number 600 probably indicates that this band or regiment of Gittites had its origin in David's band of 600 (1Sam. 23:13 27:2). They were at first, it is likely, all Israelites, then Gittites mixed with Israelites, and at last all Gittites.*⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:18.

We do know that David had a company of 600 men who came out of the city of Gath with him 30 years previous (1Sam. 27:2–3 and see the **Davidic timeline—HTML PDF**). Despite the fact that it was more common for men to stay in a profession 40–50 years back then, there would have been some attrition and some replacements. David likely had Gittite soldiers come to him now and again to join themselves to him. So, there may be a cadre of originals in this band of 600 (2Sam. 2:3 5:6), probably many of these men came to David over a period of time since he became king over Israel. The size is probably the size that David (and possibly Joab) felt most comfortable directing.

David will quiz their commanding general in the following verse to determine the depth of their fidelity to him. It is possible that David did this with the Pelethites and the Cherethites as well.

2Samuel 15:18g

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ābar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>‘āw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>passers by, those passing through; those passing over</i>	masculine plural, Qal participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>‘āh</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ‘al and pānîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...[those passing before the king](#). All these various groups marched before David, or in front of David, in military precision, just as he gave order. Essentially, this was some military drills which David went through with the men, both to warm himself up and to warm up the men. It may have been a little time since they have been to war; and it was a longer time since David was at war.

When it comes to specifics, the various translations from the LXX below have a number of differences. The AEB has the Cherethites and Pelethites waiting for David; my translation has them going to that spot under David's guidance; in the two other translations, they appear to just be standing over there by the olive tree. Some of the individual descriptors are different. Also, the AEB plays a little faster and looser with the text than the other 3 translation do.

Side-by-Side Comparison of 2Samuel 15:18

Scripture	Text/Commentary
American English Bible	Well, while the king and his servants were on the way to the desert, they [met up with some] Chelethites and Phelethites who were waiting on the Mount of Olives. So, along with all the people who came with [David], there were now six hundred great men and warriors from the Chelethites, Phelethites, and Gethites, because six hundred men had walked from Gath to join the king.

Side-by-Side Comparison of 2Samuel 15:18

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Brenton	And all his servants passed on by his side, and every Chelethite, and every Phelethite, 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 Chelethite, and every Phelethite, and all the six hundred Gittites that came on foot out of Geth, and they went on before the king.
Complete Apostles Bible	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.
Kukis	And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and they stand by the olive tree in the desert wilderness. And all the people pass by clinging to him, and all those around him, and all the court personnel, and all those [who] fight, 600 men, and they are arriving by his help; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath; those passing before the king.

However, what these texts have in common is, there are several different groups of people who have gathered with David, and they appear to be under his command and guidance (which comes out more clearly in my translation than in the others).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The final phrase seems to indicate that David calls for the foreign troops to pass in review before him. David needs to think about those who are with him, who should remain and who should go; and who should be given the option of going.

Before we move ahead, let's take a look at the previous 4 verses together (I just took the Hebrew text): Then the servants of the **king** said to David [lit., *the king*], "According to all that my lord the **king** chooses, observe, [we are] your servants." Therefore, the **king** went out with all his household at his feet, but he [lit., *the king*] left [behind] [his] ten mistresses [lit., *10 women mistresses*] to keep the palace. And the **king** went out with all the people at his feet. They later remained [at] Beth-merhak [possibly, the house of the distance]. And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath; those passing before the **king**. 7 times, in 4 verses, David is called *the king*. This is God the Holy Spirit grabbing us by the shirt collar and saying, "David is king over all Israel; he is still My king." Why is this important? David will refer to Absalom as *king* in the next verse, so we have to make certain that we understand who is king in God's sight.

And so says the king to Ittai the Gittite, "For why do you go also with us? Return and stay with the king for a foreigner you [are] and also emigrating you to your place. 2Samuel 15:19

So the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Return and stay with the [new] king for you [are] a foreigner and, furthermore, you are emigrating with regards to [or, to; possibly, from] your place.

So the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Return and stay with the new king, for you are a foreigner and, furthermore, you have just recently immigrated from your place.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to Ethai the Gethite: Why do you come with us? Return and dwell with the king, for you are a stranger, and are come <u>out of</u> your own place.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king to Ittai the Gittite, "For why do you go also with us? Return and stay with the king for a foreigner you [are] and also emigrating you to your place.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Why do you also go with us? <u>Depart from the king</u> ; for you are a stranger, and also you were <u>brought captive from</u> your country.
Septuagint (Greek)	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 <u>out of</u> your place.
Significant differences:	The 2 nd thing that David tells Ittai seems to be quite different in the Syriac than it is in the Masoretic text. Also, that he was <i>brought captive</i> in the Syriac is different from the other ancient manuscripts.

The English translation from all 3 other languages indicates that Ittai has come *from his place* or the he is an immigrant *out of his place*. In the Hebrew, there is a lamed preposition (*to, for, with respect to*) where we would have expected a min preposition (*from, off*). This will be touched on in the Hebrew and English exegesis.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	David spoke to Ittai and said, "You're a foreigner from the town of Gath. You don't have to leave with us. Go back and join the new king!
Easy English	Then the king said to Ittai, who came from Gath, "You do not need to come with us. Go back and stay with King Absalom. You come from a foreign country. You do not live in your own country.
Easy-to-Read Version	The king said to Ittai from Gath, "Why are you also going with us? Turn back and stay with the new king (Absalom). You are a foreigner. This is not your homeland.
Good News Bible (TEV)	...and the king said to Ittai, their leader, "Why are you going with us? Go back and stay with the new king. You are a foreigner, a refugee away from your own country.
<i>The Message</i>	The king called out to Ittai the Gittite, "What are you doing here? Go back with King Absalom. You're a stranger here and freshly uprooted from your own country.
New Life Bible	Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you go with us also? Return and stay with the king. For you are from another land and have been driven from your home.
New Living Translation	Then the king turned and said to Ittai, a leader of the men from Gath, "Why are you coming with us? Go on back to King Absalom, for you are a guest in Israel, a foreigner in exile.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, the king asked Ittai (the Gethite): 'Why are you traveling with us? Go back and live with the [new] king! Why, you are foreigners and you've left your homes...
Beck's American Translation	The king asked Ittai from Gath: "Why should you go with us? Go back and stay with the king since you are a foreigner and an exile from your homeland.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	The king asked Ittai from Gath, "Why should you go with us? Go back, and stay with King Absalom. You are a foreigner, an exile from your homeland.
NIRV	The king spoke to Ittai. He was from Gath. The king said to him, "Why do you want to come along with us? Go back. Stay with King Absalom. You are a stranger. You left your own country.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said to Ittai of Gath, "Why go also with us? Return and dwell with the king, for you are a foreigner, exiled from your place.
Bible in Basic English	Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why are you coming with us? go back and keep with the king: for you are a man of another country, you are far from the land of your birth.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But the king said to Athai the gardener, "Why do you especially go with us? Return and settle with that king, for you are a foreigner, so why not return to your own home?"
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you too go with us? Go back and stay with the [new] king, for you are a foreigner and you are also an exile from [So one Hebrew manuscript and several ancient versions; most manuscripts and editions read "to."] your country.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the king said to Ittai the Gittite; 'Why do you also go with us? return, and abide with the king; for you are a foreigner, and if you are wont to wander, go to your own place.
NET Bible®	Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you come with us? Go back and stay with the new [The word "new" is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation to make it clear that David refers to Absalom, not himself.] king, for you are a foreigner and an exile from your own country [Heb "place."].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the king said unto Ittai the Gittite, `Why do you go--you also--with us? turn back--and abide with the king, for you [are] a stranger, and also an exile you--to your place.
Updated Darby Translation	And the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why will you also go with us? Return to your place, and abide with the king; for you are a foreigner, and besides, you have emigrated to the place where you [dwell].
exeGesés companion Bible	Then the sovereign says to Ittay the Gittiy, Why go you - you also with us? Return to your place and settle with the sovereign: for you are a stranger and also an exile.
The Updated Geneva Bible	Then said the king to Ittai [Who as some write was the king's son of Gath.] the Gittite, Why go you also with us? return to your place, and abide with the king: for you [art] a stranger, and also an exile.
LTHB	And the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why do you go, even you with us? Turn back and remain with the king, for you are an alien, and also you are an exile. Go to your place.
Syndein	Then the {de jury} king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you also go with us? {he was the chief of police and he was needed to protect the people of Jerusalem} Go back and remain with the {de facto} king. You are a foreigner . . . and an immigrant . . . {means that this revolution does not have to involve him} therefore, return to your place {of duty}. {Note: Ittai was a Philistine who was well known to David. He was a good soldier, but RBT says he found his niche as Chief of Police (RBT concludes this since his duty was back in Jerusalem and the Gittite are usually not mentioned as part of the Royal guard - they must be the military police who controlled crime in Jerusalem). David wanted Ittai to remain and protect the rights and property of the civilians of Jerusalem. And, he is telling Ittai to respect the authority of the 'de facto king' - Absalom (means Absalom is, factually, sitting on the throne, yet David remains the king 'de jury' or under the law - as the one appointed king by God.)}

World English Bible

Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Why go you also with us? return, and abide with the king: for you are a foreigner, and also an exile; *return* to your own place. And the king says unto Ittai the Gittite, “Why will you go—you also—with us? turn back—and abide with the king, for you are a stranger, and also an exile you—to your place.

Young’s Updated LT

The gist of this verse:

The king talks specifically to Ittai the Gittite and tells him that, as an exile from his country, there is no need for him to travel with David.

2Samuel 15:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
’amar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #4428 BDB #572
’el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to, against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong’s #413 BDB #39
’Ittay (איתי) [pronounced <i>iht-TAH-ee</i>]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong’s #863 BDB #87
Alternate spelling: ’Ittay (איתי) [pronounced <i>ee-THAH-ee</i>].			
Gittiy (גיטי) [pronounced <i>git-TEE</i>]	<i>inhabitant of Gath and possibly wine press; and transliterated Gittite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong’s #1663 BDB #388

Translation: *So the king said to Ittai the Gittite,...* David singles out one man in particular, Ittai the Gittite, is probably the commanding officer of the 600 Gittites (which would make sense, given the proximity of Ittai and the Gittites named in the previous verse). It is likely that what David says to Ittai will apply to all of the Gittites who are under his command. David certainly would not quiz every single man in this company as to what they wanted to do.

We will talk more about Ittai in **2Sam. 18** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)), when he plays an important role in war against Absalom.

2Samuel 15:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ’]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
mâh (מה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong’s #4100 BDB #552

2Samuel 15:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chron. 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
gam (גם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
'attâh (אתה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: ...“Why do you also go with us? Davie asks Ittai a simple question, “Why are you going with us?” The idea is, Ittai is relatively new to Israel. According to the **Davidic timeline (HTML) (PDF)**, Ittai would have hooked up with David probably 22 years ago when David was an exile from Israel because of Saul. So, in that way, Ittai would have been relatively new to the country. For all intents and purposes, he is an immigrant to this country of Israel. It is also possible that he joined up with David since that time, although a commanding general would likely have been with the original company of 600 men. In any case, much of this is speculation, as we do not really know the background here.

2Samuel 15:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâshab (ישב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^B V]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
'îm (עם) [pronounced geem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

2Samuel 15:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...Return and stay with the [new] king... Ittai is an outsider; he has no skin in the game. Whether the king is David or Absalom, this should not be an issue to Ittai. So David suggests that Ittai remain in Israel under Absalom as king. The implication is, David would not hold this against Ittai or his loyalty.

Adding the word *new, acting, temporary* is legitimate for this portion of v. 19. One commentator even asked, *whether David had actually recognized Absalom as the legitimate king.*⁷⁶ As we noticed in the previous 4 verses, David was called *the king* 7 times. Since God the Holy Spirit is the divine Author of the Word of God, God the Holy Spirit has just told us that David is the true king. He said it 7 times, so that should make it clear who God recognizes as the King of Israel. David calls Absalom king here because he will act as a king, and for many people, life will be relatively unchanged (particularly because David is taking the fight outside of Jerusalem). Therefore, Absalom will be the *acting king, the temporary king*. At this point in time, David does not know what is going to happen. He does not know that he will be restored to the throne. He does not know that he will be successful in defeating Absalom. He knows that, whatever God has decided, that is how things will be, whether he is king or Absalom is king. However, in the recording of this chapter, it is clear that God the Holy Spirit sees David as the true king over Israel.

2Samuel 15:19d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
nōk ^e rîy (נֹכְרִי) [pronounced nawck ^e -REE or nok-REE]	foreign, alien, stranger; strange; foreign woman, a harlot; of another family; metaphorically, unknown, unfamiliar; new, unheard of	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #5237 BDB #648
This has that odd vowel games-hartuf (ō as in cost) that looks exactly like a qâ mats (â as in car).			
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	you (often, the verb to be is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation: ...for you [are] a foreigner... David explains why he is suggesting the Ittai return to Jerusalem: he is a foreigner; he has no reason to be particularly attached to David or to Absalom. Both men would be king over Israel.

This would have gotten trickier had Ittai said, "You know, my lord, that makes sense. I will return to Jerusalem." Because, had he done that, Absalom might have pressed him and his men into service. However, David has to make certain that this man has an out.

⁷⁶ Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; p. 232.

2Samuel 15:19e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean <i>together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore</i> .			
gâlâh (גלה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to uncover, [one's ear to hear something]; to reveal, to disclose, to make naked; to remove, to depart; to make [a land] naked of inhabitants, to emigrate, to be led into exile</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1540 BDB #162
'attâh (אתה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
According to the Tanakh, ⁷⁷ one Hebrew manuscripts and several ancient versions have <i>from</i> instead. As has been mentioned, the book of Samuel probably has more errors in it than any other book in the Old Testament. However, in most cases, these errors or problems are fairly minor. Most Hebrew manuscripts have the lâmed preposition (<i>to, for, with regards to</i>) whereas, we would have expected the min preposition (<i>from, off</i>). There is a catch 22 in all of this. We want to say, "Oh, there is an old manuscript out there with the most logical preposition; well, that must be correct." However, most Hebrew manuscripts of the lâmed preposition and we would expect perhaps some sloppy copyist along the way to say, "This just cannot be a lâmed preposition; it must have been a min preposition;" and then they change it. This would not have occurred the other way around. Another possibility is, the min preposition might be used for Ittai to recently have come to Israel; and the lâmed preposition looks back a ways further, so this is with reference to Ittai's old place, which may have been a long time ago.			
mâqôwm (מקום) [pronounced <i>maw-KOHM</i>]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4725 BDB #879

Translation: ...and, furthermore, you are emigrating with regards to [or, to; possibly, from?] your place. Here, I would have expected the min preposition (*from your place*), but perhaps the verb has that as a part of its meaning. It is possible that David is saying, "And, furthermore, you are emigrating to your place." The suggestion is that Ittai is a recent immigrant, with little reason to be loyal to one king over the other. The Greek clearly has this as reading, *And you are emigrating from your place*.

⁷⁷ Tanakh, the Jewish Bible by the Jewish Publication Society; ©1985; p. 493.

It's possible that you may think I am being overly picky about the lâmed preposition here. I am not the only one. However, there may be limited edification that comes from reading this.

Keil and Delitzsch Obsess over the Lâmed Preposition

There is some difficulty connected with the following words (rendered in the Eng. version “and also an exile”). In the Septuagint and Vulgate they are rendered *καὶ ὅτι μετώκησας σὺ ἐκ τοῦ τόπου σου*, *et egressus es de loco tuo* (and you have gone out from your own place); but in adopting this rendering the translators have not only passed over the *גַּם* (also), but have taken *לְמוֹקֵמְךָ* for *מִמּוֹקֵמְךָ*. Nevertheless Thenius proposes to bring the text into harmony with these versions for the purpose of bringing out the meaning, “and moreover you are one carried away from his own home.” But this is decidedly a mistake; for David would never have made a Philistine - who had just before been carried away from his own home, or, as Thenius understands it, who had been brought to Jerusalem as a hostage - the commander of a third of his army. The meaning is rather the following: “And you have still no fatherland,” i.e., you are still wandering about through the earth like an exile from his country: wherever you find a place, and are allowed to settle, there only can you dwell.

From Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:19. The text was updated somewhat.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

What appears to be the gist of this verse, despite that pesky lâmed preposition, is that David is giving Ittai and his men a way out of this. David is letting them know that as foreigners—people without any Israeli blood in them—they can opt out of this civil war, and no one is going to think any less of them.

In other words, “You, Ittai, do not need to take sides. God has determined who the king will be, and, as of now, we do not know who that person is. You will not be faulted to return to Jerusalem and simply allow this to play out.”

Let's try to update this. A person comes to the United States from a very oppressive communist government, or from a very oppressive Islamic government, where going to church on Sunday could result in being killed or injured by fanatical Muslims. So, such a person may not worry too much about whether Barack Obama or Mitt Romney is elected as president⁷⁸, because life is so much better for the immigrant than it was back in Pakistan, or Egypt, or Russia, or wherever. Both men are a breath of fresh air to him. He doesn't care who wins the election; he just loves being able to go to church without fearing for his life or the lives of his family members.

You may think to yourself, “Well, that is all very interesting, but why is this in the Bible?” It is important that we know that the Gittites, the Pelethites and the Cherethites are with David because this tells us that there was a constant flow of immigrants into Israel and they were drawn there by the Lord God, in whom they believed. We know from the book of Jonah that Israel sent out missionaries (in that case, on direct orders from God) and we know from this and many other verses that Israel attracted people from all over the world, who were drawn to that country—sometimes not knowing why—and then they believed in Israel's God, the True God of the Universe.

The same thing happens in our country. People are drawn to the United States from all over the world. Now, of course, there is that great prosperity under which we live, and that may get the attention of many, but the freedom to worship, freedom to work, freedom to think—these are often more intoxicating. And many of these immigrants become great believers in Jesus Christ.

The same thing was true of the slave population which was brought to the United States. We look upon slavery as the worst thing ever and wish we could undo it all. Poppycock! God brought these Africans over here; many of them believed in Jesus Christ and the pivot of the African-American believers was one of the greatest pivots in United States' history. Every slave brought here to the United States was hand-picked by Jesus Christ because

⁷⁸ I write this in 2012 with the election a month away. Whoever is next up in the presidential election, substitute in their names here.

He controls history. Despite the many goofy movements to move Blacks back to Africa, and despite the ease in which an African-American could choose to work for a year and save up to move to Africa, nobody does it (except for a small handful of goofy types). This is because the United States is a **client nation**, a nation where God can be openly worshiped and studied. This is not true in some African nations. Furthermore, we have law and order (i.e., the function of the laws of divine establishment) here in the United States, something which is lacking in many African countries.

Closely related to these ideas is the **Doctrine of Heathenism** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Our verse reads: [So the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why do you also go with us? Return and stay with the new king, for you are a foreigner and, furthermore, you have just recently immigrated from your place.](#) I want you to notice that David refers to Absalom as the king. Absalom is the defacto king; that is, the king in fact. He is the acting king in the palace making all of the rulings. But notice what David does not do—he does not run Absalom down. David does not say, "Return and stay with the new king, that rat-bastard Absalom." David has no mental attitude sins towards his son, despite what his son has done here. David expresses no mental attitude sins with his tongue; so we can reasonably assume that David is in fellowship. He will make nothing but good decisions throughout this chapter, another clue that he is in fellowship and thinking clearly. It is having a mental attitude like this that is one of the reasons that David is qualified to lead his people.

As we observed several verses back, there will be several words found in the Greek which are not in the Hebrew.

[Yesterday, your coming, and the day, I am leading you with us to go. And I am going upon which I am going. \[The Greek adds: And indeed you will be removed from your place \[in Jerusalem\]. Yesterday, your coming forth and today, I will move you with us \[in\] the departure.\] Return and cause to return your brothers with you. Grace and truth \[be to you\] \[Greek: And the Lord will make with you mercy and truth\]."](#)

2Samuel
15:20

[Yesterday, you arrived and today, I am leading you about with us to go \[wherever\]. And I am going in that I am going. \[The Greek inserts: Certainly, you will be removed from your place \(in Jerusalem\). You came forth \(but\) yesterday and today, you will move with us \(when we depart\)\] Return and cause your brothers to return with you. Grace and truth \[be to you\] \[Greek: And the Lord will produce grace and truth with you\]."](#)

[You arrived here but yesterday, and today, I am leading you about with the rest of us wherever I am going. And I am going without a clear destination. Therefore return to Jerusalem and take your brothers with you. Let grace and truth be with you."](#)

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

[Yesterday you came, and today will you be forced to go forth with us? But I will go where I am going: return, and take back your brothers with you, and the Lord will show you mercy and truth, because you have shown grace and fidelity.](#)

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

[Yesterday, your coming, and the day, I am leading you with us to go. \[The Greek adds: And indeed you will be removed from your place \[in Jerusalem\]. Yesterday, your coming forth and today, I will move you with us \[in\] the departure. \] And I am going upon which I am going. Return and cause to return your brothers with you. Grace and truth \[be to you\] \[Greek: And the Lord will make with you mercy and truth\]."](#)

Peshitta (Syriac)

[You came but yesterday, and shall I trouble you today to go with us, seeing I go wherever I may? Return, and make your brethren to settle down; it will be well with you.](#)

Septuagint (Greek) 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 brethren to return with you, and may the Lord deal mercifully and truly with you.

Significant differences: The first sentence in the Hebrew appears to mean something other than the words which translate it. So the English translations from the other ancient languages appear to approach this as an idiom.

The Greek appears to have a whole other sentence and a half which is not found in the Hebrew text.

The English translations from the other ancient languages appear to treat the final phrase as an idiom as well. There is clearly additional text in the Greek in this final sentence as well. The Latin matches the Greek in part, and then adds another phrase at the end.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible You just got here yesterday. So today should I make you wander around with us while I go wherever I have to go? No. Go back, and take your relatives with you. May the Lord show you loyal love and faithfulness [LXX; MT lacks may the Lord show you.]."

Contemporary English V. You haven't been with me very long, so why should you have to follow me, when I don't even know where I'm going? Take your soldiers and go back. I pray that the Lord will be kind and faithful to you."

Easy English It seems as if you only arrived yesterday. But today you wander round with me. I do not want to make you wander. I do not even know where I am going. Go back. Take the other men from your country with you. I pray that God will be kind to you. And I pray that he will make you safe.'

Easy-to-Read Version Only yesterday you came to join me. Must you now wander from place to place with me? No! Take your brothers and go back. May kindness and loyalty be shown to you."

Good News Bible (TEV) You have lived here only a short time, so why should I make you wander around with me? I don't even know where I'm going. Go back and take all your people with you---and may the LORD be kind and faithful to you."

The Message You arrived only yesterday, and am I going to let you take your chances with us as I live on the road like a gypsy? Go back, and take your family with you. And God's grace and truth go with you!"

New Berkeley Version Your coming was but as yesterday and should I today force you to wander with us, when I am moving, who knows where? Return and take back your fellow countrymen. Kindness and faithfulness be with you!"

New Century Version You joined me only a short time ago. Should I make you wander with us when I don't even know where I'm going? Turn back and take your brothers with you. May kindness and loyalty be shown to you."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible ...you've just joined me, so are you [now planning to] travel with us. are you moving away from your homes?'
And he replied, 'I will go wherever you are going.'
[But David said], 'Go back, and take your brothers with you, for Jehovah will bring you kindness and truth!

Christian Community Bible	Are you setting out when you have just arrived? Shall I make you wander about with us? Go back, take your brothers with you and may Yahweh show you kindness and faithfulness.
God's Word™	You came to us just yesterday. Should I make you wander around with me when I don't even know where I'm going? Go back, and take your countrymen with you. May the LORD always show you kindness."
New American Bible	You came only yesterday, and today shall I have you wander off with us wherever I have to go? Return and take your brothers with you, and may the LORD show you kindness and fidelity."
NIRV	You came to join me only a short time ago. So why should I make you wander around with us now? I don't even know where I'm going. So go on back. Take with you the others who are from your country. And may the Lord be kind and faithful to you."
New Jerusalem Bible	You arrived only yesterday; should I take you wandering with us today, when I do not know myself where I am going? Go back, take your fellow countrymen with you, and may Yahweh show you mercy and faithful love!
New Simplified Bible	...»In fact you came to us just yesterday. Should I make you wander around with me when I do not even know where I am going? Go back and take your countrymen with you. May Jehovah always show you kindness.«
Revised English Bible	you came only yesterday, and must you today be compelled to share my wanderings when I do not know where I am going? Go back home and take your countrymen with you, and may the LORD ever be your steadfast friend.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	You came earlier, and today you go with us as a fugitive, going with me as I go. Return! Return to your brothers with mercy and truth with you."
Bible in Basic English	It was only yesterday you came to us; why then am I to make you go up and down with us? for I have to go where I may; go back then, and take your countrymen with you, and may the Lord's mercy and good faith be with you.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Formerly you came, and to-day you are a wanderer with us on the march, for I am marching to wherever I can go.—Return and settle with your relatives,—and kindness and truth will go with you."
HCSB	Besides, you only arrived yesterday; should I make you wander around with us today while I go wherever I can? Go back and take your brothers with you. May the LORD show you kindness and faithfulness."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	You came only yesterday; should I make you wander about with us today, when I myself must go wherever I can? Go back, and take your kinsmen with you, [in] [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain. Septuagint reads "and may the LORD show you"] true faithfulness."
Judaica Press Complete T.	Only yesterday you came, and today I should move you about with us, seeing that I go wherever I can go? Return and take back your brothers with you, (and do) kindness and truth (to them)."
New Advent Bible	Yesterday you came, and to day shall you be forced to go forth with us? But I shall go whither I am going: return, and take back your brethren with you, and the Lord will show you mercy, and truth, because you have shown grace and fidelity.
NET Bible®	It seems like you arrived just yesterday. Today should I make you wander around by going with us? I go where I must go. But as for you, go back and take your men [Heb "brothers," but see v. 22.] with you. May genuine loyal love [Heb "loyal love and truth." The expression is a hendiadys.] protect [Heb "be with."] you!"
NIV – UK	You came only yesterday. And today shall I make you wander about with us, when I do not know where I am going? Go back, and take your people with you. May the Lord show you kindness and faithfulness [Septuagint; Hebrew May kindness and faithfulness be with you].'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV	Whereas you came but yesterday, should I this day make you go up and down with us? seeing I go where I may, return you, and take back your brothers: mercy and truth be with you.
Context Group Version	Whereas you came but yesterday, should I this day make you go up and down with us, seeing I go where I may? Return, and take back your brothers with you; and may YHWH show you family allegiance and truth.
English Standard Version	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."
exeGesés companion Bible	Yesterday you come - and this day do I have you wander in going with us? Seeing that I go wherever I go, return - return with your brothers: mercy and truth be with you.
The updated Geneva Bible	Whereas you came [but] yesterday, should I this day make you go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back your brothers [Meaning, those of his family.]: mercy and truth [be] with you [God require of you your friendship and fidelity.].
LTHB	You came in yesterday and today. Should I make you go with us, to go while I go, where I go? Turn back, and turn your brothers <i>to go</i> with you <i>in</i> kindness and truth.
Syndein	You {Ittai} came only yesterday. {Principal: It does not take long for a mature believer to prove his worth to good leaders.} Therefore, today, shall I cause you to wander around with us marching with us 'when I do not know where I am going?' {idiom: "and, am I going . . . toward which . . . I am going?" Principal: humility is 'thoughtfulness of others'. Only humble people can think. A high IQ with arrogance means the inability to think clearly.} Go back {an order} in grace and doctrine/truth . . . and take back your countrymen with you. {Note: In this last sentence is the use of a famine singular pronoun 'you'. This creates a pause in the reading. The famine is use to indicate a responder to the male who is initiating. Here it means that David recognizes that Ittai is following him and recognizing his authority. David only tells Ittai to return and he knows Ittai's men will respond to Ittai's command to return. This brings out the principal of respect for authority. Finally, by adding in grace and in doctrine, David is telling Ittai that he is within doctrinal bounds by returning to Jerusalem - implying strongly that Ittai and his countrymen are believers and most likely mature believers.}.
World English Bible	Whereas you came but yesterday, should I this day make you go up and down with us, seeing I go where I may? return you, and take back your brothers; mercy and truth be with you.
Young's Updated LT	Yesterday is your coming in, and to-day I move you to go with us, and I am going on that which I am going! —turn back, and take back your brothers with you, —kindness and truth."
The gist of this verse:	David acknowledges that Ittai's coming to Israel is relatively recent, and that Ittai does not have any real allegiance which he must show David.

2Samuel 15:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
t ^e môwl (לומת) [pronounced t ^e MOHL]	yesterday; and is used figuratively for <i>recently, formerly</i>	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
bôw' (אוב) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #935 BDB #97
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yôwm (יומ) [pronounced yohm]	day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly <i>immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	to lead [away], to cause to go [away], to bring, to cause to depart, to cause to come, to cause to walk	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
'îm (עם) [pronounced geem]	with, at, by, near; like; from	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: *Yesterday, you arrived and today, I am leading you about with us to go [wherever].* David makes it sound as if Ittai only recently came to Jerusalem; more recently than 20+ years ago. He tells Ittai, "You only arrived here yesterday and today, I am leading off to wherever." The idea is, of course, the Ittai has no reason to feel great loyalty toward David. He does not have to remain with David and risk his life if another king, suitable for a foreigner, is in charge.

We do not know exactly when Ittai came to Israel and came to David, whether he was with the original Gittites who joined David, or if he came along later. What David suggests here is, he came along a little later.

David is considering possibly several things. It is possible that he expect Ittai to continue with him. However, he needs to give him an out, if necessary. Given the circumstances, David cannot allow people who are half-hearted about this to join him. David does not need any men with him who are not dedicated to him. Such men could get everyone else killed if they are indecisive.

This does not mean that David was not interested in having Ittai join him. There is nothing in what David says that questions Ittai's resolve or competence. David was just making certain that Ittai was completely committed, as staying with David could mean death.

At this point, we have additional text in the Greek:

2Samuel 15:20b Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
ge (γέ) [pronounced <i>geh</i>]	1) <i>indeed, truly, at least;</i> 2) <i>even;</i> 3) <i>if indeed, seeing that</i>	particle	Strong's #1065
metanistēmi (μετανίστημι) [pronounced <i>meht-ahn-EE-stay-mee</i>]	<i>to remove from his or her country; to generally remove; to avert</i>	2 nd person singular, future active indicative	Strong's #none
From Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon .			
τον (τόν) [pronounced <i>tahn</i>]; also το (το) [pronounced <i>toh</i>]	<i>the</i>	masculine singular definite article in the accusative case	Strong's #3588
topos (τόπος) [pronounced <i>TOP-oss</i>]	1) <i>place, any portion or space marked off, as it were from surrounding space; 1a) an inhabited place, as a city, village, district; 1b) a place (passage) in a book; 2) metaphorically; 2a) the condition or station held by one in any company or assembly; 2b) opportunity, power, occasion for acting</i>	masculine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #5117
sou (σου) [pronounced <i>sue</i>]	<i>of you, your; from you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #4771 (genitive is given Strong's #4675)
echthes (ἐχθές) [pronounced <i>ehkh-THAYNE</i>]	<i>yesterday</i>	adverb	Strong's #none
hê (ή) [pronounced <i>hey</i>]	<i>the; this, that; these</i>	feminine singular definite article; nominative and vocative cases	Strong's #3588 (article, demonstrative pronoun) and #3739 (pronoun)
εξελευσις	<i>coming forth?</i>	Listed as a feminine singular, nominative case	Strong's #none
I could not find the meaning of this verb, except from looking at the English translation of the LXX.			
sou (σου) [pronounced <i>sue</i>]	<i>of you, your; from you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #4771 (genitive is given Strong's #4675)
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532

2Samuel 15:20b Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
sêmeron (σήμερον) [pronounced SAY-mer-on]	<i>today; 1) this (very) day); 2) what has happened today</i>	adverb:	Strong's #4594
metakineô (μετακινέω) [pronounced met-ak-ee-NAH-oh]	<i>to move from a place, to move away</i>	1 st person singular, future active indicative	Strong's #3334
se (σέ) [pronounced seh]	<i>you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun; accusative case	Strong's #4771 (Strong's #4571)
meta (μετά) [pronounced meht-AH]	<i>with, among, in the company of, in the midst of</i>	preposition with the genitive	Strong's #3326
hêmōn (ἡμῶν) [pronounced hay-MOHN]	<i>us, of us, from us, our, [of] ours</i>	1 st person plural, personal pronoun; genitive/ablative case	Strong's #2257 (from Strong's #1473)
tou (τοῦ) [pronounced tu]	<i>of the; from the, [away, out] from the; from the source of; by the; than the</i>	neuter singular definite article, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #3588
poreuomai (πορεύομαι) [pronounced po-ROO-oh-my]	<i>to traverse, to travel, to depart, to go way, to go forth</i>	aorist passive infinitive verb	Strong's #4198

Thayer meanings: 1) to lead over, carry over, transfer; 1a) to pursue the journey on which one has entered, to continue on one's journey; 1b) to depart from life; 1c) to follow one, that is: become his adherent; 1c1) to lead or order one's life.

Translation: And indeed you will be removed from your place [in Jerusalem]. Yesterday, your coming forth and today, I will move you with us [in] the departure.

American English Bible	...you've just joined me, so are you [now planning to] travel with us. are you moving away from your homes? And he replied, 'I will go wherever you are going.' [But David said], 'Go back, and take your brothers with you, for Jehovah will bring you kindness and truth! It was hard to tell where the AEB began and ended with this portion of v. 20, so their entire translation is given.
Brenton (updated):	...and will you thus change your place? You did come forth yesterday, and today will I set you in motion to go along with us?
Complete Apostles Bible:	...and shall you thus change your place? You came forth yesterday, and today shall I set you in motion to go along with us?

It appears that the Complete Apostles Bible may not do anything more than simply update the Brenton English translation (which is what I did, which resulted in nearly the exact same text).

We might, from time to time, find an extra word or two in the Septuagint thrown in there to smooth out the Hebrew text; however, it seems quite unlikely that the Greek translator here thought, "Let me just add a whole new sentence here in order to straighten everything out." That is highly unlikely, as the LXX translation, although uneven, made a sincere attempt to translate from the Hebrew. So, throwing in an extra sentence or two is not

something that these translators would have done. That suggests that the texts from which they worked had this very sentence in it (in the Hebrew). Therefore, this is probably a legitimate addition.

If this text is accurate and missing from the Hebrew, it does not seem to offer much to us. This is more of David reasoning with Ittai, and telling him why he does not need to come along. Ittai apparently had a place in Jerusalem, and going with David means that he will no longer live there. David tells him that he recent came forth (apparently to Israel) and now, if he stays with David, he will be moved long with David when they pick up and move again. David is simply painting an unpleasant yet realistic picture of movement with him.

2Samuel 15:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
hâlak ^e (הִלַּךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>is walking, is going, is departing, is advancing, is traveling</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
This combination of 'al and 'ăsher mean <i>because, because that, in that</i> .			
'ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
hâlak ^e (הִלַּךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>is walking, is going, is departing, is advancing, is traveling</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: [And I am going in that I am going](#). At one time, I used to carefully choose Bibles that were completely literal. In this chapter particularly (although, it is certainly true of others), the literal translation just does not do it justice.

You will note that, even though there is a great deal of variety in the looser translations, this actually gives us a better feel for this passage.

Common English Bible	You just got here yesterday. So today should I make you wander around with us while I go wherever I have to go?"
Contemporary English V.	You haven't been with me very long, so why should you have to follow me, when I don't even know where I'm going?"
Easy English	It seems as if you only arrived yesterday. But today you wander round with me. I do not want to make you wander. I do not even know where I am going.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	You have lived here only a short time, so why should I make you wander around with me? I don't even know where I'm going."
<i>The Message</i>	You arrived only yesterday, and am I going to let you take your chances with us as I live on the road like a gypsy?"

New Century Version

You joined me only a short time ago. Should I make you wander with us when I don't even know where I'm going?"

David is telling him, "Look, right now, I am just moving out. I don't have a plan; I do not know exactly where I am going; I don't know how Absalom will react. All of this stuff is up in the air right now. Therefore, it would not be a problem to me if you returned to Jerusalem or to Gath."

All of this is the truth, by the way. Seems like I read more than one commentary which suggested that David was testing Ittai at this point. David is giving Ittai a valid out. David is telling Ittai that he can go. Although David has a few ideas and a few plans, they are subject to whatever intelligence he can gather. So David does not require Ittai to join him. This is not some phony test; this is a legitimate set of options that David is offering Ittai.

2Samuel 15:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âch (אָח) [pronounced awhk]	<i>brother, kinsman or close relative</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
'îm (עִם) [pronounced geem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix; pausal form	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: Return and cause your brothers to return with you. In fact, David does more than just tell Ittai that he can go or stay. David issues a direct order for Ittai to return and to take his brothers (his Gittite army) with him. David first explained why Ittai is not beholden to him or required to follow him; and now issues an order for Ittai to go.

It is this verse that makes it plain that Ittai is leading this group of Gittites. He is the one in charge and able to lead them.

2Samuel 15:20e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-seð</i>]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾēmeth (אֱמֶת) [pronounced <i>EH-meth</i>]	<i>firmness, faithfulness, truth, certainty, stability, perpetuity, fidelity, reliable, stable, dependable</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #571 BDB #54

For this final phrase, the Greek reads: *...and may the Lord deal mercifully and truthfully [or, objectively] with you.* However, this could be simply parting words, which are elliptical: *"...grace and truth."*

Translation: *Grace and truth [be to you].* Although the LXX has a more lengthy translation of this phrase, the idea is, this may just be a way of saying goodbye. As is so often the case, the Dead Sea Scrolls are of no help to us here (it is apparently unreadable) and it would not be out of the ordinary for the Greek to fill in enough words to give meaning to this phrase. So, what we find in the Hebrew is likely accurate; but what he have in the Greek actually conveys the meaning of what David is saying.

Since there are several additional words in the Greek, we will look at this final phrase, but as the Greek has it.

2Samuel 15:20e Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
kurios (κύριος) [pronounced <i>KOO-ree-oss</i>]	<i>lord, master; Lord; he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; the possessor and disposer of a thing; the owner; one who has control of the person; prince, chief, sovereign</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2962
poieō (ποιέω) [pronounced <i>poi-EH-oh</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce; to carry out, to execute [a plan, an intention]; to practice, to act</i>	3 rd person singular, future active indicative	Strong's #4160
meta (μετά) [pronounced <i>meht-AH</i>]	<i>with, among, in the company of, in the midst of</i>	preposition with the genitive	Strong's #3326
sou (σου) [pronounced <i>sue</i>]	<i>of you, your; from you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #4771 (genitive is given Strong's #4675)

2Samuel 15:20e Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
eleos (ἔλεος) [pronounced EHL-eh-os]	<i>grace, mercy, kindness; clemency</i>	neuter singular noun; nominative case	Strong's #1656
Thayer definitions: 1) <i>mercy: kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them; 1a) of men towards men: to exercise the virtue of mercy, show one's self merciful; 1b) of God towards men: in general providence; the mercy and clemency of God in providing and offering to men salvation by Christ; 1c) the mercy of Christ, whereby at his return to judgment he will bless true Christians with eternal life.</i>			
καί (καί) [pronounced kī]	<i>and, even, also; so, too, then, that; indeed, but</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
alêtheia (ἀλήθεια, ας, ῆ) [pronounced ahl-Ā-thi-ah]	<i>[absolute, unimpeachable, divine] truth, divine viewpoint, veracity, verity; reality; of a truth, in reality, in face, certainly; conduct which is in accordance with truth/divine viewpoint</i>	feminine singular noun; accusative case	Strong's #225

Translation: And [the] Lord will make with you mercy and truth. The Greek, obviously, has a lengthier ending.

Therefore, David probably did not simply tell Ittai, "Grace and truth;" but he instead said that the Lord manufacture grace and truth for Ittai. There is one problem in the Greek: in the case of the singular *you* (which is what is in the Greek) I would have expected no preposition, but only the genitive case. However, when the Greek preposition *meta* is thrown in, then I would have expected it to be followed with the 2nd person plural, and then it would have been, "And the Lord will produce among [all of] you grace and truth." Why it was found to be the way that it is, I don't know. However, to generally understand my confusion at the text should not detract from the general idea that David is asking that God manufacture grace and truth to Ittai.

As long as we understand that, David has laid out, briefly, the entire Christian life (i.e., the life of a relationship to the True God). Mercy and grace describe salvation. God saved us in His mercy toward us (Titus 3:5). However, after salvation, we ought to be interested in and pursue truth. After all, that is the exact opposite of what Satan brought to this earth. He caused the other angels to fall, and one would assume that this was done with lies about God's character and abilities. Just as he lied to Eve, Satan lied to the angels, because he is a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). In fact, this is why we have the Bible: in order to counteract all of the lies that we face in this world.

Because of the problems with missing phrases in the Hebrew, it is likely that what is added back by the Greek is accurate. The entire translation of v. 20 is: *Yesterday, you arrived and today, I am leading you about with us to go [wherever]. And I am going in that I am going.* [The Greek inserts: Certainly, you will be removed from your place (in Jerusalem). You came forth (but) yesterday and today, you will move with us (when we) depart] *Return and cause your brothers to return with you. Grace and truth [be to you]* [Greek: And the Lord will produce grace and truth with you]." However, even though David suggests that they separate, he wants Ittai to remain in God's grace and God's truth.

We find grace and truth throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Grace and Truth [= Bible doctrine] in the Bible	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
2Sam. 2:6a	And now may Jehovah show grace and truth to you. This confirms that this was a common refrain from that era.
Psalms 25:10	All the LORD's ways show grace and truth to those who keep His covenant and decrees. Grace and truth are the keys to our faithful walk with God.
Psalms 57:3	God sends His help from heaven and delivers me. He rebukes the one who is harassing me. Selah! God sends His grace and His truth! The person chasing David at this time is Saul, and David calls upon God to rebuke him.
Psalms 61:6–7	You will add to the days of the king's life; his years will be for many generations. He shall dwell [in blessing] before God forever; weight out grace and truth to guard him. David is praying for himself and all other kings who trust in God. He asks for grace and truth to guard him.
Psalms 85:9–11	Surely God's deliverance is near those that fear Him, so that Glory may dwell in our land. Fearing God is occupation with Christ. God's glory is His Son. Grace and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. God has made all of these things, compatible with His character, work together. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from Heaven. The angels will learn truth, and understand God's perfect, by observing mankind, whom God has made.
Psalms 89:14	Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne [O God]; and grace and doctrine shall come before Your face. All that God does is based upon His righteousness and justice; and His relationship with man is grace and doctrine.
Prov. 14:22	Do not those who think evil go astray? But grace and doctrine shall be to those who think [divine] good. Our minds are to be upon doctrine, which is truth, which is divine good; our minds should be upon grace, which is God's mercy toward mankind.
John 1:17	For the Law came through Moses, but grace and doctrine came through Jesus Christ. The Law condemns us; we are not made righteous by the Law. However, Jesus Christ has given us grace and Bible doctrine. We are saved by grace and we live by grace.
2Tim. 1:13–14, 16	Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me [= Bible doctrine taught categorically], in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus [we believe God's Word and we function in the realm of the Holy Spirit]. Guard the good Deposit given through the Holy Spirit indwelling in us [the Holy Spirit will preserve us until the day of our salvation]. May the Lord give grace to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. Onesiphorus operated on divine viewpoint, so that he recognized Paul as the man of God that he was. The fact that he had been arrested was of no consequence to him.

This list of verses, with some modification, were suggested by *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 15:20.

And so answers Ittai the king and so he says, “Living [is] Y^ehowah and living [is] my adonai the king that if in a place of which is there my adonai the king, if for death if for lives, that there is your servant.”

2Samuel
15:21

But [lit., *and so*] Ittai answered the king and said, “[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king, that in the place where my adonai the king is—whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—there will your servant be.”

But Ittai the Gittite answered the king, saying, “By the life of Jehovah and by the life of my lord the king, wherever my lord the king is—whether I die or live in great prosperity—there will I, your servant, be.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Ethai answered the king, saying: <u>As</u> the Lord lives, and <u>as</u> my lord the king lives: in what place soever you will be, my lord, O king, either in death, or in life, there will your servant be.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so answers Ittai the king and so he says, “Living [is] Y ^e howah and living [is] my adonai the king that if in a place of which is there my adonai the king, if for death if for lives, that there is your servant.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	But Ittai answered the king and said, <u>As</u> the LORD lives and <u>as</u> the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there will your servant be also.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Ittai answered the king and said, <u>As</u> the Lord lives and <u>as</u> 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.

Significant differences: In the first phrase of what Ittai says, there is no word *as*; but this is a way to convey what he is saying to us in his oath in the English. There are more words in the Hebrew in his oath than *wherever*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But Ittai answered the king, "As surely as the Lord lives and as surely as my master the king lives, wherever my master the king may be, facing death or facing life, your servant will be there too."
Contemporary English V.	Ittai answered, "Your Majesty, just as surely as you and the LORD live, I will go where you go, no matter if it costs me my life."
Easy-to-Read Version	But Ittai answered the king, "As the Lord lives, and as long as you live, I will stay with you. {I will be with you} in life or death!"
Good News Bible (TEV)	But Ittai answered, "Your Majesty, I swear to you in the LORD's name that I will always go with you wherever you go, even if it means death."
<i>The Message</i>	But Ittai answered, "As GOD lives and my master the king lives, where my master is, that's where I'll be--whether it means life or death."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But Ittai said to the king, "I vow by the Lord and by your own life that I will go wherever my lord the king goes, no matter what happens-whether it means life or death."
Beck's American Translation	"As the LORD lives, and by the life of my lord the king, no!" Ittai answered the king. "Wherever my lord the king is, either in death or life, your servant will be there."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	But Ittai answered the king, "I solemnly swear, as the LORD and the king live: Wherever you are, whether you're dead or alive, I'll be there."

New American Bible	But Ittai answered the king, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, your servant shall be wherever my lord the king is, whether for death or for life." Ruth 1:16-17.
NIRV	But Ittai replied to the king, "You are my king and master. I want to be where you are. It doesn't matter whether I live or die. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive."
New Simplified Bible	Ittai answered: »Your Majesty, I swear to you in the name of Jehovah that I will always go with you wherever you go, even if it means death.«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And Ittai the Gittite in answer said, By the living Lord, and by the life of my lord the king, in whatever place my lord the king may be, for life or death, there will your servant be.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But Athar answered the king, and said, "By the life of the EVER-LIVING and by the life of your Majesty the king, I will be at the place, wherever your Majesty the king is; whether for death or for life, there will your servant be."
NET Bible®	But Ittai replied to the king, "As surely as the LORD lives and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king is, whether dead or alive [Heb "whether for death or for life."], there I [Heb "your servant."] will be as well!"
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Ittai answered the sovereign and said, "As יהוה lives, and as my master the sovereign lives, in whatever place my master the sovereign is, whether in death or life, let your servant also be there."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

exeGesés companion Bible	And Ittay answers the sovereign and says, Yah Veh lives and adoni the sovereign lives, surely in whatever place my adoni the sovereign is - whether in death or life, even there also your servant is.
Keil and Delitzsch (updated)	But Ittai replied with a solemn oath, "Assuredly at the place where my lord the king shall be (stay), whether for death or life, there will your servant be." This is in part from their commentary and does not represent a translation, apart from the quotation.
Syndein	But Ittai replied to the king, and said, "By the life {chay} of Jehovah/God . . . and by the life {chay} of my lord the king {Ittai recognizes his two main sources of authority. He will say it is his right as a mature believer to say where is God's geographical will for him. He has followed David in times of prosperity and wants to stay with him in times of adversity.} assuredly/'with confidence'/dogmatically, {idiom: literally 'if with' or 'for with' means 'dogmatically'} in whatever place my lord the king may be, 'whether {it means to me} life or death'/'whether in death or life', count on it . . . your 'loyal servant' will be there. {Note: Ittai is a mature believer. He is deciding for himself what the will of God is for him! David must be smiling when he sees how mature this man has become in a very short time. Ittai was also the son of Achish the king of Gad. Even as a gentile, he raised Ittai to be a man of integrity.} {Note: There are three categories to the will of God. First, is the 'viewpoint will' - 'what does God want me to think about this situation?'. Second, 'geographic will' - 'where does God want me to be related to this situation?' (applicable here). And, three 'operational will of God' - 'what does God want me to do related to this situation?'}.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And Ittai answered the king, and said, As Yahweh lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in what place my lord the king will be, whether to death or to life, even there also will your slave be.

World English Bible

Ittai answered the king, and said, As Yahweh lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, even there also will your servant be.

Young's Updated LT

And Ittai answers the king and says, "Jehovah lives, and my lord the king lives, surely in the place where my lord the king is—if for death, if for life, surely there is your servant."

The gist of this verse:

Ittai pledges his loyalty to David, whether this means life or death.

2Samuel 15:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿānāh (אָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʾIttay (אִתַּי) [pronounced <i>ihT-TAH-ee</i>]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87
ʾēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: **But** [lit., *and so*] **Ittai answered the king...** Although David issued Ittai an order, for one of the very few times in his life, Ittai speaks up to disobey the king. He will do so with the upmost respect.

2Samuel 15:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311

2Samuel 15:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh- NAY</i>]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated <i>Adonai, adonai</i></i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10

There are actually 3 forms of this word: 'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; 'ădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; and 'ădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NEE*].

This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יִם) [pronounced *eem*], an older form of the *pluralis excellentiæ* (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1st person singular suffix, hence, *my Lord* (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from *my lords*).

There are points of grammar which speak to the options above, but not so that we may unequivocally choose between the three. (1) When we find 'ădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAH*] (note the difference of the vowel ending), it always means *my lords*. (2) Jehovah calls Himself 'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*] in Job 28:28 Isa. 8:7; however, many of the Job manuscripts read *Y^ehowah* and 8 ancient Isaiah manuscripts read *Y^ehowah* instead. This suggests, that either ancient Scribes were confused about this form of *Adonai* or that they simply substituted *Adonai* for *Y^ehowah*, which was not an abnormal practice (in oral readings, the ancient Tetragrammaton was not spoken, but *Lord* was said instead). And even if every manuscript read *Adonai*, then we may also reasonably conclude that one member of the Trinity is addressing another member of the Trinity (although the idea of God saying *my Lord* would be theologically confusing, even if addressing another member of the Trinity; although Jesus did refer to God the Father as *our Father*).

Almost every single translator renders this *Lord, the Lord, or Adonai*. On occasion, however, this is rendered *my Lord*.

melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
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Translation: ...and said, "[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king,... First Ittai takes an oath, which brings in both spiritual authority and temporal authority. When Ittai speaks of God being alive, he says it in the exact sense that David is alive. The idea is, to Ittai, both Y^ehowah and David are alive to him; they are equally real. He probably learned of the Lord from David, and he is clearly a believer in Y^ehowah Elohim. As has

been previously discussed, many people immigrated to Israel because their God was Y^ehowah. The same thing is true of the United States.

Although Absalom is the king's son, at no time does he speak of God in an personal way; however, Ittai, a foreigner, is herein taking an oath by God.

2Samuel 15:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mâqôwm (מָקוֹם) [pronounced <i>maw-KOHM</i>]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode</i> (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

The two word ʾăsher + shâm can be rendered *where, in what place, to what place* when found together. Sometimes, the addition of the verb *to be* might be appropriate to smooth out the phrasing.

ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
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There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנִי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NEE*].

This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (אֲדֹנַיִם) [pronounced *eem*], an older form of the *plurialis excellentiæ* (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1st person singular suffix, hence, *my Lord* (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from *my lords*).

2Samuel 15:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>There are points of grammar which speak to the options above, but not so that we may unequivocally choose between the three. (1) When we find 'ădônay (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAH</i>] (note the difference of the vowel ending), it always means <i>my lords</i>. (2) Jehovah calls Himself 'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i>] in Job 28:28 Isa. 8:7; however, many of the Job manuscripts read <i>Y^ehowah</i> and 8 ancient Isaiah manuscripts read <i>Y^ehowah</i> instead. This suggests, that either ancient Scribes were confused about this form of <i>Adonai</i> or that they simply substituted <i>Adonai</i> for <i>Y^ehowah</i>, which was not an abnormal practice (in oral readings, the ancient Tetragrammaton was not spoken, but <i>Lord</i> was said instead). And even if every manuscript read <i>Adonai</i>, then we may also reasonably conclude that one member of the Trinity is addressing another member of the Trinity (although the idea of God saying <i>my Lord</i> would be theologically confusing, even if addressing another member of the Trinity; although Jesus did refer to God the Father as <i>our Father</i>).</p>			
<p>Almost every single translator renders this <i>Lord, the Lord, or Adonai</i>. On occasion, however, this is rendered <i>my Lord</i>.</p>			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...that in the place where my adonai the king is... Essentially, Ittai is going to tell David, "Wherever you are, I will be there too." All of this proceeds from an oath where Ittai has recognized the reality of the God of Israel.

2Samuel 15:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
<p>When this particle 'îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>] is found twice (as it is here), it can be translated, ...<i>whether...or...</i></p>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâveth (מָוֶת) [pronounced <i>MAW-veth</i>]	<i>death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4194 BDB #560
'îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
<p>When this particle 'îm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>] is found twice (as it is here), it can be translated, ...<i>whether...or...</i></p>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced khay- YEEM]	<i>life, lives, living, being alive, having life, immortality, a long life, sustenance, sustaining life; refreshment; being vigorous; prosperity, welfare, happiness, living prosperously</i>	masculine plural substantive; masculine plural adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #313

Translation:... —whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—... For Ittai, it does not matter if his time with David ends up in death (e.g., in a battle with Absalom) or whether they live. Ittai uses the plural of *life*, which, in the Hebrew, can refer to *life in great prosperity*. This is a part of life with a **supergrace** believer, which is what David is.

You will notice that Ittai mentions *death* first; this suggests that he has no misgivings about the risks involved here. He clearly understands that he can be killed for associating with David.

David suggests that Ittai has no reason to be loyal to him and that, if he chooses to return to live under Absalom, that is okay, as Ittai is not a Jew and has no relational connection of David. However, Ittai does not see it this way he is not going to abandon his friend and his king, David, even though the circumstances are dire.

What we have here is the king of man who followed David, based upon David's relationship with the God of Israel. We will, in the next chapter, see the caliber of man who followed Absalom.

2Samuel 15:21e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: ...there will your servant be." Ittai ends his moderately complex pledge to be wherever David is.

Think about where these two men are. They are not too far from where Jesus and the Apostles were after our Lord's last supper before the trials and His crucifixion. They were in Jerusalem, and had gone down to the Kidron valley, and up Mount Olives. *After Jesus had said these things, He went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, and He and His disciples went into it (John 18:1). He went out and made His way as usual to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. When He reached the place, He told them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." (Luke 22:39–40).* Not too long after this, the Apostle Peter denied

the Lord three times after Jesus had been arrested. After Jesus is taken, Peter tries to follow Him as He is taken into Jerusalem, but when he is recognized as being a disciple of Jesus, Peter denies this 3 times. But Ittai tells David: “[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king, that in the place where my adonai the king is—whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—there will your servant be.” What a contrast, and all of this takes place in the same general area—outside of Jerusalem, on the other side of the Brook Kidron, up on the Mount of Olives.

Ittai makes a clear choice to stay with David, saying first, even if he dies, that is where he wants to be. Ittai had his priorities straight. David was a great believer; he understood doctrine and he apparently either wrote or taught doctrine. But what he said was profound. Furthermore, Ittai recognized that, as a mature believer, David would receive great blessing from God, and this blessing overflowed to all who were with him.

On the other hand—and many of you may not be able to relate to this—what an incredible thing to go down in battle righting side-by-side King David; what could be more exciting and glorious? So Ittai was ready for whatever. The very idea of taking out as many of David’s enemies as humanly possible, whether one’s life is taken on the battlefield or not is what Ittai is more than willing to do.

Application: Where do you want to be when disaster strikes? You want to be among a number of supergrace believers. You want to be in a place where doctrine is being taught; where people have a love for God (which means, in this dispensation, a love of the Word of God).

I recall a few years back when a number of **ambassadors** were saying, “I don’t want to serve in Iraq. That is like giving me a death sentence.” However, liberals loved the Arab spring, which, at this point in time, is imploding and turning evil (it always was **evil**, but **more people** are able to **recognize** it now). Now, serving nearly anywhere in the Middle East is a lousy place to be (if not a **deadly** place to serve), unless you are a believer with doctrine and you are able and willing to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the people.

Ittai understands where his life will be full; standing along side of David, a supergrace believer. In many cases, this is in the eye of the storm; all around you, you see the hurricane thrashing and tearing everything apart, but in the eye, everything is calm and safe. One might see that as illustrative of God’s protective wall of fire for His Own.

Guzik summed this up quite quickly.

Guzik on Ittai’s Testimony of Loyalty

1. Ittai did it when David was down
2. Ittai did it decisively
3. Ittai did it voluntarily
4. Ittai did it having newly come to David
5. Ittai did it publicly
6. Ittai did it knowing that the fate of David became his fate

From: *David Guzik’s Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:19–23.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

But [lit., and so] Ittai answered the king and said, “[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king, that in the place where my adonai the king is—whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—there will your servant be.” It should not strike us as odd that Ittai, a Philistine gentile, is pledging his support and loyalty to David, a Jew. Ittai recognizes David’s association with the True God of the Universe, and therefore, joins him, whether for death or for life.

Application: It is not good luck hooking up with a doctrinal church; it is common sense. Throughout the Bible, God respects those who are His. Recall that, even with Abraham's nephew Lot, God preserved Lot and even respected his family that came after, despite the fact that it was a product of incest.

Application: Your associations and the associations of your children is of utmost importance. But Ruth replied [to her Jewish mother-in-law]: Do not persuade me to leave you or go back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD do this to me, and even more, if anything but death separates you and me (Ruth 1:16–17). A man with many friends may be harmed, but there is a friend who stays closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24). See also John 6:66–69.

<p>And so says David unto Ittai, "Go and pass on." And so passes on Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little one who [are] with him.</p>	<p>2Samuel 15:22</p>	<p>Therefore, David said to Ittai, "Advance and pass by." And Ittai the Gittite passed by with all his followers and all of the families who [are] with him.</p>
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Therefore, David said to Ittai, "March and pass before me." And Ittai the Gittite passed before David with all of his soldiers and their families.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And David said to Ethai: Come, and pass over. And Ethai the Gethite passed, and all the men that were with him, and the rest of the <u>people</u> .
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says David unto Ittai, "Go and pass on." And so passes on Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little one who [are] with him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. So Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men and all the little ones that were with him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said to Ittai, Come and pass over <u>with me</u> . So Ittai the Gittite and the king passed over, and all his <u>servants</u> , and all the <u>multitude</u> with him.

Significant differences: The Greek adds a *with me* to what David says to Ittai. Who exactly is with Ittai varies slightly, according to the English translations of the Latin and Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	"Okay then," David replied to Ittai. "Keep marching!" So Ittai the Gittite and all of his men and all the little children with him marched past....
Contemporary English V.	"Then come on!" David said. So Ittai and all his men and their families walked on past David.
Easy English	David said to Ittai, 'Go ahead and walk.' So, Ittai from Gath walked past. All his men and their families were with him.
Easy-to-Read Version	David said to Ittai, "Come, let's go cross Kidron Brook."
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Fine!" David answered. "March on!" So Ittai went on with all his men and their dependents.
<i>The Message</i>	"All right," said David, "go ahead." And they went on, Ittai the Gittite with all his men and all the children he had with him.
New Living Translation	David replied, "All right, come with us." So Ittai and all his men and their families went along.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king said, 'Then come with me!' And Ittai the Gethite and all his servants (a huge number of them) traveled with the king.
Beck's American Translation	"Come along," David told Ittai. So Ittai from Gath went ahead with all his men and all his family who were with him.
Christian Community Bible	Then David said to Ittai, "Go then, march on." So Ittai the Gittite marched on with all his men and all the children who were with him.
<i>God's Word™</i>	So David told Ittai, "Go ahead and keep marching." So Ittai from Gath marched on with all his men and all the families who were with him.
New American Bible	So the king said to Ittai, "Go, then, march on." And Ittai the Gittite, with all his men and all the dependents that were with him, marched on.
NIRV	David said to Ittai, "Go ahead then. Keep marching with my men." So Ittai, the Gittite, kept marching. All of his men and their families marched with him.
New Simplified Bible	David answered: »That is fine. March on!« So Ittai went on with all his men and their dependents.
Revised English Bible	David said to Ittai, 'It is well, march on!' And Ittai the Gittite marched on with his whole company and all the dependants who were with him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David said to Ittai, "Go and pass." Ittai of Gath passed with all his men with all the his children.
Bible in Basic English	And David said to Ittai, Go forward, then. And Ittai the Gittite went on, with all his men and all the little ones he had with him.
Complete Jewish Bible	"Go, move along," said David to Ittai; and Ittai the Gitti moved on, accompanied by all his men and the little ones with him.
HCSB	"March on," David replied to Ittai. So Ittai the Gittite marched past with all his men and the children who were with him.
New Advent Bible	And David said to Ethai: Come, and pass over. And Ethai the Gethite passed, and all the men that were with him, and the rest of the people.
NET Bible®	So David said to Ittai, "Come along then [Heb "Come and cross over.]" So Ittai the Gittite went along [Heb "crossed over.]", accompanied by all his men and all the dependents [Heb "all the little ones."] who were with him.
NIV – UK	David said to Ittai, 'Go ahead, march on.' So Ittai the Gittite marched on with all his men and the families that were with him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	So David said to Ittai, Go on and pass over [the Kidron]. And Ittai the Gittite passed over and all his men and all the little ones who were with him.
English Standard Version	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.
exeGesés companion Bible	And David says to Ittay, Go and pass over. - and Ittay the Gittiy passes over with all his men and with all the toddlers.
Syndein	Consequently, David said to Ittai, "Move out and cross over {the ford of Citron}." Then Ittai the Gittite crossed over {the Citron} with all his men, and all the families which were with him. {Note: Ittai will stay and become one of David's three great corps commanders.}
World English Bible	David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones who were with him.

Young's Updated LT

And David says unto Ittai, "Go and pass over;" and Ittai the Gittite passes over, and all his men, and all the infants who are with him.

The gist of this verse:

Ittai and all of his men and their families chose to go with David, so they march with him.

2Samuel 15:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דִּי־דָּ) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eh/</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ittay (אִתַּי) [pronounced <i>iht-TAH-ee</i>]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #5674 BDB #716

Translation: Therefore, David said to Ittai, "Advance and pass by." David is overlooking all of his troops, and ordering them to move in formation before him. So he gives this order to Ittai. David appears to be organizing the troops who have come with him and maneuvering them before him.

2Samuel 15:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 15:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ābar (אָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
'Ittay (אִתַּי) [pronounced <i>ih^t-TAH-ee</i>]	<i>with me; transliterated Ithai, Ittai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #863 BDB #87
Gittiy (גִּתִּי) [pronounced <i>git-TEE</i>]	<i>inhabitant of Gath and possibly wine press; and transliterated Gittite</i>	gentilic singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1663 BDB #388

Translation: *And Ittai the Gittite passed by...* Therefore, Ittai leads a battalion of 600 soldiers in formation before David. He is passing by David in review. This simply means that Ittai is both following orders and his men are very capable and well-trained soldiers.

As a high ranking military man, you need to know two things: your assets and your enemy's assets.

2Samuel 15:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh^l</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ānāshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>uh-NAW-sheem</i>]; also spelled 'iyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>ee-SHEEM</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh^l</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ṭaph (טַף) [pronounced <i>tahf</i>]	<i>children, little children, little ones, young boys; young people up to the age of 20; families</i>	masculine singular (collective) noun with the definite article	Strong's #2945 BDB #381

Although the ṭaph (טַף) [pronounced *tahf*] can refer to little ones, it also can refer to young men who are under the age of 20 (Ex. 12:37) and to families as well (2Chron. 20:13).

2Samuel 15:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced geem]	with, at, by, near; like; from	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix; pausal form	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...with all his followers and all of the families who [are] with him. The men who are with him—his followers—these are the 600 soldiers. However, they have brought with them their families. Although the word used here can refer to little ones, it also can refer to young men who are under the age of 20 (Ex. 12:37) and to families as well (2Chron. 20:13). It would make little sense for this army of 600 to only bring their children along; therefore, this refers to the families of the Gittite soldiers. So, quite obviously, they are throwing in with David in a big way. They are even putting their families at risk.⁷⁹ Again, in a time of national disaster, where should you be? As close to a supergrace believer as possible.

This ought to seem like a careful choice that these people are making. Absalom is new and shiny, and he looks great; and David has made several major mistakes in his life. However, apparently these men are able to recognize the one they should be backing, who is David. David has a clear relationship to God, and these men are all aware of that. Therefore, it makes more sense to remain with God's man than it does to trust some heathen.

Again, this all goes back to what Ittai first said: **But** [lit., and so] **Ittai answered the king and said, "[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king, that in the place where my adonai the king is—whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—there will your servant be."** Ittai and his soldiers recognize the relationship that David has with God, and that is the most important factor to them. This is known as being in the **geographical will of God (HTML) (PDF)**. Ittai knows that being in God's geographical will means being with David.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I have mentioned the geographical will of God on many occasions. Therefore, it might be useful to have it laid out in doctrinal form.

The Geographical Will of God

- Anything related to the will of God has several common elements:
 - First of all, you must be a believer in Jesus Christ. There is no will of God whatsoever for the unbeliever, apart from, "**Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.**" (John 3:16, 18, 36).
 - In order to discern the will of God, including His geographical will, you must be in fellowship, which requires you to name your sins to God (1John 1:9).
 - You must know Bible doctrine (2Peter 3:18). God does not give you a tingly feeling when you are doing the right thing and a stomach ache when you are not.
- There are things which are true for all human beings, which are the **laws of divine establishment**.

⁷⁹ From Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *Sir John Chardin informs us, in a manuscript note on this place, that it is usual with the greatest part of the eastern people, especially the Arabs, to carry their whole family with them when they go to war.* Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 15:22.

The Geographical Will of God

Believers and unbelievers ought to function within the confines of these laws.

3. You do not use your free will to sin or to commit crimes. When you do that, you are out of the will of God and probably out of the geographical will of God.
4. It is a part of man's nature and a part of man's responsibility to work. So, during working hours, you ought to be at work.
 - 1) Adam worked both in perfect environment and in a fallen world. Gen. 2:8, 15 3:17
 - 2) On many occasions, God teaches the importance of hard work. One example is Prov. 6:6–11.
 - 3) When believers lost track of this in Thessalonika, Paul told them, **If one does not work, then neither should he eat** (2Thess. 3:10).
 - 4) As an aside, a believer should not be sitting at home collecting a check from the government. I have personally known dozens of people who collect checks from the government, and, apart from a social security check collected after age 65, I have never known a single person who would have starved without this government check. In most cases, the same is true of most of the retired social security recipients that I have known.
5. Believers and unbelievers both have a responsibility toward their spouses and toward their children. To properly function in a marriage to properly raise a child, there must be time spent on these things. That time spent with the family is being within the geographical will of God.
6. Believers grow by means of the Spirit and knowledge of the Word of God (2Peter 3:18). That means, you ought to be under the teaching of the Word of God every day that your church is open. Unfortunately, in most cases, it is only open 2–3 times per week. This ought to be supplemented with additional teaching on the off days.
7. Once you have taken into consideration your job, your spouse, your family, the intake of Bible doctrine, along with meals and sleeping; it is generally quite easy to be in God's geographical will 24 hours a day.
8. What about the big things, like moving from point A to point B?
 - 1) If you are in a city where there is no Bible doctrine being taught (and there are many cities like that), and no group which studies under a pastor from another city, you need to consider other cities. I have known a lot of people over the years and very few who did not have the academic discipline of the church classroom (which could be a group in which a person meets) were able to make a go of the spiritual lives. This is a **list** of doctrinal churches that I am aware of.
 - 2) When it comes to making a big move, there will certainly be other factors, e.g., advancement in your profession, a job promotion, specialized training for your profession, etc. You may not be able to find a job in your field in your city. However, if you are looking to make a move because of your vocation, then the spiritual availabilities where you are moving to must be a part of your decision making process.
 - 3) All of your decisions ought to have a spiritual aspect to them. That is a part of being occupied with the Person of Jesus Christ.
 - 4) God will not talk to you, He will not email you, He will not give you tingly feelings to move your from point A to point B.
9. The same thing is true when it comes to any major decision in your life, e.g., changing jobs. Personal problems or a personality conflict are not sufficient reasons to change jobs. One of the best decisions I made was to stay at a job where there were problems, and that encouragement to stay came from Bible teaching which I received just at that time. Similarly, one of the best decisions I made was to change jobs (that very same job) about 15 years later.
10. For the new believer or the immature believer, your best decision is to stay right where you are about 99.9% of the time. Paul advises that the believer remain in the state wherein he was called. If he is a slave, do not expend effort trying to be free. If you are married to an unbeliever, do not seek to break the bonds of your marriage. 1Cor. 7:20–21 **Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.)** Read all of 1Cor. 7:18–24 to get the full impact of this passage.
11. We have had several instances of God's geographical will being made clear (that is, God came to these individuals and told them what to do and where to go):
 - 1) Noah building the ark and then entering into the ark with his family.

The Geographical Will of God

- 2) Abram and his wife moving to the Land of Promise.
 - 3) Hagar being sent back to her mistress.
 - 4) You will never receive these sorts of verbal instructions because you have the entire Word of God available to you.
12. We also have instances of a believer being in God’s geographical will without God having to tell him exactly where to go and what to do.
- 1) Abram chose to separate from Lot because they were involved in constant disputes over the ownership of the assets of their two companies. God came to Abram almost immediately after and continued teaching the Abrahamic Covenant to him. Gen. 13
 - 2) Abram in Gen. 14 gathered his men and fought to free his nephew Lot from what would be a lifetime of slavery. God did not have to come to Abram and tell him to do this. As a result, Abram enjoys the fellowship of Melchizedek, one of the pivotal people of the Old Testament.
13. For the growing and mature believer, the key to the geographical will of God is being in fellowship with God and knowing the Word of God.

Additional resources:

- The Doctrine of the Will of God ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#))
- R. B. Thieme, Jr.’s [Divine Guidance](#).
- Buddy Dano’s [God’s Will for Your Life](#).
- The example of [Paul and the geographical will of God](#).

This doctrine is taken directly from [lesson #160](#) from the [Basic Exegesis of Genesis](#) ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

In the Old Testament, most believers had a relationship with someone who had a relationship with God. Because Jesus had not yet come, these various people were representative of Jesus (usually in His 1st Advent).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

David Sets up the High Priests to Head His Insurgency Network

Since we are going to spend several chapters on counterespionage, it might be helpful to know some of the language.

The Vocabulary of Revolution, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Agent	A person, usually a foreign national, who has been recruited by a staff case officer from an intelligence service to perform clandestine missions.
Clandestine operation	An operation sponsored or conducted by governmental departments or agencies in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment. A clandestine operation differs from a covert operation in that emphasis is placed on concealment of the operation rather than on concealment of the identity of the sponsor. In special operations, an activity may be both covert and clandestine and may focus equally on operational considerations and intelligence-related activities. An intelligence operation designed to remain secret as long as possible.
Clandestine warfare	This is the secret war which goes on between nations, during times of peace and times of war.

The Vocabulary of Revolution, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Compromised	When an operation, asset, or agent is uncovered and cannot remain secret.
Conspiracy	A group of individuals who have, in secrecy or in partial secrecy, banded together to overthrow establish authority or an established system.
Counter-espionage	...is spying directed against an enemy's spy system, such as by recruiting agents in foreign intelligence organs. These are activities to protect classified information from enemies.
Counterinsurgency	Action taken by a government to counter insurgent activities (those of revolutionaries, rebels, guerrillas, etc.).
Counter-intelligence	...is the activity of preventing the enemy from obtaining secret information.
Covert operations	Secret acts by a spy organization.
Decoy	...is a person used to distract, confuse the adversary
Defector	In politics, a defector is a person who gives up allegiance to one state or political entity in exchange for allegiance to another. This act is usually in a manner which violates the laws of the nation or political entity from which the person is seeking to depart, as opposed to a change of citizenship, which does not typically defy the law of any nation.
Disinformation	...is deliberately false information released to mislead an enemy
Espionage	...is the act or function of obtaining secrets from enemies. It is the practice of spying or using spies to obtain information about the plans and activities especially of a foreign government
Infiltration operation	The covert moving of an operative into a target area with the idea that his presence or true affiliation will go undetected for the appropriate amount of time.
Insurgency	An insurgency is the state or condition of being in revolt or insurrection. This is an uprising against the state.
Intrigue	Intrigue is the means by which conspirators carry out their plan of revolution.
Mole	A human penetration into an intelligence service or other highly sensitive organization. Quite often a mole is a defector who agrees to work in place.
Operative	An intelligence officer or agent operating in the field.
Plot	A plot is a carefully designed plan designed to carry out a conspiracy.
Revolution	Revolution is the overthrow by violence of duly constituted authority resulting in fundamental change in political organization, constitution, or government. Revolution is a form of conspiracy to overthrow establishment-type government to remove the authority of establishment by means of violence.
Revolutionary	...is a person who desires to overthrow an established government.

The Vocabulary of Revolution, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Unconventional warfare	<p>Unconventional warfare as a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery. Organization varies by culture and type of conflict. Whereas conventional warfare is used to reduce an opponent's military capability, unconventional warfare is an attempt to achieve military victory through acquiescence, capitulation, or clandestine support for one side of an existing conflict.</p>
<p>As an aside, one of the reasons for our being defeated in Vietnam was, we used conventional warfare against unconventional warfare.</p>	
<p>Definitions, for the most part, taken from: http://www.themasterofdisguise.com/glossary.html http://spywriter.com/terms2.html http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconventional_warfare http://www.thefreedictionary.com</p>	

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And so all the earth weepers a voice great and all the people passers by and the king passing over in a torrent of Kidron. And all the people passers by upon faces of a way—the wilderness.

2Samuel
15:23

So all the land was crying [with] a great voice and all the people are passing by. Then the king passes through the Kidron Brook. Then all of the people pass upon the face of the road to the desert-wilderness.

So the entire country was weeping with a loud voice as all the people advanced. Then the king himself passed through the Kidron Brook. And the people advanced near to the road which leads into the desert-wilderness.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And they all wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself went over the brook Cedron, and all the people <u>marched towards</u> the way that looks to the desert.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so all the earth weepers a voice great and all the people passers by and the king passing over in a torrent of Kidron. And all the people passers by upon faces of a way—the wilderness.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over; then the king also passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all the country wept with a loud voice. And all the people passed by <u>over the Brook of Kidron</u> ; and the king crossed the Brook Kidron. And all the people and the king passed on toward the way of the wilderness.

Significant differences: The Greek mentions the Brook Kidron twice. The English translation from the Latin has *marched forth*, which is quite similar to *passed on*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The whole countryside cried loudly as all the troops marched past. The king crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the troops passed by on the Olive road [LXXL; MT lacks Olive.] into the wilderness.
Contemporary English V.	The people of Jerusalem were crying and moaning as David and everyone with him passed by. He led them across Kidron Valley and along the road toward the desert.
Easy English	They all walked through the country. Everyone cried loudly as David and his men walked by. King David also crossed over the Kidron Valley. Then they all walked towards the desert.
Easy-to-Read Version	All the people [Literally, "country."] were crying loudly. King David crossed over Kidron Brook. Then all of the people went out to the desert.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The people cried loudly as David's followers left. The king crossed Kidron Brook, followed by his men, and together they went out toward the wilderness.
<i>The Message</i>	The whole country was weeping in loud lament as all the people passed by. As the king crossed the Brook Kidron, the army headed for the road to the wilderness.
New Berkeley Version	While all the people were passing by, the entire countryside was loudly weeping; and when the king crossed over the brook Kidron, all the people crossed too, in the direction of the desert. The road eastward from Jerusalem toward Jericho, through the northern end of the wilderness of Judah; see Luke 10:30.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, throughout the land, people were crying and wailing. Then the king and all his people crossed the Cedar (Kidron) Wadi and traveled toward the edge of the desert.
Christian Community Bible	Meanwhile, all those in the countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. Then the king crossed the brook Kidron and all the people moved on to the desert.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	The whole country was crying loudly as all the troops were passing by. The king was crossing the Kidron Valley, and all the people were moving down the road toward the desert.
New American Bible	The whole land wept aloud as the last of the soldiers went by, and the king crossed the Wadi Kidron with all the soldiers moving on ahead of him by way of the ascent of the Mount of Olives, toward the wilderness.
NIRV	All of the people in the countryside sobbed out loud as David and all of his followers passed by. The king went across the Kidron Valley. He and all of the people who were with him moved on toward the desert.
New Jerusalem Bible	The entire population was weeping aloud as the king stood in the bed of the Kidron and everyone marched past him, making for the desert.
New Simplified Bible	The people cried loudly as David's followers left. The king crossed Kidron Brook. His men followed him. They went to the wilderness.
Revised English Bible	The whole countryside resounded with their weeping. The king remained standing while all the people crossed the wadi of the Kidron before him, by way of the olive tree in the wilderness.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	All the land wept with a great voice, and all the people passed. The king passed the Kidron riverbed, and all the people passed in front of the way of the wilderness and...
Bible in Basic English	And there was great weeping in all the country when all the people went through; and the king himself was waiting in the Kidron valley and all the people went by him in the direction of the olive-tree on the edge of the waste land.
Complete Jewish Bible	The whole country wept and wailed as all the people left. When the king crossed Vadi Kidron, all the people crossed, too, heading toward the desert road.

Ferar-Fenton Bible	And all the land wept with a loud voice, when the force passed with the king over the brook Kidron. Thus all the train passed in the direction of the desert.
HCSB	Everyone in the countryside was weeping loudly while all the people were marching past. As the king was crossing the Kidron Valley, all the people were marching past on the road that leads to the desert.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	The whole countryside wept aloud as the troops marched by. The king crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the troops crossed by the road to the wilderness. Large portions of this verse are uncertain. Emendation yields "stopped in the Kidron Valley, while all the people marched on before him by way of the Mount of Olives to..."
New Advent Bible	And they all wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself went over the brook Cedron, and all the people marched towards the way that looks to the desert.
NET Bible®	All the land was weeping loudly [Heb "with a great voice."] as all these people were leaving [Heb "crossing over."]. As the king was crossing over the Kidron Valley, all the people were leaving [Heb "crossing near the face of."] on the road that leads to the desert.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And all the land are weeping--a great voice, and all the people are passing over; and the king is passing over through the brook Kidron, and all the people are passing over on the front of the way of the wilderness;...
exeGesés companion Bible	And all the land weeps with a great voice and all the people pass over: and the sovereign passes over the wadi Qidron and all the people pass over on the face of the way of the wilderness.
The Geneva Bible	And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people [That is, the four hundred men.] passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness. .
LTHB	And all the land was weeping with a loud voice. And all the people were passing over. And the king was passing over through the torrent Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.
Syndein	While the countryside wept aloud {the rural people understood what they lost when David's establishment government was leaving - they risk their property, their freedoms, and even their lives}, all the people crossed over {the Citron}. Then the king also crossed over the brook Citron, {David crossed last} while all the people crossed over before his face, and took the highway over the Mount of Olives which leads to the desert. {this is the desert between the Mount of Olives and Jericho - in Jesus' day this was called the road to Jericho} {Note: RBT's translation follows the Ko-ra reading instead of the Ka-the-eve because it gives the full directions. David will go east away from Jerusalem over the fords of the River Jordan near Jericho. He will cross these fords and wind up at Mahanaim.}.
World English Bible	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.
Young's Literal Translation	And all the land are weeping--a great voice, and all the people are passing over; and the king is passing over through the brook Kidron, and all the people are passing over on the front of the way of the wilderness.

The gist of this verse: All of the people with David and many who were not were weeping in sadness that David was no longer king over Israel. This takes place as the people and the king pass over through the brook Kidron along a road in the desert-wilderness.

2Samuel 15:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kôl (לכ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'erets (אָרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced baw-KAW]	<i>weeping [for] (in grief, humiliation, or joy), weeping [bitterly], weeping upon, crying [for], bewailing</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #1058 BDB #113
qôwl (לִוְיָהּ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

Translation: So all the land was crying [with] a great voice... *Land* here is a metonym. *Land*, quite obviously, does not weep. It stands for *the people of the land*. So, throughout the land, they have heard the trumpets and then the various people announce that Absalom is king in Hebron, and it is very sad for them to hear this, and they cry out loud, throughout all of Israel.

I have painted an honest but very negative picture of David. After telling you what Absalom had to offer, you may find it hard to believe that anyone still supported David, given his sins and crimes. But remember, for years, David has either gone out himself as a general and, more recently, has sent out his nephew Joab as a general, and he has kept the land safe. The people did not have to worry about various foreign nations coming in and attacking them because David has beat down the outside nations. This gave them great freedom and prosperity, because they were not giving some or all of their produce to some foreign land.

As I write these words, there are riots going on in Egypt, which has recently deposed Mubarak as their ruler. Now, Mubarak was a heartless, tough ruler; but he kept the peace. Egypt was a sovereign country and they had no fears from riots within or from invasion from without. Christian Churches were not persecuted. Money and time was not spent on trying to destroy Israel. However, recently, great crowds of Egyptians "stood up for freedom" in Tahir Square, Mubarak was deposed and killed, and the only viable political faction, the Muslim Brotherhood, took power through elections. And now, there are riots; churches are not safe; and the people who spearheaded this revolt, hoping for some freedom, now are under a very disorganized religious tyranny. There was law and order under Mubarak; there were tourists who regularly came to Egypt from all over the world (who were very helpful to the economy, I understand), and Christians could worship openly. Now that has all changed (I write this

in late 2012). So, just because a cruel dictator is deposed, that does not mean that life will be all sunshine and happiness. The lives of a majority of the people has degenerated significantly.

Let's take a simpler example that all Americans are aware of. George W. Bush was resoundingly rejected in 2008 (he was not on the ticket, but that is who Barack Obama ran against), and Obama was elected. People were ecstatic when he accepted the nomination of the American people. However, because he had never run even a lemon aid stand in his life, Obama was ill-prepared to run the largest bureaucracy in the world. So, people voted against John McCain because they saw him as a 3rd term of Bush, and elected someone who was new a shiny; more handsome and younger and cool. This is Absalom. He is handsome, young and cool; and he believes in equality and he treats men like they are his personal friends; and he can relate to the people of Israel. But, point of fact, had he ruled over Israel for any amount of time, his failings as a human being would become manifest.

Application: New and shiny does not mean better; hope and change is meaningless. The Arab Spring is just a slogan that we have put over a movement in the Arab world that is quite ugly and vicious.

These people in Israel who are with David recognized the freedom that they have under David; they recognize their ability to worship Y^ehowah Elohim and the freedom to enjoy their land and their property. Furthermore, there was a judicial system to which they could appeal. David provided these people with divine establishment laws; he provided them with freedom from within and freedom from without.

Therefore, to hear the David was no longer their ruler caused many people great sadness and they wept aloud because of it. Furthermore, they might find themselves in the midst of a great civil war, where a variety of normal services break down, there are battles everywhere, and the war may involve brother against brother. So, there is a potential change for the worst for all of these people.

However, one thing needs to be seriously considered: David is taking his soldiers out of Jerusalem. This not only spares those who live in Jerusalem from being in the midst of a war, but it may spare all of Israel from such a scenario. David may see to it that any war which takes place is away from the populated areas of Israel.

2Samuel 15:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
'ābar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>passers by, those passing through; those passing over</i>	masculine plural, Qal participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716

Translation: ...and all the people are passing by. There are a number of people who are with David—his palace officials, much of his army, foreign details, and many family members. They all pass in review before David.

2Samuel 15:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
‘âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>‘aw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>passing by, passing through; passing over</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nachal (נַחַל) [pronounced <i>NAHKH-al</i>]	<i>brook, torrent</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5158 BDB #636
Qid ^o rôwn (קִידְרוֹן) [pronounced <i>kidh-ROHN</i>]	<i>dark, obscure; turbid; making black [or sad]; transliterated Kidron</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6939 BDB #871

Translation: Then the king passes through the Kidron Brook. Once they have passed before David, he follows them, going through the Brook Kidron. The Kidron Brook apparently is right behind the city of David (to the east), and David and his soldiers and his followers went down the mountain on the east side and crossed over the Brook Kidron. The words used here suggest that they went through the brook, as there was apparently no way to cross over it.

The Pulpit Commentary: *The brook Kidron...is a winter torrent, dry during most of the year, but serving at the rainy seasons to carry off the rainfall from the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It lay on the east of Jerusalem, and beyond it was Mount Olivet.*⁸⁰ Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge on this subject: *The brook Kidron, which is but a few paces broad, runs along the valley of Jehoshaphat, east of Jerusalem, to the south-west corner of the city, and then, turning to the south-east, empties itself into the Dead Sea. Like the Ilissus, it is dry at least nine months in the year, being only furnished with water in the winter, and after heavy rains. its bed is narrow and deep, which indicates that it must formerly have been the channel for waters which have found some other, and probably subterraneous course.*⁸¹

There is, in fact, a garden on the other side, during the time of our Lord, where the Lord led His disciples, down into the Kidron Valley and them up into this garden or olive orchard (we might call it a park today), on the night in which He was crucified. They had eaten a good meal together in the upper room, where Jesus was teaching them; and then they went for a walk to this park area, the place where Jesus was betrayed (John 18:1–11).

This is a **Map of Jerusalem** during the time of Christ.⁸² However, it is helpful in order to see David's movements.

The city itself is built up on a hill, surrounded by various walls over the years.

⁸⁰ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:23.

⁸¹ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 15:23.

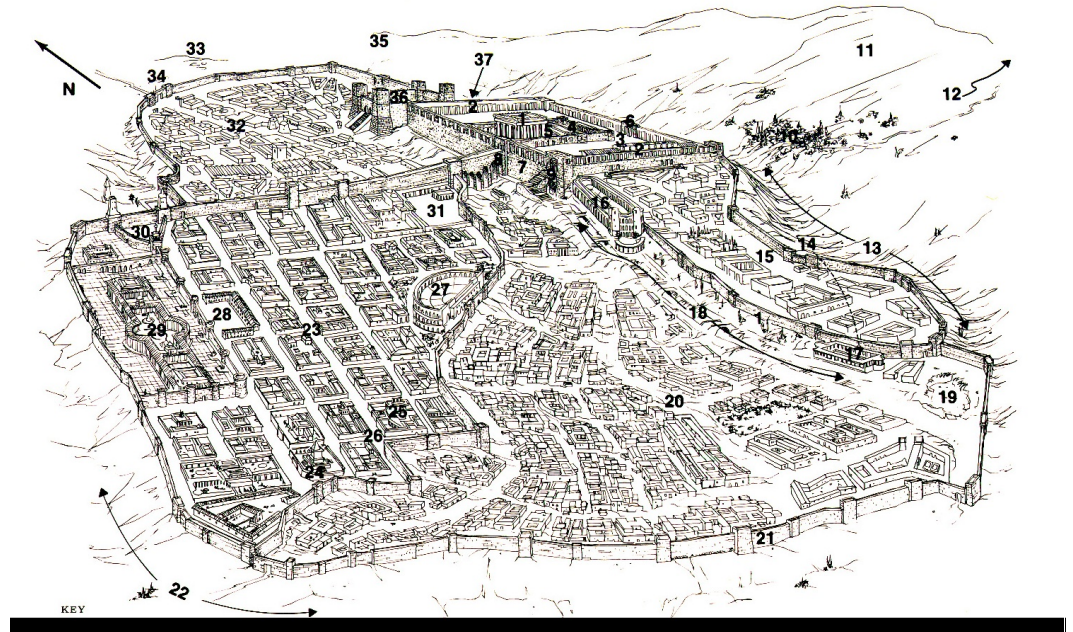
⁸² From <http://emp.byui.edu/SATTERFIELD/Rel211/jerusalem.htm> accessed October 5, 2012.

11 The Mount of Olives (on the other side and slightly south is the Dead Sea)

13 The Kidron Valley (which is where the Kidron Torrent would flow).

David's troops exit the city on the east, travel across the Brook Kidron (#13) and then ascend the Mount of Olives, crying for a portion of this ascent.

At some point, David was able to view his troops pass by him and to take direction, knowing that they might soon be at war with Absalom's army, which would include, in a few cases, brother against brother.



2Samuel 15:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kōl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
‘ābar (עָבַר) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHR]	passers by, those passing through; those passing over	masculine plural, Qal participle	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	face, faces, countenance; presence	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, ‘āl and pānîym mean upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking.

2Samuel 15:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced DEH- <i>rek</i> ^e]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
'eth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mid ^e bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced mid ^e -BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

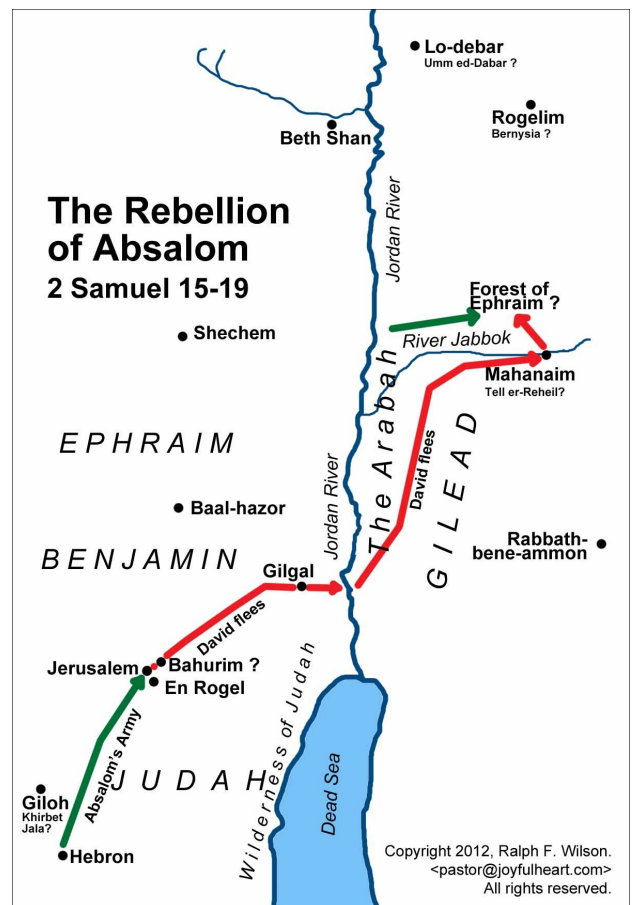
Translation: Then all of the people pass upon the face of the road to the desert-wilderness. There is a road which leads into the desert-wilderness. Although the words literally means that they traveled upon the face of this road, it is possible that they are moving along side of it as well, possibly overlooking it.

The wilderness area would have been the uninhabited area between Jerusalem and Jericho. Or it may have referred to their eventual destination on the other side of the Jordan River.

Just as the Brook Kidron is significant near the end of our Lord's earthly ministry, the wilderness of Judæa is significant at the beginning. John the Baptizer—the herald for our Lord—lived out in this wilderness, and began his ministry in this general area as well (Matt. 3:1–3 Luke 1:80).

Although the exact road to the desert-wilderness is no longer well-known to us, it would simply be going northeast, around the top of the Dead Sea in order to cross over the Jordan River.

Map of the Absalom Rebellion⁸³ to the right gives us an idea about how Absalom is moving from Hebron to Jerusalem, and how David is leaving Jerusalem.



Right outside of Jerusalem, David would have looked over his troops, put them through their paces, and then questioned their officers directly.

The maps gives us a vantage point of a much larger area. David and Absalom are both moving northeast. David is going to move out to a less populated area, east of the Jordan, where there was more cattle ranching and grazing which takes place.

⁸³ From <http://www.jesuswalk.com/david/maps/rebellion-of-absalom-map-2sam-15-19-1200x1748x300.jpg> accessed October 5, 2012.

So all the land was crying [with] a great voice and all the people are passing by. Then the king passes through the Kidron Brook. Then all of the people pass upon the face of the road to the desert-wilderness. Both the army of David and the army of Absalom are moving simultaneously in northeasterly directions. Between the Mount of Olives and Jericho—which is the direction David will take his small army—is the road to Jericho, which goes through desert wilderness.

And, behold, also Zadok and all the Levites with him those bearing an Ark of a Covenant of the Elohim. And so they set down an Ark of the Elohim. And so comes up Abiathar while all the people to pass out from the city.

2Samuel
15:24

And also, observe, Zadok [has come] and all the Levites with him, who are bearing the Ark of the Covenant of Elohim. And they set the Ark of Elohim down. Abiathar also came up while all the people were passing [in review] out from the city.

It was also observed that Zadok, the priest, had come out, along with the Levites who were bearing the Ark of the Contract of God. They set the Ark down (while David spoke with Zadok). Abiathar also came up as the people were passing in review going out of the city.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Sadoc the priest also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God, and they set down the ark of God: and Abiathar went up, till all the people that was come out of the city had done passing.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And, behold, also Zadok and all the Levites with him those bearing an Ark of a Covenant of the Elohim. And so they set down an Ark of the Elohim. And so comes up Abiathar while all the people to pass out from the city.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And behold, Zadok <u>the priest</u> went also and all the Levites who were with him, bearing the ark of God; and Abiathar went up <u>and stood</u> until all the people had finished passing over from the city.
Septuagint (Greek)	And behold also Zadok, and all the Levites were 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.

Significant differences: The Syriac adds in *the priest* but leaves out *the covenant* as a descriptor of the Ark of God. The Syriac also leaves out that they set down the Ark of God. The Syriac also adds in the phrase *and stood* to the final sentence.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Zadok was there too, along with all the Levites carrying the chest containing God's covenant. They set God's chest down, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the troops had finished marching out of the city.
Contemporary English V.	Zadok and Abiathar the priests were there along with several men from the tribe of Levi who were carrying the sacred chest. They set the chest down, and left it there until David and his followers had gone out of the city.
Easy English	Zadok was there too with all the *Levites. The *Levites were carrying the *ark of the promise of God. They put down the *ark of God. Abiathar gave *sacrifices until all the people had left Jerusalem.
Easy-to-Read Version	Zadok and all of the Levites with him were carrying the Box of God's Agreement [Also called "The Ark of the Covenant," the box containing the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them and the other things that proved God was with

the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai Desert.]. They set down God's Holy Box. And Abiathar said prayers [Literally, "went up." This could mean, "burn incense," "offer sacrifices," or it might simply mean that Abiathar stood to one side, by the Holy Box, until all of the people passed by.] until all of the people had left Jerusalem.

Good News Bible (TEV)	Zadok the priest was there, and with him were the Levites, carrying the sacred Covenant Box. They set it down and didn't pick it up again until all the people had left the city. The priest Abiathar was there too.
<i>The Message</i>	Zadok was also there, the Levites with him, carrying GOD's Chest of the Covenant. They set the Chest of God down, Abiathar standing by, until all the people had evacuated the city.
New Century Version	Zadok and all the Levites with him carried the Ark of the Agreement with God. They set it down, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had left the city.
New Living Translation	Zadok and all the Levites also came along, carrying the Ark of the Covenant of God. They set down the Ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices [Or Abiathar went up.] until everyone had passed out of the city.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	{Look!} There they saw ZaDok and all the Levites carrying the Chest of the Sacred Agreement of Jehovah from the [Tent of God]. Well, they set the Chest of God down, and AbiAthar came to him, along with all the people from the city [of JeruSalem].
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Zadok and all the Levites with him were carrying the ark of God's promise. They set down the ark of God beside Abiathar until all the troops had withdrawn from the city.
New American Bible	<i>David and the Priests.</i> Zadok, too, and all the Levites bearing the ark of the covenant of God set down the ark of God until the whole army had finished marching out of the city; and Abiathar came up.
NIRV	Zadok also went with them. Some of the Levites went with him. They were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set the ark down. Abiathar offered sacrifices until all of the people had left the city.
New Jerusalem Bible	Zadok was there too, and all the Levites with him, carrying the ark of God. They set the ark of God down beside Abiathar until everyone had finished marching out of the town.
New Simplified Bible	Zadok the priest was there. He had Levites there carrying the sacred Ark of God. They set it down and did not pick it up again until all the people left the city. The priest Abiathar was there too.
Revised English Bible	Zadok also was there and all the Levites with him, carrying the Ark of the Covenant of God. They set it down beside Abiathar until all the army had passed out of the city.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	...beheld Zadok and also all the Levites with him lifting the ark of the covenant of God until Abiathar ascended and all the people finally poured from the city and passed the ark of God.
Bible in Basic English	Then Zadok came, and Abiathar, and with them the ark of God's agreement: and they put down the ark of God, till all the people from the town had gone by.
Complete Jewish Bible	Tzadok also came, accompanied by all the L'vi'im bearing the ark for the covenant of God. They set the ark of God down, but Evyatar went up until all the people had finished leaving the city.

Ferar-Fenton Bible	There were also Zadok, and all the Levites with him carrying the Ark of the Covenant of GOD. But they set down the Ark, and helped Abiathar, until all the forces had passed out from the city.
HCSB	Zadok was also there, and all the Levites with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set the ark of God down, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until the people had finished marching past.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Then Zadok appeared, with all the Levites carrying the Ark of the Covenant of God; and they set down the Ark of God until all the people had finished marching out of the city. Abiathar also came up [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain. Emendation yields "look, you and Abiathar return."].
Judaica Press Complete T.	And lo, Zadok also came, and all the Levites 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 finished passing out of the city.
New Advent Bible	And Sadoc the priest also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God, and they set down the ark of God: and Abiathar went up, till all the people that had come out of the city had done passing.
NET Bible®	Zadok and all the Levites who were with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. When they positioned the ark of God, Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving [Heb "crossing from."] the city.
NIV – UK	Zadok was there, too, and all the Levites who were with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving the city.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And see, Tsad?oq also came, and all the Lēwites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of Elohim. And they set down the ark of Elohim, and Eb?yathar went up until all the people completed passing over from the city.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and lo, also Zadok, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of Elohim, and they make the ark of Elohim firm, and Abiathar goes up, till the completion of all the people to pass over out of the city.
English Standard Version	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.
exeGesés companion Bible	And behold, Sadoq also, and all the Leviym with him bearing the ark of the covenant of Elohim: and they firm the ark of Elohim; and Abi Athar ascends, until all the people consummate passing from the city.
The Geneva Bible	And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites [were] with him, bearing the ark [Which was the charge, of the Kohathites, (Numbers 4:4)] of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up [To stand by the ark], until all the people had done passing out of the city.
LTHB	And, behold, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set the ark of God down. And Abiathar went up until all the people finished passing on out of the city.
NASB	Now behold, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar came up until all the people had finished passing from the city.
Syndein	{Intro to David's Chief Counter-Intelligence Agent - the Co High Priest Zadok} Now behold . . . Zadok also, {the priests had to come from the Levy family and from the line of Aaron. Zadok was from the eldest son of Aaron, Eleazar. Under David,

Zadok was the co-High Priest with Abiathar (who is descended from Ithamar - the youngest son of Aaron). Under Solomon would be the sole High Priest since Abiathar joined the revolt against Solomon's reign.} **and all the Levites with him**, {the Levites who were NOT of the line of Aaron were the administrators of spiritual affairs. They were the professional singers and musicians, the caretakers of the tabernacle, curtains, shewbread, and the custodian of the Ark of the Covenant} **bearing/carrying** {hard work} **the Ark of the Covenant of 'Elohiym /Godhead and they set down the Ark of 'Elohiym /Godhead**. {on the slope of the Mount of Olives - they saw the Ark as they crossed at the Kidron ford} **Meanwhile Abiathar offered sacrifices** {`alah} {in Jerusalem}, {the other co-High Priest stayed behind to minister to those who could not leave} **until all the people/stragglers had finished leaving the city** {crossing over the Kidron}.

World English Bible

Behold, Zadok also *came*, and all the Levites 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.

Young's Updated LT

And lo, also Zadok, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God, and they make the ark of God firm, and Abiathar goes up, till the completion of all the people to pass over out of the city.

The gist of this verse:

The priests Zadok and Abiathar were there, with the Ark of God. The Levites were there as well.

2Samuel 15:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדוֹק or צִדְקָה) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843

Translation: **And also, observe, Zadok [has come]...** Zadok is one of the two priests who served during the time of David, who was first introduced to us in **2Sam. 8** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). We are going to repeat some of the doctrines which were first given in 2Sam. 8 and in **1Chron. 6** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)):

In the Bible, so far, we know very little about Zadok. However, we have already examined him in greater detail in previous passages.

Some Background on Zadok the Priest

Zadok 1 is probably the most well-known of the priests (okay, you haven't heard of him, but he is mentioned first in 2Sam. 8:17, where we read: [And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, priests;...](#) What we have are two High Priests, and the reason that they are both High Priests is that they come from different lines. Zadok comes from the line of Eleazar and Ahimelech comes from the line of Ithamar (who are both sons of Aaron, the first High Priest of Israel—Num. 3:4). This particular *Ahimelech* and this particular *Abiathar* are not mentioned in the genealogical lines of [1Chron. 6](#). I have placed them in some of the tables in that chapter to help orient you to the two lines.

Zadok appears to have begun under David as a young man (2Sam. 8:17 1Chron. 12:23–28). He and his son, Ahimaaz, were priests during the time of Absalom's rebellion (2Sam. 15:36). When he originally followed David (along with Abiathar, a priest in the line of Eli and Ithamar), he brought along the Ark of God. David told him to return the Ark to Jerusalem (2Sam. 15:24–29). All the gathered information during Absalom's rebellion was to be filtered through them, as David's trusted servants, and passed along to David (Ahimaaz and Jonathan would gather information and pass it along to David—2Sam. 17:17–20). Once Absalom's rebellion had been quashed, David was not accepted immediately by Judah. David then sent messengers to Zadok to gain the acceptance of the Judæan people (2Sam. 19:11–14). Zadok is also mentioned in connection with David in about a dozen other passages.

Zadok more or less shared his position as priest with Abiathar (the priest in the line of Ithamar) throughout the reign of David. However, when David was ready to pass away, Abiathar aligned himself with Adonijah, David's fourth son born to him by Haggith (2Sam. 3:4 1Chron. 3:1–2), and, while David was deathly ill, yet still alive, Adonijah assumed the position of king of all Israel. For those loyal to David, this was a serious problem, as David had promised Bathsheba that his son by her, Solomon, would succeed him. Zadok was one of the men who proclaimed Solomon king, by David's orders, while David was still alive (1Kings 1). After assuming his position as king, Solomon removed Abiathar as priest and reinstated Zadok (1Kings 2:27, 35).⁸⁴ Sometime previous, there had been a prophecy laid down that, because of the disobedience of Eli's son, that his line would be cut off forever (1Sam. 2:27–36). This removal of Abiathar was the fulfillment of that prophecy.

This information was originally taken directly from [1Chron. 6 \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)).

2Samuel 15:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּם) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

⁸⁴ What appears to be the case is that the cabinet members of the King remained until officially removed. Therefore, Adonijah's staff officially remained (including Abiathar) even after Solomon arose as the proper king of United Israel, thus deposing Adonijah. An exception to this, it would seem to me, would be if they fled for their lives. That would essentially vacate their office as well.

2Samuel 15:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: ...and all the Levites with him,... The Levites were the spiritual tribe of Israel. They owned no land, although there were cities assigned to them. However, they would never have a chunk of ground with a house on it that they could call their own as other Israelites could do. The Levites were closely involved in the various spiritual functions of Israel, mostly described in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy. They were financially supported by the people. Their purpose was to be seen as not having a permanent part of this earth. There are Jews from the other 11 tribes whose family perpetually owned a plot of ground; but this was not the case for the Levites.

2Samuel 15:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced naw-SAW]	<i>lifting up, bearing, carrying; exalting; taking away</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ărôwn (אֲרוֹן) [pronounced uh-ROHN]	<i>ark, chest; Ark</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #727 BDB #75
b ^ê rîyth (בְּרִית) [pronounced b ^ê reeth]	<i>covenant; pact, alliance, treaty, alliance, contract</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1285 BDB #136
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...who are bearing the Ark of the Covenant of Elohim. These Levites tended to the Ark and to the Tabernacles. As has been previously discussed, the Ark is in Jerusalem, but the Tabernacle appears to be in another city. See [The Movement of the Ark and the Tent \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)).

David was responsible for bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. The book of Chronicles devotes 3 chapters to that event, because it signifies Jesus Christ returning to Jerusalem (the Ark is a type of Christ).

The Ark is not brought along as a good luck charm, as it was in the early Philistine wars (1Sam. 4); but this represented an exit of the High Priest from Jerusalem, which would certainly involve the Ark of God. This tells us that Zadok had the responsibility of the worship service which was held by the Ark, at the place that David had it moved to.

2Samuel 15:24d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsaq (יָצַק) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAHK</i>]	<i>to lay out, to set down; to place, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3332 BDB #427
The Hiphil meanings of yâtsaq are very different from the other stems (Gesenius was helpful, but BDB was not). Joshua 7:23 2Sam. 15:24			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ărôwn (אֲרוֹן) [pronounced <i>uh-ROHN</i>]	<i>ark, chest; Ark</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #727 BDB #75
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: [And they set the Ark of Elohim down](#). Zadok is going to speak to David, so the Levites halt, put the Ark down, and wait for Zadok, the High Priest, to give them direction. The significance here appears to be that the Ark was going to go with both Zadok and David, the Ark representing our Lord Jesus Christ. The Kohathite Levites were probably carrying the Ark (Num. 3:31). See the Doctrine of the [Ark of the Covenant \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Apparently, when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem, he put Zadok in charge of the tent where it was kept and of whatever worship services were held there.

Zadok did not bring the Ark with him as a good luck charm, as was done in 1Sam. 4, but this was simply that Zadok and the Levites and the supporters of David were leaving Jerusalem, so why leave the Ark behind? David went to a lot of trouble to bring the Ark into Jerusalem in the first place. Therefore, Zadok would have seen it as quite important to David.

Let's say a European church is [converted into a mosque](#); would they leave some of their historic Bibles behind as a good will gesture? Of course not. Zadok knew that Absalom had no interest in the Ark. It is very likely that he never came to the place where the Ark was kept in Jerusalem.

2Samuel 15:24e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 15:24e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
There appears to be a military component in the use of this verb in some contexts. That is, it sometimes does <i>not</i> mean <i>to go up [in elevation]</i> or <i>to go up [in a northerly direction]</i> , but <i>to go up against</i> an enemy in battle or <i>to go to a specific place in order to position oneself ready for war</i> .			
ʿEb ^e yâthâr (אֲבִיָּאֵתָר) [pronounced <i>eb^e-yaw-THAWR</i>]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâbar (עָבַר) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
The lâmed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be, must be, ought to be</i> . ⁸⁵ (4) Lâmed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i> . ⁸⁶			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿîyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

⁸⁵ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar-Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

⁸⁶ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

Translation: [Abiathar also came up while all the people were passing \[in review\] out from the city.](#) There are a few commentators who suggest that Abiathar is *offering up* sacrifices. However, the verb here means *to go up, to come up*; and it is in the Qal (normal) stem. In order for this to indicate that Abiathar is offering up sacrifices, this would need to be in the Hiphil (causative) stem and there would need to be something (an object) and he is offering up. However, this simply tells us that Abiathar *came up, goes up*; which would be in keeping for him if he comes from another city other than Jerusalem. Remember, the trumpet blasts and these people calling out, “Absalom is king in Hebron;” were all over Israel—in every major city. So, Abiathar, who was probably ministering in Gibeon where the Tabernacle was, probably came from there. See the **Movement of the Ark and the Tabernacle** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

Abiathar is also the high priest, which is confusing to many. For much of Israel's history, there was only one high priest, because that is how it is supposed to be. The high priest represents our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, we would not expect there to be more than one of them at a time. However, the priests were wiped out by King Saul at Nob (1Sam. 21). The very young Abiathar escaped and went to David, who was in hiding after that for several years. However, Israel needed a high priest, so Zadok became the high priest of Israel while Abiathar was with David in hiding. When David became ruler, he did not change the standing of either man.

The material which follows is lifted directly out of 2Sam. 8:

There were two priests under David; the second priest was Ahimelech. R. B. Thieme identifies Zadok as being over the military priests, Ahimelech he sees as over the civilian priests.⁸⁷

There are two problems here—why are there 2 High Priests and why isn't this second High Priest *Abiathar* rather than *Ahimelech*? I have *Abiathar* so firmly entrenched in my own brain that I read through this several times before I realized it is backwards here.

Now, what might confuse you is the idea that it appears as though we have two High Priests under the reign of David. In fact, it appears as though we have this parallel priesthood for several decades. Furthermore, another confusing portion of Israel's history is the location of the tent of God. You probably have no idea as to why there are two priesthoods and where exactly was the Tent of God. Let me explain: at the end of the time of the judges, the Philistines took from Israel the Ark of God ([1Sam. 4—pdf version](#)), which Ark Israel brought into the battle for good luck. God cursed degenerate Israel and allowed the Philistines to not only be victorious, but to take the Ark as well. However, God also cursed the Philistines, and anywhere that they took the Ark, that city was placed under great divine judgement. The Philistines finally returned the Ark to Israel, and David later brought the Ark to Jerusalem where David constructed a separate tent for it on Zion. However, the Tent of God was actually located in Gibeon, which is where sacrifices were offered until the Temple was built.⁸⁸ Therefore, there would need to be two sets of priests, as there were two places in Israel which required a priesthood. Zadok performed the duties of a High Priest in Gibeon (1Kings 3:4 1Chron. 16:39) and Abiathar's antecedents originally acted as a priests in Jerusalem (actually, in Nob, which was just slightly northeast of Jerusalem). Nob was known as *the city of priests* (1Sam. 22:19). Saul, because of the kindness these priests showed to David, wiped out all of the priests in Nob, except for Abiathar, who escaped to David ([1Sam. 22—PDF version](#)). It is possible and even logical that the Tent of God was moved to Gibeon because of this assault on the city of Nob (after killing the priests, Saul then assaulted the city itself).⁸⁹ There is no specific Scripture to support this, it is logical, as the priesthood was in Nob in 1Sam. 22 and then in Gibeon in 1Chron. 16:39 (where David is said to leave Zadok in charge of the Tabernacle). Since Abiathar's family had been wiped out and Abiathar was on the run with David, the other main line of priests stepped in to fill the spiritual void, and that was Zadok.

⁸⁷ From http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_08.html accessed September 16, 2012.

⁸⁸ Although I have not quoted Keil and Delitzsch very often in this chapter, I would have not put together these divergence places of worship apart from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 445.

⁸⁹ This is the hypothesis of Keil and Delitzsch in their *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 446.

After the attack upon Nob, Abiathar fled to David and became a part of David's entourage. He served directly under David after David became king, generally in Jerusalem. It is likely that he was involved in the duties of moving the Ark into Jerusalem and overseeing the Ark afterwards. Neither Zadok or Abiathar are ever called *high priests*, just *priests*.

There is a reason Zadok and Abiathar are not called High Priests in the Bible, even though they may have separately or collectively held that title—the Word of God is first going to focus on David, as a precursor of Jesus Christ in His 1st and 2nd Advents; and then the Bible will focus on Solomon, who reveals Christ in His Millennial reign. So, it is not so much a matter of titles, but a matter of focus. The office of High Priest is to look forward to Jesus Christ. Having two in that office confuses the issue; as would adding David into the mix. Therefore, the Word of God concentrates on David instead of these other two guys.

The two most noted problems are the easiest to deal with: *why wasn't Zadok killed in Nob* and *why are there 2 High Priests?* You may recall that Saul, in a fit of rage, slaughtered the priests in Nob. Well, there were Levites scattered all over northern and southern Israel, and some of them were from the tribe of Aaron, making them eligible for the true priestly line (I should point out the Levites ≠ priests and that the term *Levitical Priesthood* is not exactly correct—it should be called the *Aaronic Priesthood*). So, we have almost the entire line of priests wiped out in Nob (the Ithamar line). However, we would have other priests elsewhere—in particular, the line of Eleazar, one of Aaron's other sons. If you will recall how Saul was, one minute, he would be on the trail of David wanting to kill him and the next moment, Saul would be sorry and regretting his every action taken against David. No doubt he felt this way about slaughtering the priests. So, Saul found the other line of priests—those descended from Eleazar—moved the Tabernacle to Gibeon, and then he put those priests in charge (with Zadok at the head). Although a portion of this explanation is conjecture (Saul moving the Tabernacle to Gibeon and installing the Eleazar line of priests to officiate over the Tabernacles), the lines of Zadok and Abiathar as well as the slaughter at Nob and Saul's erratic personality are well-documented by Scripture. It is essentially just connecting the dots.⁹⁰

When Solomon built the Temple, which became the center of worship for Israel, and when he brought the Ark of God to the Temple, this roughly coincided in time with a return to a single line of priests (there was some intervening time between these events, which appears to be less than 20 years).⁹¹ What happened was, Abiathar backed one of David's son Adonijah instead of Solomon. Although Solomon said Abiathar deserved death (Adonijah was executed), he expelled him from Jerusalem instead and removed his line from the priesthood. 1Kings 2:22–27

Just in case your head starts to swim when you ponder the priests, the two priestly lines, the kings and the prophets, and who lived when, in **1Chron. 6**, I have a chart of the **Kings, Prophets and Priests** set up chronologically (a chart which I often refer to myself).

We first need to look back on this history of Abiathar:

The Doctrine of Abiathar—Part I

1. When fleeing from Saul, David went to the city of Nob, the city of the priests, and he managed to get Ahimelech, the High Priest, to feed him and his few allies by lying to Ahimelech. He got the priests to give to him the consecrated bread which was on hand. This was observed, apparently at a distance, by Doeg the Edomite, who was the head of Saul's shepherds. 1Sam. 21:1–7
 - 1) As an aside, Ahimelech is the son of Ahitub. 1Sam. 22:9–12, 20
2. Doeg later tells Saul that David had been in Nob, after Saul was on one of his anti-David rants. So Saul gathers up his army and they all go to Nob. Although it is apparently by questioning Ahimelech that he

⁹⁰ Robert Gordon suggests that Zadok was the head of some cult in Jerusalem until David took over, and then he converted (back?) over to the true worship of Jehovah. Such an explanation just does not hold water for me—why would a line of Aaron end up teaching falsehoods in Jerusalem, and then so quickly be brought back into line? Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 246.

⁹¹ This was taken from **1Chron. 6** ([PDF version](#)).

The Doctrine of Abiathar—Part I

- believed David still to be a great soldier of Saul's, Saul not only disabuses him of this notion, but then orders all of the priests to be killed. In fact, Saul killed the men, women, children and animals of Nob. 1Sam. 22:6–19
3. Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, escaped from this nightmare and fled to David, who tells Abiathar to stay with him. My impression is that, Abiathar was fairly young at this time—in his teens, although this is not necessarily the case. 1Sam. 22:20–23
 4. Abiathar had the wherewithal to carry the ephod with him. So, this indicates, when he made his escape, there was no expectation of things ever being normal again in Nob. David makes use of the ephod in order to determine his next move. 1Sam. 23:6–13
 5. Abiathar is not mentioned again until this passage, which, in time, is probably about 20 years later (we have a few years during which David continues to elude Saul, even to where David joined up with the Philistines; then Saul's army would be destroyed by the Philistines; David would then take control of Judah, then Jerusalem, and then, 7 years later, all of Israel would follow him; finally, we have all of these war alluded to here). 1Sam. 24–2Sam. 8
 6. In later passages, Abiathar will be called a priest; and in several passages, Abiathar, and not Ahimelech, will be associated with Zadok. 2Sam. 15:24, 27, 29, 35 17:15 19:11
 7. This indicates that this passage (and 1Chron. 18:16) *ought* to read *Abiathar son of Ahimelech* rather than *Ahimelech son of Abiathar*.
 8. Abiathar will still be a priest under Solomon. 1Kings 1:7, 42 2:22–27 4:4
 9. Jesus will call Abiathar a High Priest in Mark 2:26.

On another occasion, we will examine more about Abiathar the Priest under David and later under Solomon.

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Abiathar also came up while all the people were passing [in review] out from the city. We do not have Abiathar and Zadok arriving together. They are listened separately and Abiathar is said to *come up* to David. So, Zadok probably came out of Jerusalem with the Ark and Abiathar had a ministry elsewhere (or simply came from outside of Jerusalem), so that, in order to come directly to David, he would come up to where David is, standing over his troops.

It is possible that these two high priests arrived at very different times, but are grouped here together in one verse because they are both high priests. So, Zadok may have arrived, was told by David to return to Jerusalem with the Ark; and then, 20 min. later, Abiathar comes up (and it could have been a day or two later, if Abiathar is with the Tabernacle).

*Clarke: The priests knew that God had given the kingdom to David; they had no evidence that he had deposed him: they therefore chose to accompany him, and take the ark, the object of their charge, with them.*⁹² As noted earlier, Zadok alone is probably in charge of the Ark.

So, what we have here are the two High Priests under David who are loyal to David, and they come to him as he is leaving Jerusalem, retreating; and they are ready to go with him, along with all of the Levites. What David does is going to be one of the most remarkable things you have ever read in the Holy Bible: David will use the high priests as spies and their sons as couriers—and this is all sanctified by God the Holy Spirit.

It is a matter of some interest that both of these priests appear to be in Jerusalem (although it is possible that Abiathar came from outside the city, as he apparently arrives later and some surprise is registered). It certainly appears as if it is Zadok who is in charge of the Ark of God.

⁹² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:24.

It may be helpful to sort out these two priests, the Ark and the Tabernacle.

The Priests, the Ark and the Tabernacle

1. Through a number of unusual circumstances, both Zadok and Abiathar were priests during the time of David. 2Sam. 8:17 20:25 1Chron. 15:11
2. Zadok and Abiathar both arrive to speak with David as he oversees his troops and their families when leaving Jerusalem. It appears as though the two high priests, Zadok and Abiathar, arrive separately, along with the Levites. 2Sam. 15:24.
3. The order which David gives to Zadok seems to most closely associate him with the Ark of God. 2Sam. 15:25
4. Zadok seems to be already in charge of the Ark, as he is named first and the Ark is named after; and then Abiathar is named. Furthermore, David tells Zadok specifically to *return* to the city (of Jerusalem) (2Sam. 15:27), which certainly suggests that this is where Zadok came from.
5. The Ark had originally been captured by the Philistines, returned, and then David brought the Ark into Jerusalem from where it had been stored, separate from the Tabernacle. 1Sam. 4–6 1Chron. 13 15–16
6. However, it is clear that Zadok, at one time, in charge of worship at the Tabernacle (1Chron. 16:39–40). At the same time, Asaph and his family were in charge of the Ark, after it had been moved to Jerusalem (1Chron. 16:37).
7. It is now more than 20 years after David moved the Ark and made the original assignments in personnel to the Ark and the Tabernacle. The **Davidic Timeline** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).
8. The Tabernacle was clearly in Gibeon all of this time. 1Chron. 21:29 2Chron. 1:3
9. However, David had brought the Ark to Jerusalem while the Tabernacle remained in Gibeon. 2Chron. 1:3–4
10. After Solomon built the Temple of God (this was David's idea), he brought the Ark and the Tabernacle into the Temple. 1Kings 8:4–8
11. Since David will command Zadok to take the Ark back into Jerusalem, it suggests that, at some point in time over those 20+ years, Zadok moved from Gibeon, where he oversaw the Tabernacle to Jerusalem to oversee the Ark. In the alternative, this marked a change of assignment for Zadok. 2Sam. 15:25
12. Both Zadok and Abiathar accompanied the Ark back into Jerusalem. 2Sam. 15:29
13. These men were both in charge of the Ark and whatever services were performed in the city of Jerusalem; but they also acted as counterinsurgents, passing along pertinent information to David through their sons. 2Sam. 15:32–37 17:14–17
14. Unfortunately, in the future, Zadok would back Solomon as king and Abiathar will back Adonijah; and this would end the priesthood of Abiathar. 1Kings 1:1–53 2:26–27
15. In the end, it was Zadok who would be the priest under Solomon. 1Chron. 29:22

Because Zadok and Abiathar seem to come to David separately, and because Abiathar showing up appears to be a surprise, I would theorize that Zadok, for sometime, was in charge of the Ark in Jerusalem, although we do not have any Scripture which confirms that. The Scripture we have suggests that this may be true. The surprise arrival of Abiathar suggests that he had most recently been in charge of the Tabernacle, but when he heard that Absalom was declared king in Hebron, he quickly came to David to find out if it were true. Again, this is pure conjecture, but it is reasonable.

In order for there to be no contradictions, we simply need to provide a reasonable series of events involving both Zadok and Abiathar, which line up with the text of this chapter. Essentially, this is what we have done.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

As has been previously noted, we do not know exactly what went on with the Ark by itself. It appears to have been in Jerusalem in some sort of a tent prepared by David, and it appears to be a center of worship. However, it seems that the Ark and Tabernacle were not brought to the same place for awhile. That is, throughout the lifetime of David, the Ark was in one place and the Tabernacle was in another.

V. 24 reads: It was also observed that Zadok, the priest, had come out, along with the Levites who were bearing the Ark of the Contract of God. They set the Ark down (while David spoke with Zadok). Abiathar also came up as the people were passing in review going out of the city. All of those related to the service of God came and showed their support for David. This indicates that David had a close relationship with these people, and Absalom did not. There was not a 50-50 breakdown among the spiritual. They were all pro-David, and bear in mind, this all took place in a very short amount of time. That is, the priests and the Levites had to make up their minds in about an hour, and this was an easy call for them. They knew about David's spiritual life and his failures; and they knew about Absalom's lack of a spiritual life. They were possibly aware of Absalom using God as an excuse to gather his forces in Hebron.

And so says the king to Zadok, "Bring back an Ark of the Elohim [to] the city. If I find grace in [two] eyes of Y^ehowah, and He has brought me back and He has shown me him and his habitation.

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Then the king said to Zadok, "Bring back the Ark of Elohim [to] the city. If I find grace in the eyes of Y^ehowah, then He will bring me back and He will make me see it [the Ark] and its habitation.

Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the Ark of God back into the city. If I find grace in the estimation of Jehovah, then He will bring me back and He will allow me to see the Ark in its habitation.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to Sadoc: Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find grace in the sight of the Lord, He will bring me again, and he will shew me it, and his <u>tabernacle</u> .
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king to Zadok, "Bring back an Ark of the Elohim [to] the city. If I find grace in [two] eyes of Y ^e howah, and He has brought me back and He has shown me him and his habitation.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then the king said to Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city; perhaps I shall find favor in the eyes of the LORD, and he will bring me back again and show me both it and his habitation.
Septuagint (Greek)	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 it and its <u>beauty</u> .
Significant differences:	The English translation from the Greek has <i>beauty</i> rather than <i>habitation</i> . The Latin has <i>tabernacle</i> instead.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry God's chest back into the city. If the Lord thinks well of me, then he will bring me back and let me see it and its home again.
Contemporary English V.	Then David said: Zadok, take the sacred chest back to Jerusalem. If the LORD is pleased with me, he will bring me back and let me see it and his tent again.
Easy English	Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the *ark of God back into Jerusalem. If the *Lord is pleased with me, he will bring me back. He will let me see the *ark and the tent of the *Lord again.
Easy-to-Read Version	King David said to Zadok, "Take God's Holy Box [Also called "The Ark of the Covenant," the box containing the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them and the other things that proved God was with the people of Israel

	during their time in the Sinai Desert.] back to Jerusalem. If the Lord is pleased with me, then he will bring me back and let me see Jerusalem and his temple.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the Covenant Box back to the city. If the LORD is pleased with me, some day he will let me come back to see it and the place where it stays.
<i>The Message</i>	Then the king ordered Zadok, "Take the Chest back to the city. If I get back in GOD's good graces, he'll bring me back and show me where the Chest has been set down.
New Berkeley Version	But the king instructed Zadok, "Return God's ark to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, He will restore me and have me see both it and its shrine;...
New Century Version	The king said to Zadok, "Take the Ark of God back into the city. If the Lord is pleased with me, he will bring me back and will let me see both it and Jerusalem again.
New Life Bible	The king said to Zadok, "Return the special box of God to the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will have me return. And He will have me see both it and His family.
New Living Translation	Then the king instructed Zadok to take the Ark of God back into the city. "If the Lord sees fit," David said, "he will bring me back to see the Ark and the Tabernacle [Hebrew and his dwelling place.] again.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then the king said to ZaDok, 'Take the Chest of God back to the city. For, if I should find favor in the eyes of Jehovah and He returns me, He will show it to me in all His glory, once again.
Beck's American Translation	"Take God's ark back to the city," the king told Zadok. "If the LORD will be kind to me, He will let me come back and see both it and His dwelling place again.
Christian Community Bible	...after which the king said to Zadok, "Carry the Ark of God back into the city. If Yahweh looks kindly on me, he will bring me back and allow me to again see the Ark and its lodging place.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	The king told Zadok, "Take God's ark back to the city. If the LORD looks favorably on me, he will allow me to come back and see both it and its dwelling place again.
New American Bible	Then the king said to Zadok: "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find favor with the LORD, he will bring me back and permit me to see it and its lodging place.
NIRV	Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back into the city. If the Lord is pleased with me, he'll bring me back. He'll let me see the ark again. He'll also let me see Jerusalem again. That's the place where he lives.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king then said to Zadok, 'Take the ark of God back into the city. Should I win Yahweh's favour, he will bring me back and allow me to see it and its tent once more.
New Simplified Bible	The king said to Zadok: »Take the Ark of the Covenant back to the city. If Jehovah is pleased with me he will let me come back to see it and the place where it stays.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The king said to Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find grace in the eyes of Yahweh, he will return me to see his settlement.
Bible in Basic English	And the king said to Zadok, Take the ark of God back into the town: if I have grace in the eyes of the Lord, he will let me come back and see it and his House again:...
Complete Jewish Bible	The king said to Tzadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in ADONAI's sight, he will bring me back and show me both it and the place where it is kept.

HCSB	Then the king instructed Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, He will bring me back and allow me to see both it and its dwelling place.
NET Bible®	Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's sight he will bring me back and enable me to see both it and his dwelling place again.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then the king told Zadok, Take back the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, He will bring me back and let me see both it and His house.
Concordant Literal Version	And the king said to Zadok, `Take back the ark of Elohim to the city; if I find grace in the eyes of Yahweh, then He has brought me back, and shown me it and His habitation;"...
exeGesés companion Bible	And the sovereign says to Sadoq, Turn back the ark of Elohim into the city: if I find charism in the eyes of Yah Veh he turns me back and has me see it and his habitation of rest:...
LTHB	And the king said to Zadok, Take the ark of God back to the city. If I find grace in the eyes of Jehovah, then He will bring me back and make me see it and His dwelling place.
New RSV	Then the king said to Zadok, `Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it remains.
Syndein	And the king commanded Zadok, "Return the Ark of 'Elohiym/Godhead into the city. {by this command, David is recognizing this installment of Divine Discipline from God. In 'cursing for discipline' the issue is sin. In 'cursing for blessing' (cursing has been turned into blessing after rebound) the issue is grace.} If I shall find grace {grace is the issue so David did rebound} in the eyes of Jehovah/God, He will restore me, {David's faith is claiming the promise} and He will show me both it {the Ark}, and His habitation {the tabernacle in Jerusalem}." {Note: The Ark and the tabernacle were training aids for learning doctrine. David had so many wives and mistresses that he was distracted from doctrine. So, here he is making a vow to 'get back to doctrine'. This is a common vow in times of distress. It is in times of prosperity that most forget their need for doctrine in their lives. David is realizing he had failed the prosperity test.}.
A Voice in the Wilderness	And the king said to Zadok, Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of Jehovah, He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place.
Young's Updated LT	And the king says to Zadok, "Take back the ark of God to the city; if I find grace in the eyes of Jehovah, then He has brought me back, and shown me it and His habitation.

The gist of this verse: David tells Zadok to take the Ark back to Jerusalem, and, if God is graceful to David, then He will let David return.

2Samuel 15:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צדק or צדק) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
shûwb (שב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ârôwn (ארון) [pronounced <i>uh-ROHN</i>]	<i>ark, chest; Ark</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #727 BDB #75
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43
'îyr (עיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: Then the king said to Zadok, “Bring back the Ark of Elohim [to] the city. David quickly considers all that is before him. The two priests of God are ready to join him with the Ark of God and with the Levites. The Ark was not to be taken out to battle as some sort of good luck charm, as we saw in back in 1Sam. 4–5. Nor was the Ark especially attached to David, even though David recognized its importance. And, given all that could befall the residents of Jerusalem, it would be good for them to have the Ark and the priests to go to during a time of national crisis. This allows the people of Jerusalem and other communities to continue with a spiritual life while this civil war rages.

Also, David will make a calculation here that will surprise some believers: not only does he want the priests and the Ark to remain in Jerusalem, but David will ask the priests to act as spies in Jerusalem, and to funnel all important information to their sons, who will bring this information to David.

In fact, all the David says to Zadok will be amazing. His life has been turned upside down, and yet David is always thinking. He's not going to get all emotional and tell Zadok how much he will miss him and what good friends they have become. David is going to be cool and calculating. A leader must be able to think under pressure.

Therefore, David tells Zadok to take the Ark back into Jerusalem. This suggests that Zadok is in charge of the Ark at this time.⁹³

2Samuel 15:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
chên (חֵן) [pronounced <i>khayn</i>]	<i>grace, favor, blessing</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2580 BDB #336
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i>]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
This phrase is literally <i>in his eyes</i> , but it can be translated <i>in his opinion, in his estimation, to his way of thinking, as he sees [it]</i> .			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *If I find grace in the eyes of Y^ehowah,...* David recognizes that what happens to him, from this point on, will be a part of God's gracious behavior. Now, this has always been the case with David, but he is clearly making that statement at this point.

Application: Everything that you do, whether it is a part of your personal life, your professional life or your spiritual life, is a matter of the grace of God. You may be a great prayer warrior, a marvelous teacher of the Word of God, or the best evangelist that this world has ever seen. However, if you are to function, it is 100% on the basis of God's grace. We put up nothing. We offer nothing to God that is meritorious in salvation; and we offer up nothing to God that is meritorious in our lives. It is through God's power that we work; it is God's grace that maintains our lives.

⁹³ Or, in the alternative, David could just now be making that assignment to Zadok.

David is the greatest ruler that Israel will ever have and possibly the greatest ruler of all time. But he recognizes, right here, that if he returns to Jerusalem and spends even another second on the king's throne, it is all based upon the grace of God.

At no point does David say, "I have been a great ruler over Israel. God cannot manage His affairs on this earth without me. He'll defeat Absalom and He will bring me back." Nope. If David returns to Jerusalem, it will be based upon God's grace. What he did with Bathsheba and her husband was reprehensible. David does not deserve another instant on this earth. He failed and he failed big time.

Application: This is how much we deserve to go onto the next instant in our lives. It is all based upon the grace of God.

2Samuel 15:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

Translation: ...then He will bring me back... If David discovers grace in God's sight, then God will bring David back into Jerusalem. It ought to be obvious that this is what David wants. David would obviously want to remain king, but, in taking an appraisal of his situation, he has decided that he needs to leave Jerusalem and it is God Who will choose whether or not he will ever return.

Application: In recent times, I have become more aware of the limited time that we have left on this earth. There are a limited number of hours remaining during which we will walk this earth. We are not going to live to be 120 years old. So, whatever your spiritual gift happens to be, you need to have it up and running—and based upon God's grace. So there is no misunderstanding—you do not force your spiritual life. The most important thing is, you grow first, and then you do. And God will provide all of it for you.

At this point in time, David is perhaps 50 or 60 years old. He knows that his life is limited, and he considers the possibility that he may not return to Jerusalem. No leader is indispensable. They can all be replaced. David recognizes this. Therefore, if David returns to Jerusalem, he knows that it will be based entirely upon God's grace.

2Samuel 15:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to cause to see, to cause to look; to show; to cause to see [with pleasure]; to cause to know, to cause to learn; to cause to experience [evil or good]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nâveh (נָוֶה) [pronounced naw-VEH]	<i>inhabiting, dwelling, abiding; as a substantive: a seat; a habitation or an area [or region] of habitation [for man, God, shepherds, shepherd's flocks]; meadow, pasture</i>	masculine singular adjective; masculine singular noun; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5116 BDB #627

Translation: ...and He will make me see it [the Ark] and its habitation. What God will allow is for David to see the Ark and to see again where this Ark is being kept (which, apparently, has become the center for Y^ehowah worship in Jerusalem). You may recall that, when David brought the Ark back to Jerusalem, he also made a tent for the Ark (2Sam. 6:17). This apparently was no pup tent, slightly larger than the Ark, but something which was large enough to be used for worship (there has to be some place or worship in Jerusalem).

The Ark of God is a symbol, and David recognizes its great importance. He may not fully appreciate all that the Ark is and all that it represents, because it is a shadow of Jesus Christ to come. However, David knows that God, 400 years earlier, told Moses exactly how the Ark was to be manufactured, and so, Moses had this done. Preserving this Ark is a sacred trust from generation to generation.

In retrospect, we can look back upon the Ark and we understand everything about it, and what everything symbolized. David did not have that privilege. He knew this was tied to God; he knew this was built to God's specifications. But it was a shadow of things to come, and David did not fully apprehend the connection. However, he knew that it must be preserved from generation to generation; and that he could pray to God to return him to Jerusalem, the city where the Ark was kept. See the Doctrine of the **Ark of the Covenant** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

And if so He says, 'I do not take pleasure in you;' behold me, He will do to me as which has been good in His [two] eyes."

2Samuel
15:26

But if He says this [lit., thus]: 'I do not take pleasure in you;' [then] here I am [lit., behold me]; He will do to me just as is good in His sight."

But if God says, 'I take no pleasure in you;' then here I am, and He will do to me as is good in His sight."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But if He will say to me: You pleasest me not: <u>I am ready</u> , let Him do that which is good before Him.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And if so He says, 'I do not take pleasure in you;' behold me, He will do to me as which has been good in His [two] eyes."
Peshitta (Syriac)	But if he shall say, I have no delight in you; behold, here I am, let him do to me as seems good in his sight.
Septuagint (Greek)	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.
Significant differences:	No serious differences apart from the English translation from the Latin <i>I am ready</i> for <i>behold me</i> . Given what follows in the various English translations, that is probably a reasonable understanding of the Hebrew itself.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But if God says, 'I'm not pleased with you,' then I am ready. Let him do to me whatever pleases him."
Contemporary English V. Easy-to-Read Version	But if he says he isn't pleased with me, then let him do what he knows is best. But if the Lord says that he is not pleased with me, then he can do anything he wants to me."
Good News Bible (TEV) New Living Translation	But if he isn't pleased with me---well, then, let him do to me what he wishes." But if he is through with me, then let him do what seems best to him."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But if He should say that He doesn't want me, then look. here I am! May He do to me whatever is good in His eyes.'
Beck's American Translation	But if He says, "I don't delight in you.' I'm ready. He may do to me what He thinks is right."
<i>God's Word</i> ™ New American Bible	But if he says, 'I'm not pleased with you,' let him do to me what he considers right." But if he should say, 'I am not pleased with you,' I am ready; let him do to me as he sees fit." 2 Sm 16:10.
NIRV	But suppose he says, 'I am not pleased with you.' Then I accept that. Let him do to me what he thinks is best."
New Jerusalem Bible	But should he say, "You displease me," here I am: let him treat me as he sees fit.'
New Simplified Bible	»Let him do to me what he wishes if he is not pleased with me.«
Revised English Bible	But if he says he does not want me, then here I am; let him do what he pleases with me.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferar-Fenton Bible	But if He decides not to restore me to you, let Him do to me what is good in His sight."
HCSB	However, if He should say, 'I do not delight in you,' then here I am--He can do with me whatever pleases Him."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And if He should say, 'I do not want you,' I am ready; let Him do with me as He pleases."
NET Bible®	However, if he should say, 'I do not take pleasure in you,' then he will deal with me in a way that he considers appropriate [Heb "as [is] good in his eyes."]."

NIV – UK But if he says, "I am not pleased with you," then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and if thus He say, I have not delighted in you; here [am] I, He does to me as [is] good in His eyes.
English Standard Version	But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."
exeGesés companion Bible	...and if he says thus: I delight not in you! Behold, I - may he work to me as seems good in his eyes.
The Geneva Bible	But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, [here am] I [The faithful in all their afflictions show themselves obedient to Gods will.], let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.
LTHB	And if He says this, I have not delighted in you, behold, I am here. He shall do to me as <i>seems</i> good in His eyes.
Syndein	{David Recognizing No One is Indispensable} But if He would communicate thus/'in this manner', "I {God} have' 'been dissatisfied'/'not been pleased' with you. {David knows he messed up. He has confessed his sin, but installment discipline is continuing - God promoted David and can demote him anytime - discipline means God wants to keep you on - He will remove you under the sin unto death when your chances are up. If a boss has to fire a person don't scold them first - just get them out. If you want to keep them, then discipline them for instruction purposes so they can improve and be of value to the company in the future.} 'I am ready for my punishment.' {idiom: literally 'Behold, here am I'} Let Him do to me 'whatever seems best to Him'. {idiom: literally 'whatever is good in His eyes'}.
World English Bible	...but if he say thus, I have no delight in you; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seems good to him.
Young's Updated LT	And if thus He say, I have not delighted in you; here am I, He does to me as is good in His eyes."

The gist of this verse: David says that he is willing to go with whatever God's plan is.

2Samuel 15:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
’îm (אם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced <i>koh</i>]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
’âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

2Samuel 15:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
châphêts (חָפַץ) [pronounced <i>khaw-FATES</i>]	<i>to will, to desire, to take pleasure in, to delight in, to long to, to be inclined to; to move, to bend down</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2654 BDB #342
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix; pausal form	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: *But if He says this* [lit., *thus*]: 'I do not take pleasure in you;'... David is speaking to Zadok, and he is giving a "what if God says this to me." So God looks at David and decided, "I do not take pleasure in you; I do not delight in you." This is the alternate scenario that David considers. David knows quite well that he deserves nothing from God. He has had a lousy testimony as a king because of his skirt-chasing. David is fully aware of this, and what he is saying to Zadok suggests that he has a whole self-awareness thing going on concerning the sins which he has committed.

2Samuel 15:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
kaph or k ^e (כְּ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

Together, ka'âsher (כְּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *kah-uh-SHER*] means *as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as*. Back in 1Sam. 12:8, I rendered this *for example*.

2Samuel 15:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
טוֹב (טוֹב) [pronounced tow ^b v]	<i>to be good [pleasant, beautiful, delightful], to be delicious, to be cheerful [happy, joyful], to be kind, to be well, to do well, to do right</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect (or a Qal participle)	Strong's #2895 BDB #373
Apparently, the 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect is identical to the Qal participle and to the masculine singular adjective as well (which is Strong's #2896 BDB #373). The masculine singular adjective means <i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i> .			
בֵּ (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
עֵינַיִם (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced gay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

This phrase is literally *in his eyes*, but it can be translated *in his opinion, in his estimation, to his way of thinking, as he sees [it]*.

Translation:...[then] here I am [lit., *behold me*]; **He will do to me just as is good in His sight.** Then David says, "Behold me" which essentially means, "I'm right here; here I am." God is sovereign; and God can do whatever He desires. "My fate is in God's hands."

So David is willing to deal with whatever God brings him, even if God takes him out of this life. On the one hand, God may allow him to return to Jerusalem and see the Ark once again; or, on the other hand, God may not. David is completely at God's mercy for what happens in the future.

This does not mean that David is going to find some park bench to sit on until God decides what He wants to do. God already knows what David's future holds. David does not, but is willing to go along with whatever. However, David is not a passive participant in his life. He is a king and he is the leader of these people. Therefore, he has to be their leader. This is no job for a passive man. This is no job for a man who wants to sit on a park bench and let life sort itself out for him. David, whether in place in the palace of Jerusalem or in retreat at the Mount of Olives, he remains a leader. Therefore, he is constantly thinking, constantly weighing his options, constantly realizing that God is in control; and constantly realizing that he must provide leadership and guidance for those who are around him.

The Pulpit Commentary often has some excellent comments, but they are often difficult to read through (not as tough as Keil and Delitzsch, however). Below is a distillation from the Pulpit Commentary.

The Pulpit Commentary on David's Attitude

1. David was clearly resigned to submit to whatever might be the will of God, whether to enjoy divine blessing or divine pressure
 - 1) He was willing to deal with defeat or or with victory in the contest with his unnatural son; and, with the results of one or the other:
 - 2) To permanently losing his kingship or to regaining his throne.
 - 3) To be permanently exiled from Jerusalem or returned to it.
 - 4) To be banished from the ark or to be restored to Its presence

The Pulpit Commentary on David's Attitude

5) To death or life.

2. The nature of David's resignation:

- 1) David was not insensible nor indifferent. It is obvious from his tears as to how deeply David felt. Troubles which do not trouble require no exercise of submission.
- 2) David's was not a stoic submission to the inevitable.
- 3) David did not abandon prayer or effort to secure what was felt to be desirable. While surrendering himself to the disposal of the Most High, David carefully planned and worked toward victory. Christian resignation is not fatalism.
- 4) David displayed trustful submission to the will of God. He recognized the hand of God in his adversities, saw that the issue of events would be according to the Divine appointment, and on this account was prepared to acquiesce in it. **"Let Him do to me as seems good in His sight."**

3. David's **doctrinal rationales** in his resignation:

- 1) David understood the rightful sovereignty of God. God rules over all, and this recognition often produces submission to His will. "You know, my dear," said a poor man to his wife, when they were mourning the loss of a peculiarly interesting and affectionate child, "this family is God's garden, and he has a right to come into it and pluck any flower that pleases him best.
- 2) David understood God's omnipotence. **Therefore, be humble** [in your actions] **before God's powerful authority, so that you may be exalted** [by Him] **at the proper time** (1Peter 5:6; AUV-NT). Because God is omnipotent, our resistance to His will is futile. Yet, we are assured that God will bring good out of evil when it is time. (Rom. 8:28)
- 3) God is wise and He is good. God does not act arbitrarily or randomly. In submitting to Him, we are acquiescing in our own ultimate well being.
- 4) We are sinful and unworthy. David was doubtless aided in resigning himself to the will of God by the memory of his heinous sins (Jude 1:10:15 Neh. 9:33 Lam. 1:18 3:39 Dan. 9:14 Micah 7:9). If anything, we deserve more suffering than is inflicted upon us; we do not merit good.
- 5) God has assured blessings to us. The memory of past enjoyments, which tends to embitter present griefs, should nevertheless awaken a gratitude which tends to reconcile us to them. **"Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"** (Job 2:10) The mercies still remaining to us, duly appreciated and acknowledged, will have a similar beneficial effect. The way in which God has led us through past difficulties should strengthen confidence in him, and render us willing to trust him with our future. Specially, if we are Christians indeed, let us keep in
 - (1) As God's children, we stand redeemed, reconciled, and renewed.
 - (2) As believers, we enjoy unspeakable blessings. We have been pardoned, we have peace with God, access to Him, the assurance of His fatherly pity and love, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, with His special guidance, support, and consolation.
 - (3) God has made many to us regarding His good for us (Psalm 84:11 Matt. 6:33 Rom. 8:28). We know that we can depend upon His divine care, sympathy, and support (Psalm 55:22 Heb. 13:5-6). Finally, we know that we will eventually be delivered from all affliction, and then enjoy eternal glory, which will far outweighing all present trouble (Rom. 8:18 2Cor. 4:17, 2Cor. 4:18). We are often prepared and rewarded for exhibiting doctrinal endurance.

4. The benefits which flow from such resignation:

- 1) We have **the peace of God which goes beyond all understanding** (Philip. 4:7); and with it, the strength to endure and the power also to do whatever may be possible towards deliverance.
- 2) We have the evidence to our own consciousness that we are the children of God.
- 3) Our attitude is a good influence over others. It shows them the value of our relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we need to recognize that we will all suffer affliction. The only question is how and with what results? Shall we suffer in faith and hope and submission, and thus secure Divine approval, support, and blessing? Or should we suffer impatiently and rebelliously, thus adding to our sufferings, and gaining no

The Pulpit Commentary on David's Attitude

blessing from them? "Woe to the one who argues with his Maker--one clay pot among many." (Isa. 45:9a)

From: *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:25 (heavily edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Sam. 15:25–26 Then the king said to Zadok, "Bring back the Ark of Elohim [to] the city. If I find grace in the eyes of Y^ehowah, then He will bring me back and He will make me see it [the Ark] and its habitation. But if He says this [lit., *thus*]: 'I do not take pleasure in you;' [then] here I am [lit., *behold me*]; He will do to me just as is good in His sight." David is ready to follow the Lord's lead, in whichever direction that it takes him. His desire is expressed (that God bring him back to Jerusalem to behold the Ark and its tent); but if God is so disappointed as to not return David to his throne, he can live with that as well.

It should be noted that David, as a leader, does not become passive, and just sit back at this point. He acts on his own behalf and he acts as a leader for those who have followed him there. Paraphrase from John Wesley: *We should not complain of what is in our lives as God's hand is clearly a part of all events. Furthermore, we ought not to be afraid of what will come to pass; let us see all events as a part of God's plan.*⁹⁴

From the Pulpit Commentary: *David's answer is full, not only of devout resignation and trust in God, but it is remarkable also for the absence of superstition. He feels that God will not judge him by any mere outward sign or privilege, but in truth and equity. If he deserves condemnation, he will not escape it by carrying the Ark about with him. If, on the other hand, God accepts him, then God will restore him to the enjoyment of his spiritual privileges, and bring him back to worship at the place which he has chosen to live.*⁹⁵

We have another man of Scripture who had a very similar response to even greater personal destruction. Job, when his family had been decimated and his riches destroyed or taken from him, reacted in this way: **Then Job stood up, tore his robe and shaved his head. He fell to the ground and worshiped, saying: Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this life. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Praise the name of the LORD. Throughout all this Job did not sin or blame God for anything.** (Job 1:20–22; HCSB).

And so says the king unto Zadok the priest, "[Are] a seer, you? Return [to] the city in peace and Ahimaaz your son; and Jonathan son of Abiathar; two of your sons with you.

2Samuel
15:27

Then the king said to Zadok, the priest, "[Are] you a seer? Return [to] the city in peace [and tranquility] with [lit., *and*] Ahimaaz your son; and [with] Jonathan the son of Abiathar; both of your sons with you.

Then the king said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Therefore, return to the city quietly and peacefully. Make certain that you take your son, Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan; take both of your sons with you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁹⁴ John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:26 (heavily edited).

⁹⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:26 (edited).

Latin Vulgate	And the king said to Sadoc the priest: O seer, return into the city in peace: and let Achimaas thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons, be with you.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says the king unto Zadok the priest, "[Are] a seer, you? Return [to] the city in peace and Ahimaaz your son; and Jonathan son of Abiathar; two of your sons with you.
Peshitta (Syriac)	The king said also to Zadok the priest, Return, <u>go to</u> the city in peace, you and your sons with you, Ahimaaz your son and Nathan the son of Abiathar.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said to Zadok the priest, <u>Behold</u> , you shall return to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons with you.
Significant differences:	David then calls Zadok a seer. We seem to have different words in the Greek and Syriac.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	"Do you understand?" the king said to the priest Zadok. "Go back to the city in safety-you and Abiathar[g] with your two sons, your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.
Contemporary English V.	Zadok, you are a good judge of things, so return to the city and don't cause any trouble. Take your son Ahimaaz with you. Abiathar and his son Jonathan will also go back.
Easy English	The king also said to Zadok the priest, `You are a seer (a *prophet). Go back to the city and have peace. Go with your son Ahimaaz and with Jonathan, the son of Abiathar. You and Abiathar should take your two sons with you.
Easy-to-Read Version	The king said to Zadok the priest, "You are a seer [Another name for a prophet.]. Go back to the city in peace. Take your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.
Good News Bible (TEV)	And he went on to say to Zadok, "Look, take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan and go back to the city in peace.
<i>The Message</i>	The king directed Zadok the priest, "Here's the plan: Return to the city peacefully, with Ahimaaz your son and Jonathan, Abiathar's son, with you.
New Berkeley Version	The king continued to Zadok, "Do you understand? Go back in peace to the city; but let your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan be with you, these two sons of you two.
New Life Bible	And the king said to Zadok the religious leader, "Are you not a man who speaks for God? Return to the city in peace with Abiathar and your two sons, your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.
New Living Translation	The king also told Zadok the priest, "Look [As in Greek version; Hebrew reads Are you a seer? or Do you see?], here is my plan. You and Abiathar [Hebrew lacks and Abiathar; compare 15:29.] should return quietly to the city with your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king told ZaDok the Priest, 'Look! You, your son AhiMaAz, your other two sons, and JoNathan (the son of AbiAthar) should just return to the city in peace.
Christian Community Bible	The king also said to the priest Zadok, "See, better go back to the city in peace and take with you your son Ahimaaz, and Jonathan, son of Abia thar.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	"Aren't you a seer?" the king asked Zadok the priest. "Go back to the city peacefully, and take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan with you.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king said to Zadok the priest, 'Look, you and Abiathar go back quietly into the city, with your two sons, your own son Ahimaaz and Jonathan son of Abiathar.

Revised English Bible The king went on to say to Zadok the priest, 'Are you not a seer? You may safely go back to the city, you and Abiathar, and take with you the two young men, Ahimaaz your son and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English The king said further to Zadok the priest, See, you and Abiathar are to go back to the town in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz, your son, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar.

Complete Jewish Bible The king then said to Tzadok the cohen, "Do you see? Return to the city in peace, your two sons with you - Achima'atz your own son and Y'honatan the son of Evyatar.

Ferar-Fenton Bible The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Cheer up, and return quietly to the city with Akhimatz your son, and Jonathan-ben-Abiathar's two sons with you.

HCSB The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Look, return to the city in peace and your two sons with you: your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) And the king said to the priest Zadok, "Do you understand? You return [Hebrew uncertain. Emendation yields "Look, you and Abiathar return."] to the safety of the city with your two sons, your own son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

Judaica Press Complete T. And the king said to Zadok the priest: 'Do you (not) see? return to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, your two sons, shall be with you.

NET Bible® The king said to Zadok the priest, "Are you a seer [The Greek tradition understands the Hebrew word as an imperative ("see"). Most Greek mss have ἴδετε (idete); the Lucianic recension has βλέπετε (blepe). It could just as well be taken as a question: "Don't you see what is happening?" The present translation takes the word as a question, with the implication that Zadok is a priest and not a prophet (i.e., "seer") and therefore unable to know what the future holds.]? Go back to the city in peace! Your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan may go with you and Abiathar [Heb "And Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, two of your sons, with you." The pronominal suffix on the last word is plural, referring to Zadok and Abiathar.].

NIV – UK The king also said to Zadok the priest, 'Do you understand? Go back to the city with my blessing. Take your son Ahimaaz with you, and also Abiathar's son Jonathan. You and Abiathar return with your two sons.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible The king also said to Zadok the priest, Are you not a seer? [You and Abiathar] return to the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son and Jonathan son of Abiathar.

Context Group Version The king said also to Zadok the priest, Do you see? Return into the city in peace, and your { pl } two sons with you { pl }, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

English Standard Version The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Go back [Septuagint The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Look, go back] to the city in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

exeGesés companion Bible And the sovereign says to Sadoq the priest,
Are you a seer?
Return to the city in shalom with your two sons,
Achiy Maas your son
and Yah Nathan the son of Abi Athar.

Syndein {Preparing Zadok to be the Chief of Intelligence for David}

Then the king said to Zadok the priest {cohen} {Zadok is actually the co-High Priest}, "Are you not a 'prophet - writer of scripture type' {ra'ah}? {this is the 'writer of scripture type of prophet so Kodak needed to be in the city where the writing materials and a place to write were} Return to the city in tranquility/prosperity. {meaning no reason to be upset you can not go with David - David will have a great purpose for him in the city - counter- intelligence} Both Ahimaaz, your son, . . . and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar . . . these two sons . . . {take} with you. {Note: Ra'ah is one of the three Hebrew words for 'prophet'. A ra'ah type prophet receives communication from God and writes scripture. RBT says Zadok is most likely the writer of II Samuel, II Kings, II Chronicles . . . finishing the work of Samuel after his death. (The other two types of 'prophets' are nabiyy' which was a prophet similar to a pastor teacher in the Church Age - he taught doctrine from the written word (Aaron was a nabiyy' according to Exodus 7:1). The last type was the chozeh. He received communication directly from God but it was only for the people of that day - his communication did not become part of the written word that lives and abides forever and ever. David wrote many of the Psalms so he also was a "ra'ah".}.
 And the king says unto Zadok the priest, "Are you a seer? Turn back to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar, your two sons with you.

Young's Updated LT

The gist of this verse:

David says for Zadok and Abiathar to return to Jerusalem with their two sons, and he begins to lay out a counterinsurgency plot.

2Samuel 15:27a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek ^e (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צדק or צדק) [pronounced tzaw-DOHK]	just, righteous; transliterated Zadok	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
kôhên (כהן) [pronounced koh-HANE]	priest	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3548 BDB #463

Translation: Then the king said to Zadok, the priest,... In v. 25, David says to Zadok; and here he speaks unto Zadok. What is possibly going on is, David is speaking quietly to Zadok, on the side, apart from everyone else. This would help to explain two things: why David is twice said to speak to Zadok (that is, why isn't this just a continuation of the quote); and it explains why there are different prepositions used here.

Furthermore, what David says here and in the next verse is much more confidential than what David said previously.⁹⁶ At this point, David has taken Zadok aside, apparently with Abiathar.

As was mentioned earlier, we do not know when Abiathar came up; and he could have come up several hours after Zadok. However, whatever that time frame, David is going to send both men back to Jerusalem (Zadok apparently came out of Jerusalem and we do not know about Abiathar, who I think came from Gibeon). However, this sentence works, whether he is speaking only to Zadok and then later to Abiathar; or to both of these men at the same time. The former seems to be the case, and David is letting Zadok know that he will be in league with Abiathar and their two sons as **counterinsurgents**.

2Samuel 15:27b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (הַ) [pronounced <i>heh</i>]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied. This can be used in an indirect interrogation and translated <i>whether</i> .		Strong's #none BDB #209
râ'âh (רֹאֶה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>a seer, perceiver</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Translation:... “[Are] you a seer? Then sense here is given by Barnes: “Are you not a seer? Therefore, go back to the city, and observe, and inform me of what you see.”⁹⁷

Seer is one of the three different words used to refer to a prophet. We certainly think of a prophet as someone who conveys to us future events; but a prophet was one who represented God to man, speaking God's truth to man. Sometimes, this involved seeing into the future, in order to establish his authority.

In part, this comes from notes from R. B. Thieme, Jr.⁹⁸

Three Hebrew Words Denoting a Prophet

Hebrew word	Meaning
râ'âh (רֹאֶה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>A seer, perceiver.</i> R. B. Thieme, Jr. suggests that this sort of prophet receives communication from God and records Scripture as well. He suggests that Zadok, for this reason, is the writer of 2Samuel, 1Kings, and portions of 1 & 2Chronicles. Strong's #7200 BDB #906.

⁹⁶ As a side note, when working on this verse, the first things I noticed was, *the king said* twice, without any intervening dialogue from Zadok; and the different of prepositions. Things like this stand out in the Hebrew, even though we would not see any difference in the English.

⁹⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:27 (edited and updated).

⁹⁸ From http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_15a.html accessed October 7, 2012.

Three Hebrew Words Denoting a Prophet

Hebrew word	Meaning
nâbîy' (נָבִיא) [pronounced naw ^b -VEE]	<i>A prophet [true or false]; spokesman, speaker.</i> According to R. B. Thieme, Jr., a nâbîy was a prophet similar to a pastor teacher in the Church Age - he taught doctrine from the written word (Aaron was would have been a nâbîy according to Exodus 7:1) this is the word consistently translated <i>prophet</i> in the KJV (and in many other translations). Strong's #5030 BDB #611.
chôzeh (חָזַה) [pronounced khoh-ZEH]	<i>A seer; a vision.</i> BDB definitions only. This is the present active participle of the verb châzâh (חָזַה) [pronounced <i>khaw-ZAW</i>], which means <i>to see, to behold; to see [God]</i> , therefore, <i>to enjoy His favor, to know Him</i> ; [followed by bêyth preposition]: <i>to look upon, to contemplate; to choose.</i> According to R. B. Thieme, Jr., such a one received communication directly from God but it was only for the people of that day - his communication did not become part of the written word that lives and abides forever and ever. However, most prophets functioned for that day and for the long future. Strong's #2372 BDB #302. Strong's #2374.

There is a gloss in 1Sam. 9:9, which reads, [In the old days in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said this: Come, let us go to the seer, for the prophet of today was before called a seer.](#) When the events of this book first took place, it was more common to call a prophet by the name *seer*. During its writing, or during the time it was being copied, the designation *prophet* was more commonly used.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. makes some distinctions here that I am not ready to affirm.

Although we may want to assign the concept of prophet to these people as we view a prophet today (a man who foretells the future; and often paints a bleak picture of the future); this more refers to men of God who taught the Word of God. They may or may not be priests or Levites, but they were more akin to the pastor-teacher today than to our personal understanding of what a prophet it (see 1Sam. 10:5 1Kings 18:4,13).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

So far, we have: [Then the king said to Zadok, the priest, "\[Are\] you a seer?](#) You may say, "But Zadok is a priest!" And a priest represents man to God. A prophet, on the other hand, represents God to man. The priest and prophet were two sides of the Messiah, who would both represent God to man and man to God, as the great Mediator between the two. [For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the Man, Christ Jesus](#) (1Tim. 2:5; HCSB). The priesthood looked forward to the Messiah, as did the string of prophets that God sent to Israel.

Although Moses is called a prophet (Deut. 18:15), along with Aaron (Ex. 7:1); there does not appear to be a great prophetic age to Israel until both the northern and southern kingdoms begin to face the possibility of being destroyed under the **4th and 5th stages of national discipline**. Then we actually have a period of time when there are many prophets who come and speak to Israel, to warn the people of what they are facing in the future.

Although the United States is a **priest nation** today (a nation which represents God to the world), we do not have prophets in the sense of people coming and telling us that New York City is about to fall into the sea, and that Jihadists next year will come up through Mexico and invade our country. However, a good pastor-teacher is able to read the writing on the wall, and, combining his knowledge of history, current events and Bible doctrine, he can correctly interpret history and give warnings of what our nation could face. For many years, R. B. Thieme, Jr. was that voice of warning. It was not that he could see into the future or that his words were put on the same level as Scripture, it was simply that he could look at current events, the Bible, and tie the two together. So, even though the AIDS epidemic or hurricane Katrina are not found in the Holy Bible, and even though no person in their right mind has been given special information from God on these events, a believer with doctrine in his soul can see

these events as God's judgment upon a geographical area or upon a specific group of people. However, it is not ridiculous to suggest that New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago may, as American cities, face harsh judgment in the near future. Do you recall the riots and lawlessness of Detroit and Los Angeles? What happened to those cities in the aftermath? Did things get tremendously better? No, increased lawlessness has become a permanent part of those cities, as has poverty and desperation for large pockets of population in those two cities.

2Sam. 15:27a **Then the king said to Zadok, the priest, "[Are] you a seer?** David first of all knows that he has Zadok's loyalty; because here is Zadok with the Ark of God, ready to go. Secondly, David knows that Zadok is a brilliant man. The reason that David asks, "Are you a seer?" is not an inquiry as to, "Do you also have the gift of prophecy?" It is somewhat of a play on words. David is more asking Zadok, "You have your eyes open; you notice things, you pay attention to what is going on around you?" This is what David is saying, but without saying that exactly. He needs a man who is loyal, observant, and prudent who will not stand out as someone who ought not to be there in Jerusalem.

David is going to ask both Zadok and Abiathar to be spies on his behalf. He will ask them to report to him all that goes on in Jerusalem. In war, one of the most important factors is information.

2Samuel 15:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative; with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
The voluntative hê ; that is, it ends with <i>âh</i> , not to indicate a feminine ending (although the meaning is similar), but this indicates that with the verb in the 1 st person, we should have the additional words <i>let me, allow me to</i> . The 1 st person Niphal may require the additional word <i>may, might, ought, should</i> . In the second person, we should have the additional word <i>might</i> ; or, in any person we might add the word <i>may, might</i> . Surprisingly enough, I have found nothing concerning the voluntative hê in any of my reference books (Gibson, Mansoor, Zodhiates or Kelley), but Owen points it out again and again, and the many translators of Scripture go along with this. This appears to be tacked onto imperatives to smooth them out and to recognize the volition of the person being spoken to.			
îyr (יָר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâlôwm (שְׁלֹמ) or shâlôm (שְׁלֹמ) [pronounced shaw-LOHM]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: **Return [to] the city in peace [and tranquility]...** Now David lays out a plan, and this is something that is going to surprise a lot of believers (it did me, when I first heard this verse explained).

You will note the voluntative hê with the imperative. Here, that somewhat softens the imperative into more of a request.

It sounds as if David might be saying, “You are a man of God, so your place in Jerusalem among the people is where you would best serve Y^ehowah.” But that is not what David is telling Zadok.

David tells Zadok to return to the city Jerusalem in peace. This would mean quietly. There is going to be no fuss, no stirring up the population; it is going to take place as if he never left. He will do it in a tranquil manner. Zadok is not going to have a sign in his window, saying, “I support King David.”

Zadok will continue being a priest, representing man to God, offering up sacrifices, and just going on with his normal, day-to-day business. Only a handful of men in Jerusalem will know that Zadok is involved in **counterinsurgency** against Absalom.

2Samuel 15:27d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀchîymaʿats (אחימאז) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ġahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: ...with [lit., and] Ahimaaz your son;... Key to this return is Ahimaaz, who is Zadok's son.

2Samuel 15:27e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y ^e hōwnâthân (יהונתן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>]	<i>Jehovah has given, whom Jehovah gave, a gift of Jehovah; alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
There are two primary ways of spelling <i>Jonathan</i> : Y ^e hōwnâthân (יהונתן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>], which is found 83 times, and Yōwnâthân (יונתן) [pronounced <i>yoh-naw-THAWN</i>], which is found 42 times.			
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʾEb ^e yâthâr (אביאטר) [pronounced <i>eb^e-yaw-THAWR</i>]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5

Translation: ...and [with] Jonathan the son of Abiathar;... Also key to David's plot here is Abiathar's son, Jonathan. So, what is suggested here is, Abiathar and Zadok both are going to be ministering in Jerusalem and they will have their sons with them.

2Samuel 15:27f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַיִ) [pronounced sh ^e n-Ā]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
bânîym (בְּנֵיִם) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: ...both of your sons with you. Here, the *your* and the *you* are both in the plural form. Zadok and Abiathar and their sons will all be working together.

One of the things which we must be careful of when studying narrative is, what people do in these narratives is not always something which has God's approval. After all, David might be setting up a spy network using the priests of God, but that does not mean that God has approved of this. It is just like the first chapter of Acts when the disciples figure that they need a 12th disciple, Judas is dead, so it is time to elect a new guy. It is what they actually did, and it is a part of the Word of God, but that does not mean that God approved of what they did. They did it, but God chose His Own 12th disciple, ignored the guy that they chose, and the plan of God moved forward. However, so that there is no confusion, what we are studying here is approved by God, and we will read about that in the near future. Setting up a spy network may seem pretty wild to you; and having these men who are to tell the truth of God to those who will listen will now become involved in **counterinsurgency**—which means that they will lie to the opposition if need be—and yet, this is God's will. In fact, the Bible will clearly tell us that this is God's will.

This entire verse reads: **Then the king said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Therefore, return to the city quietly and peacefully. Make certain that you take your son, Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan; take both of your sons with you.** David, 500 years before the Chinese war expert Sun Tzu⁹⁹ was on the earth, was organizing a counterinsurgency network. Had David not been involved with writing the Word of God, he would have written the first work on war and counterinsurgency. However, lucky for us, David was instead moved by the Holy Spirit to record the Word of God for us today.

Look, I am waiting in a plains of the desert-wilderness until a word from with you to make known to me."

2Samuel
15:28

Look, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region until a word directly from you is made known to me."

Listen, both of you, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region until I hear from you."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

⁹⁹ Actually, Sun Wu.

Latin Vulgate	Behold I will lie hid in the plains of the wilderness, till there come word from you to certify me.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Look, I am waiting in a plains of the desert-wilderness until a word from with you to make known to me."
Peshitta (Syriac)	See, I will wait in the plain of the wilderness until there come a <u>man</u> from you to inform me.
Septuagint (Greek)	Behold, I continue in arms in Araboth of the desert, until there come tidings from you to report to me.

Significant differences: The English translation from the Syriac has *a man* rather than *a word, a report*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	I will be waiting in the desert plains until you send word telling me what to do."
Contemporary English V.	I'll wait at the river crossing in the desert until I hear from you.
Easy English	I will wait in the desert where people cross the shallow river. I will wait there until I hear news from you.'
Easy-to-Read Version	I will be waiting near the places where people go across the river into the desert. I will wait there until I hear from you."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Meanwhile, I will wait at the river crossings in the wilderness until I receive news from you."
<i>The Message</i>	I'll wait at a spot in the wilderness across the river, until I get word from you telling us what's up."
New Berkeley Version	See! I am going to be waiting at the desert fords [Of the Jordan; see 2Sam. 17:16] until word comes from you bringing me information."
New Century Version	I will wait near the crossings into the desert until I hear from you."
New Life Bible	See, I will wait in the desert by the place where the river is crossed, until I hear from you."
New Living Translation	I will stop at the shallows of the Jordan River [Hebrew at the crossing points of the wilderness] and wait there for a report from you."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	For I'm going to live like a soldier in the desert, and I'll wait there for you to send word to me.
Christian Community Bible	I will wait in the desert fords until you send word for me."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	I'll wait at the river crossings in the desert until I receive a message from you."
New American Bible	Remember, I shall be waiting at the fords near the wilderness until a report from you comes to me."
NIRV	I'll wait at the place in the desert where we can go across the Jordan River.
New Jerusalem Bible	You see, I shall wait in the passes of the desert plain until word comes from you bringing me news.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	See, I will linger in the plain of the wilderness until a word comes from you to tell me."
Bible in Basic English	See, I will be waiting at the way across the river, in the waste land, till I get news from you.
Complete Jewish Bible	I will wait on the desert plains until a message with new information comes from you."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	You see, I shall be waiting at Aboth in the pastures, until the coming of news from you to inform me.

HCSB	Remember, I'll wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Look, I shall linger in the steppes of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."
Judaica Press Complete T.	See, I will tarry in the plains of the wilderness, until there comes word from you to announce to me.'
NET Bible®	Look, I will be waiting at the fords of the desert until word from you [The pronoun is plural, referring to Zadok and Abiathar.] reaches me."
NIV – UK	I will wait at the fords in the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	See, I will wait at the fords [at the Jordan] of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.
Concordant Literal Version	...see you, I am tarrying in the plains of the wilderness till the coming in of a word from you to declare to me.
Context Group Version	See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness, until there comes word from you {p} to inform me.
English Standard Version	See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."
exeGesés companion Bible	See, I linger in the plain of the wilderness, until word comes from you to tell me.
Fred Miller's Revised KJV	See, I will wait in the plain of the wilderness, until word comes from you to certify me.
LTHB	Behold, I will wait in the plain of the wilderness until word comes from you to report to me.
Syndein	See {ra'ah}, I will wait at the 'fords of the desert', until there a word/communication/'an intelligence report' {dabar} comes from you {Zadok} to inform me {David}. {Note: The 'fords of the desert' was a very famous caravan crossroads point. It was the fords over the Jordan River near where Jericho is. From there, David can go in a number of directions. He will wait for an intelligence report on the movements of Absalom's army before he decides the best direction to move.}
Third Millennium Bible	See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness until there come word from you to assure me."
Webster's Bible Translation	See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until word shall come from you to certify me.
World English Bible	Behold, I will stay at the fords of the wilderness, until word comes from you to inform me."
Young's Updated LT	See, I am tarrying in the plains of the wilderness till the coming in of a word from you to declare to me."

The gist of this verse: David indicates where he will be staying, waiting for word from them.

2Samuel 15:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	look, see, behold, view, see here, listen up	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

2Samuel 15:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>]	<i>I, me;</i> (sometimes a verb is implied)	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
mâhahh (מָהַח) [pronounced <i>maw-HAH</i>]	<i>to delay, to linger, to tarry, to wait; to refuse, to turn back</i>	Hithpalpel participle	Strong's #4102 BDB #554
Gesenius has an alternate spelling for this verb.			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'ārâbâh (אֲרָבָה) [pronounced <i>guh-raw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>plain; arid, sterile region; a desert; transliterated Arabah with the definite article</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #6160 BDB #787
In the Hebrew Bible, ¹⁰⁰ the scribes did not alter any text they felt had been copied incorrectly. Rather they noted in the margin what they thought the written text should be. The written variation is called a kethiv and the marginal note is called the qere. Where the translators of the Authorised Version followed the qere reading rather than the kethiv, we indicate the kethiv reading by the number 08675. For example, in Ge 24:33 "was set" is coded as [H7760] 08675 [H3455]. The translators used the qere reading that has Strong's number [H7760] but the kethiv reading is Strong's number [H3455]. Both words have the same meaning, "was set".			
'ăbârâh (אֲבָרָה) [pronounced <i>gub-aw-RAW</i>]	<i>ford [shallow portion] [of a river]; ferry boat or raft [for crossing a river]</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #5679 BDB #720
So, what we find in this text is Strong's #5679; however, the scribes believed the actual reading to be Strong's #6160.			
However, we seem to have the exact same problem in 2Sam. 17:16, which reads: And now send quickly and tell David, saying, Do not stay in the plains of the wilderness tonight, but speedily pass over, lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people with him. Both passages have a kethiv and a qere reading.			
mid ^e bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced <i>mid^e-BAWR</i>]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

¹⁰⁰ This is taken from E-sword dictionary called *Strong's with Tense and Mood*.

2Samuel 15:28a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>Although I think that the <i>plains of the desert region</i> is accurate, the Pulpit Commentary argues persuasively against that: <i>The Revised Version has "at the fords of the wilderness," that is, it rightly keeps to the written Hebrew text (the K"tib), while the Authorized Version adopts a conjecture of the Massorites (the K"ri). This conjecture is the substitution of arboth for abroth, and they have made the same alteration at, 2Sam. 17:16. But the substitution is uncalled for and mischievous; for David would not halt indefinitely in the plain, the Arabah (of which Arboth is the plural) but would press on to the fords, where some delay must take place, and where the king's presence would be important in giving instructions for what was by no means an easy operation. (comp. 2Sam. 19:18) At the river, moreover, David could be assailed only in front, where his "mighties" would make a strong defence, while in the Arabah they might be surrounded; and, encumbered as they were with women, their line must be so extended as to be weakened. We find, too, in Jude 1:3:28 that the fords of the Jordan formed a good military position. In 2Sam. 17:22 it is expressly said that the fording of the river did not take place until Jonathan and Ahimaaz came with their reports; and their words there, in ver, 21, show that David was on the bank when they arrived, with his preparations so complete, that, in the next few hours, all his company were safely carried over to the other side. Ahimaaz was a famous runner, (see 2Sam. 18:27) and, if David was ready, the time gained by him upon any body of troops leaving Jerusalem at the same hour, would have enabled the king to get his people across; but if he had still some miles to march, with a number of women and children, Ahimaaz's fleetness would have been rendered useless.</i>¹⁰¹</p>			

Personally, I don't really have a dog in this hunt. The Pulpit Commentary argues that David is talking about going further to the Jordan itself; and other suggests that David stops in the plains to await word there. However, it is possible that there is more going on in 2Sam. 17 which will suggest the other reading.

Translation: [Look, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region...](#) The first word might be better translated, *listen, both of you*. It is a 2nd person masculine plural imperative, so this is directed to both Zadok and Abiathar, the priests (or, at Zadok and his son).

You will note that there are two readings here. Apparently the scribes believed that the reading above is correct and that *fords* is not. The reason should be obvious; we would associate *fords* with some river, and we do not find a river in the text. Now, David is going in the direction of the Jordan River and he is going to cross it, but, apparently, between Jerusalem and there is a high plains desert region near Jericho (2Kings 25:5).

In any case, it is about 10 miles to get to the plains near Jericho; and 20 miles to get to the fords of the Jordan.

So, David has a place where he will be waiting, which is known to both of the priests.

2Samuel 15:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723

¹⁰¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:28.

2Samuel 15:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min ’êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...until a word directly from you is made known to me.” These priests will not be bringing a message to David; one of their sons will bring a message to him. If the priests disappear, people are going to ask questions. Furthermore, they are going to be quite recognizable to much of the public. Therefore, their lesser known sons would actually bring the messages to David.

The entire verse reads: *Listen, both of you, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region until I hear from you.*” David cannot determine what he will do next until he has gathered intelligence on the opposing army led by Absalom. He needs to know their numbers, their plans, their organization and their generals. There is likely very specific information which David requested. The Bible does not record this information. David is going to want to know how large Absalom’s army is; he will want to know anyone from high up in his own army who has joined Absalom. If Absalom appears to be gearing up the troops to go after David, obviously, he needs to know this.

So that there is no misunderstanding here, Zadok and Abiathar are risking their lives and the lives of their sons by doing this.

And so returns Zadok (and Abiathar) an Ark of the Elohim [to] Jerusalem; and so they stay there.

2Samuel
15:29

Zadok returned the Ark of Elohim [to] Jerusalem with Abiathar; and they remained there [in Jerusalem].

Zadok returned the Ark of God to Jerusalem, accompanied by Abiathar. Then they remained in Jerusalem.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	So Sadoc and Abiathar <u>carried back</u> the ark of God into Jerusalem: and they tarried there.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so returns Zadok (and Abiathar) an Ark of the Elohim [to] Jerusalem; and so they stay there.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Zadok therefore and Abiathar <u>carried</u> the ark of God back to Jerusalem; and they remained there.
Septuagint (Greek)	So Zadok and Abiathar brought back the ark of the Lord to Jerusalem, and <u>it</u> remained there.

Significant differences: The English translation from the Latin and Syriac indicate that Zadok and Abiathar carried the Ark. In the Hebrew, they simply return the Ark of God. In the Hebrew, they remain in Jerusalem; in the Greek, the Ark remains there.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	So Zadok and Abiathar took God's chest back to Jerusalem and stayed there.
Contemporary English V.	Zadok and Abiathar took the sacred chest back into Jerusalem and stayed there.
Easy-to-Read Version	So Zadok and Abiathar took God's Holy Box [90] back to Jerusalem and stayed there [Also called "The Ark of the Covenant," the box containing the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them and the other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai Desert.].
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Zadok and Abiathar took the Covenant Box back into Jerusalem and stayed there.
<i>The Message</i>	So Zadok and Abiathar took the Chest of God back to Jerusalem and placed it there,...
New Life Bible	So Zadok and Abiathar returned the special box of God to Jerusalem and stayed there.
New Living Translation	So Zadok and Abiathar took the Ark of God back to the city and stayed there.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, ZaDok and AbiAthar returned the Chest of God to JeruSalem, and it stayed there.
NIRV	So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem. They stayed there.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and dwelled there. So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and did not go away from there.
Complete Jewish Bible	So Tzadok and Evyatar carried the ark of God back to Yerushalayim and stayed there.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Zadok and Abiathar therefore returned the Ark of GOD to Jerusalem, and went back there.

HCSB
New Heart English Bible

So Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and stayed there.
Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem; and they stayed there.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they abode there.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Sadoq and Abi Athar return the ark of Elohim to Yeru Shalem: and they settle there.
King James 2000 Version	Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.
LTHB	And Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem. And they remained there.
Syndein	Zadok, therefore, because of Abiathar {because Abiathar was back in the tabernacle in Jerusalem}, he {Zadok} returned {shuwb -3rd masculine singular - only Zadok did this} the Ark of 'Elohiym/Godhead to Jerusalem and they {Zadok and Abiathar} remained/tarried there.
Webster's Bible Translation	Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.
World English Bible	Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they abode there.
Young's Updated LT	And Zadok taketh back--and Abiathar--the ark of God to Jerusalem, and they abide there.

The gist of this verse: Zadok and Abiathar return to Jerusalem with the Ark of God.

2Samuel 15:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to send back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדֹק or צִדְקָה) [pronounced tzaw-DOHK]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:29a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾărôwn (אָרוֹן) [pronounced <i>uh-ROHN</i>]	<i>ark, chest; Ark</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #727 BDB #75
ʾĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced <i>y'roo-shaw-LAH-yim</i>]	possibly means <i>founded upon peace</i> or <i>city of the Jebusites</i> (or both); it is transliterated <i>Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location; pausal form	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

Translation: [Zadok returned the Ark of Elohim \[to\] Jerusalem with Abiathar;...](#) *To return* is in the 3rd person masculine singular form, so this again suggests that it was Zadok who had control of the Ark. That is, it was his responsibility, as his name is first. They all return to Jerusalem probably together, and Zadok himself is not carrying the Ark. That requires several men with poles so that none of them actually touch the Ark (which is something that David found out about by studying the Scriptures).

2Samuel 15:29b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (בָּשַׁב) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAH^βV</i>]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

Translation: [...and they remained there \[in Jerusalem\].](#) This time the verb is in the plural; so both men are staying in Jerusalem. Now, I previously suggested that Abiathar may have been stationed elsewhere, possibly with the Tabernacle. However, it is safe and reasonable for him to take up residence in Jerusalem and it would not arouse suspicion, because Absalom apparently has little or no interest in the Ark of God or in spiritual things. Therefore, even if he noticed and asked, Zadok and Abiathar would have some good reason for Abiathar being in Jerusalem (and, that is assuming that he did not originally come from Jerusalem).

It appears that their sons did not actually stay in Jerusalem, but in a place called Enrogel, according to 2Sam. 17:17 (And Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by En-rogel, for there they might not be seen to come into the city. And a slave-girl went and told them, and they went and told King David.).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

God Answers David's Prayer

And David is going up in an ascent of olives, going up and weeping, and a head to him being covered (and he is going barefoot). And all the people who [are] with him have covered a man his head and they have gone up, going up, and weeping. 2Samuel 15:30

And David is going up the ascent of [the Mount] of Olives, going up and weeping, his head covered, and he is going barefoot. All the people who [are] with him also have covered each one his head while they go up, [also] going up and weeping.

David is going up the ascent to the Mount of Olives, and he is weeping as he goes up. His head is uncovered and he is barefoot. Accordingly, all of the people who are with him also have their heads covered, and they are weeping as they go up.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, going up and weeping, walking barefoot, and with his head covered, and all the people that were with <u>them</u> , went up with their heads covered weeping.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And David is going up in an ascent of olives, going up and weeping, and a head to him being covered (and he is going barefoot). And all the people who [are] with him have covered a man his head and they have gone up, going up, and weeping.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet and wept as he went up and had his head covered and all the people who were with him also covered their heads, and they went up on foot, weeping as they went.
Septuagint (Greek)	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.

Significant differences: The Peshitta leaves out that David is barefoot. However, that the people are *on foot* is found in the second half of this verse, which is not found in the Hebrew.

In the final two phrases, the English translation from the Latin just used the verb *going up* once (it is found twice in the Hebrew) and it has *with them* instead of *with him*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	David went on up the slope of the Mount of Olives. He was barefoot and crying, and he covered his head to show his sorrow. Everyone with him was crying, and they covered their heads too.
Easy-to-Read Version	David went up the Mount of Olives. He was crying. He covered his head and he went without shoes on his feet. All of the people with David also covered their heads. They went with David, crying.

Good News Bible (TEV)	David went on up the Mount of Olives crying; he was barefoot and had his head covered as a sign of grief. All who followed him covered their heads and cried also.
<i>The Message</i>	...while David went up the Mount of Olives weeping, head covered but barefooted, and the whole army was with him, heads covered and weeping as they ascended.
New Berkeley Version	David, meanwhile, was climbing the Mount of Olives, making the ascent weeping, with his head covered and walking barefoot [All signs of mourning (Esther 6:12 Ezek. 24:17)]. Each man of all the people with him likewise covered his head and went up weeping as he climbed.
New Life Bible	David went up the Mount of Olives and cried as he went. His head was covered and he wore no shoes. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up crying as they went.
New Living Translation	David walked up the road to the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went. His head was covered and his feet were bare as a sign of mourning. And the people who were with him covered their heads and wept as they climbed the hill.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then David climbed the Mount of Olives barefoot and with his head covered, crying. And all the people came with him with their heads covered and crying.
Beck's American Translation	David was going up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went up, with his head covered and walking barefoot. And everyone of the people with him covered his head and they wept as they went up.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	David cried as he went up the Mount of Olives. He covered his head and walked barefoot. And all of the troops with him covered their heads and cried as they went.
New American Bible	As David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, he wept without ceasing. His head was covered, and he was walking barefoot. All those who were with him also had their heads covered and were weeping as they went. 2 Sm 19:5; Mi 1:8.
NIRV	But David went on up the Mount of Olives. He was sobbing as he went. His head was covered, and he was barefoot. All of the people who were with him covered their heads too. And they were sobbing as they went up.
New Jerusalem Bible	David then made his way up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, his head covered and his feet bare. And all the people with him had their heads covered and made their way up, weeping as they went.
New Simplified Bible	David went up the slope of the Mount of Olives. He was barefoot and crying. He covered his head to show his sorrow. Everyone with him was crying. They covered their heads too.
Revised English Bible	David wept as he went up the slope of the mount of Olives; he was bareheaded and went barefoot. The people with him all had their heads uncovered and wept as they went.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David ascended by the Ascent of Olives, weeping as he ascended with his head canopied. He was going barefoot as all the people with him. A man canopied his head and ascended, weeping as they ascended.
Bible in Basic English	And David went up the slopes of the Mount of Olives weeping all the way, with his head covered and no shoes on his feet: and all the people who were with him, covering their heads, went up weeping.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But David ascended the Mount of Zethim [Olives —F.F.], going up and weeping with his head covered. He marched with his head covered, and all the troops with him also veiled their heads,—and went ascending and weeping.
HCSB	David was climbing the slope of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he ascended. His head was covered, and he was walking barefoot. Each of the people with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they ascended.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	David meanwhile went up the slop of the [Mount of] Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he walked barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and wept as they went up.
NET Bible®	As David was going up the Mount of Olives, he was weeping as he went; his head was covered and his feet were bare. All the people who were with him also had their heads covered and were weeping as they went up.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV	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.
Concordant Literal Version	And David is going up in the ascent of the olives, going up and weeping, and he has the head covered, and he is going barefooted, and all the people who [are] with him have covered each his head, and have gone up, going up and weeping;...
exeGesés companion Bible	And David ascends by the ascent of the Olives and weeps as he ascends with his head covered and he walks unshod: and of all the people with him every man covers his head: and they ascend; weeping as they ascend.
The Geneva Bible	And David went up by the ascent of [mount] Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head [With ashes and dust in sign of sorrow.] 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.
Syndein	Then David ascended the {forward} slope of {the Mount of} Olives, and weeping/'kept on crying' as he went up, with his head covered/veiled {like with mosquito netting} . . . marching barefooted. {a sign of many problems - but here is a sign of humility and helplessness - the two pre-requisites for Getting with the Divine Solution - 'God helps the helpless and makes war on the arrogant'} Therefore, all the people who were with him each one covered his head, and went up, weeping as they ascended {the slope}. {Note: To stop and cry would include the arrogance factor. David is marching on while he grieves about his situation. But he is continuing on - indicating his greatness. Going barefoot, David is making it clear that only God can deliver him. He does not want to mislead the people who go with him.} {Note: What David was thinking at this time, might well have been the basis for Psalm 3.}.
World English Bible	David went up by the ascent of the <i>Mount of Olives</i> , and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered, and went barefoot: and all the people who were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.
Young's Updated LT	And David is going up in the ascent of the olives, going up and weeping, and he has the head covered, and he is going barefooted, and all the people who are with him have covered each his head, and have gone up, going up and weeping.

The gist of this verse: While ascending the Mount of Olives, David is weeping, with his head covered and he is barefoot. The people with him have their heads covered and they are weeping as well.

2Samuel 15:30a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>going up, ascending, coming up, climbing</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
<p>There appears to be a military component in the use of this verb in some contexts. That is, it sometimes does <i>not</i> mean to go up [in elevation] or to go up [in a northerly direction], but to go up against an enemy in battle or to go to a specific place in order to position oneself ready for war.</p>			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
maʿâlêh (מַעְלֵה) [pronounced <i>mah-guh-LEH</i>]	<i>ascent, a trail or road going up; a higher place [summit, stage, platform]; an acclivity, a hill</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4608 BDB #751
Zayith (זַיִת) [pronounced <i>ZAH-yeeth</i>]	<i>olives, olive orchard</i>	masculine plural noun (used as a proper noun here) with the definite article	Strong's #2132 BDB #268

Translation: [And David is going up the ascent of \[the Mount\] of Olives,...](#) The Mount of Olives is a north to south mountain range approximately 2 miles long, across from the Kidron valley east of Jerusalem.¹⁰² Obviously, it is famous for its olive trees. This is the first mention of this mountain in the Old Testament, as it is more prominent in the New.

From various parts of this mountain, there are magnificent views of the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, the mountains of Moab, and, of course, Jerusalem, as this mountain, in its highest place rises above Jerusalem by 100 ft.¹⁰³

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: *Mount Olivet, so called from its abounding with olive trees, is situated east of Jerusalem, being separated from it only by the valley of Jehoshaphat and the brook Kidron. Josephus says it is five stadia, i.e., 625 geometrical paces from Jerusalem; and St. Luke (Acts 1:12) says it is a Sabbath day's journey, or about eight stadia distant, i.e., to the summit. It forms part of a ridge of limestone hills, extending from north to south for about a mile; and it is described as having three, or, according to others, four summits; the central and highest of which overlooks the whole of the city, over whose streets and walls the eye roves as if in the survey of a model.*¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 4, p. 299.

¹⁰³ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 4, p. 299.

¹⁰⁴ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 2Sam. 15:30.

However, David is not thinking of the magnificent view. He had a wonderful life in Jerusalem. He had beautiful wives, wonderful children, and wonderful palace, as well as great power and wealth. Furthermore, he enjoyed a rich spiritual life there as well.

Application: Always bear in mind what led David to this place: adultery and then murder. He had a wonderful life, and this was destroyed by giving into his sexual lust. I want you to bear in mind, God is not pulling any strings here. God is not making Absalom rebel against David. God has not turned the people against David. God did not make Amnon rape Tamar. These are not things which God has done to David; these things are a result of David's lusts for women, his inability to draw a line where he should have (Bathsheba was married). What David's sons did were a result of him not properly fathering them; he was indulgent and not the disciplinarian that he should have been (having so many wives, David was very much like the divorced father who supported his wife and children and often bribed his children for their affection). The people reacted to David as they would to nearly any leader who had done his own soldier the way David did Uriah. First impregnating his wife and then killing him—this was deplorable behavior. So, essentially what we are seeing play out over a period of perhaps 10 years are the results of what David has done himself. These things are a result of his own failings as a parent and as a husband and as a king.

Application: Knowing about David is supposed to help you make good decisions and not to give into your lusts (whether for women, power, money or whatever). However, even with all of these mistakes under his belt, David is still the greatest king of Israel. No matter how many mistakes he made, and no matter how big the mistake was, David turned toward the Word of God for comfort and guidance.

2Samuel 15:30b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâlâh (אָלַח) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	going up, ascending, coming up, climbing	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced baw-KAW]	weeping [for] (in grief, humiliation, or joy), weeping [bitterly], weeping upon, crying [for], bewailing	Qal active participle	Strong's #1058 BDB #113

Translation: ...going up and weeping,... While David is going up this mountain, he is weeping at the same time. This might be better conveyed by the more relaxed Kukis version: [David is going up the ascent to the Mount of Olives, and he is weeping as he goes up](#). David is going to have a good cry, which is a cultural thing, as the Jews tended to be very expressive with their emotions. However, he will snap out of it and become a leader before too long.

Application: The Word of God is conveying to us the heartbreak that David is enduring for making the mistakes that he did. You cannot have sex with another man's wife; you cannot chase after other men's wives. This was an executable offense in the Old Testament and it used to be a crime in our country. God teaches the sanctity of marriage in His Word.

2Samuel 15:30c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rô'sh (שׂאֵר or שָׂאֵר) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
châphâh (חָפַח) [pronounced <i>khaw-FAW</i>]	<i>being covered, being overlain; being veiled</i>	Qal passive participle	Strong's #2645 BDB #341

Translation: ...his head covered,... None of this is given by way of, “This is what you should be doing when you are sad.” That is, the Bible is not being prescriptive here; it is simply being descriptive, telling what David was doing. I would imagine his face would be covered because he does not want the people to see him crying (as 2Sam. 19:4 Esther 6:12).

There is certainly the possibility that David is the culprit here—even though all of these people are following him—and so he covers his head (see Esther 7:8).

Bullinger says¹⁰⁵ that this is self-condemnation of David's part, backing this up with 2Sam. 19:4 Job 9:24 Esther 7:8 Jer. 14:4.

2Samuel 15:30d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , <i>is</i> implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>is walking, is going, is departing, is advancing, is traveling</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
yâchêph (יָחַף) [pronounced <i>yaw-KAYF</i>]	<i>barefoot, unshod</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #3182 BDB #405

¹⁰⁵ *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 606.

Translation: ...and he is going barefoot. Again, this is descriptive and not prescriptive. The next time you commit adultery, this does not mean you should wander up and down the streets weeping with your head covered while you walk barefoot. David simply chose this himself, as a recognition of his own culpability in all of this. Anyone who can see David, understands that by going barefoot, he is taking responsibility for what he has done. He is the cause of what is going on.

Also, no doubt, David is sad about this entire situation; what he is going through and what he is putting these people through as well. No doubt, David is reviewing his life and thinking over the many mistakes that he has made—with Amnon and Absalom; with Bathsheba; with her husband, Uriah the Hittite. No where else would be a better place or time for David to review his life—particularly the most recent 10 years—and think about what he has done.

God the Holy Spirit includes this to indicate that David is human; he makes mistakes, some of them grave mistakes (and when I say mistakes, I don't mean that he accidentally tripped and fell into adultery; I mean that he sinned). This represents to us David's feet of clay; David's humanity. None of the people of the Old or New Testaments had lives of perfection. David is a great believer, and he has screwed up so badly here, that he has essentially been caused not only to leave his home but to leave his city.

Application: Although the Bible does not teach a religion of looking within, there is a time for introspection. When you have committed sins, they never involve you alone but they are about you and your relationships with other people. There are people who learn the hard way—this is David in this instance—and he is no doubt thinking about the wrong that he has done.

Application: There are times in your life when you need to stop and see how your life, your relationships and your work relate to the Word of God. You need to have the Word of God in your soul, and you get that from a pastor-teacher.

Interestingly enough, while all this is going on, David is still the leader of these people. So he does not spend hours in self-examination. There are points in time when he has to exercise his leadership. For, for a time here—perhaps an hour or so—this is a quiet walk, with some weeping taking place, where David is thinking over his life and his mistakes. However, David cannot give in to self-recrimination. He cannot spend days on such things, because he has a position in life.

Application: You may not be a leader, but you have a place in God's plan. If you screw up your life royally through this or that set of sins, you may spend some time reflecting on your mistakes, and their consequences, but you need to also move on from there. You rebound, you get Bible doctrine, and you move forward in your Christian life; not matter what a mess you have made.

2Samuel 15:30e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

2Samuel 15:30e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'ēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
chāphâh (כָּפַח) [pronounced <i>khaw-FAW</i>]	<i>to cover, to overlay; to veil</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2645 BDB #341
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
rô'sh (רֹאשׁ אוֹ שָׂרָף) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Translation: All the people who [are] with him also have covered each one his head while they go up,... David is a leader; he screwed up, and yet he is still a leader. The men with him recognize the difficulty of this situation; they are leaving their homes as well. They are leaving behind a life that was wonderful, and—bear in mind—THEY DID NOTHING WRONG.

Application: You need to think long and hard about power. You may be a person who desires power; you may think you are just the right person to lead. David has screwed up. Behind him are hundreds of people who are paying the price for his screw up. I am not saying that you should not exercise leadership abilities, because God gives such abilities to some believers.

Application: In the year that I write this (in the year of our Lord 2012), we have the least qualified president in the history of the United States occupying the oval office. He would be challenged to operate a McDonald's Hamburger franchise, not because he is a bad person or a stupid person, but because he has never run anything before in his life. He does not know who he should hire, who he should fire, who he can trust; nor can he deal with conflict resolution in the highest echelons of power. He has not even the slightest clue of what to do when he wants A and the Republican House wants B and the Senate is divided as well. He doesn't know who to call; he doesn't know who to lead into a resolution of difficulties. He simply has no concept of how to lead. However, guaranteed, we as a people will face difficulties and hardships because of his lack of leadership ability. Furthermore, he is a man who is incapable of re-calibrating. If he tries A and it fails miserably, it never occurs to him to try not-A. He was certain that A was what he should do; and, more than like, he is going to try it again. An example of this is, he pushed through a huge stimulus bill, which involved spending massive amounts of money, which he expected to turn the economy around. It didn't. So, what is his solution in his fourth year as

president? To offer up a smaller Stimulus Bill but to call it the American Jobs Act. As he flails about, doing nearly everything wrong, the people of the United States will pay the price. He will get a lucrative salary and protection for the rest of his life; but the damage that he caused will be endured by literally millions of people. That is the concept and result of bad leadership.

Application: Just because people follow you, that does not make you a good leader.

Application: Allow me another tangent, because it obviously seems like I am simply raking President Obama over the coals. Yes, he is a lousy leader; but also, we as Americans deserve his leadership. We are a **client nation** to God, and we have screwed up. Remember in the 1950's the Billy Graham crusades? Billy Graham would speak and thousands and sometimes even millions of people would believe in Jesus Christ. What evangelist can do that today in America? Who is the evangelist speaking where 1000 people hear him and believe in Jesus Christ? That isn't happening. Our Black churches, which were once one of the great stabilizing factors among African Americans (and for America in general) have many turned to Black Liberation Theology and they teach nothing but Satanic lies from the pulpit. So, the fact that we have a crappy leader is on our shoulders. We as Americans deserve Barack Obama as our president.

Application: And while I am on tangents, do not think that simply electing the presidential candidate from the other party is going to fix everything. Although the other candidate is much more aligned with divine establishment thinking, if God believes that we need it, don't expect everything to become suddenly rosy. The solution to this nation's problems are individual and they are spiritual. I used to put out a political e-zeen, and I enjoyed doing that; but, it came to a point where I recognized, this was not going to fix anything and I was wasting precious time compiling that e-zeen. It was fun and a nice hobby, but I was losing time in the study of the Word of God, which is far, far more important. What the Word of God does in the souls of individuals is 1000x time more important than my being able to convince one or two people to vote for candidate B instead of candidate A.

Application: Continuing on this tangent: we all have "x" number of hours in a day and we all have full lives. We have to decide on how to prioritize our lives. You have to decide how much time to devote to your spiritual growth, to the spiritual growth of your family (assuming that you are the mother or father); how much time you devote to your family and your job and your hobbies. What ought to be at the top of your list is spiritual growth. There is nothing more important than that in your life. This does not mean that you throw aside your other responsibilities but, in my opinion, an hour a day ought to be devoted to Bible study (preferably from a teacher who has extensive knowledge of the Word of God). As much of your day as possible needs to be spent filled with the Spirit. So you must keep short accounts with God (when you sin, then you confess that sin).

Anyway, what led us off on these tangents is, David is a leader. The decisions that he makes, even the most personal, are going to have an effect on the people whom he leads. This is what is going on right here. You can tell David is the leader. Why? What he does, the people do. He is going up this mountain crying; and they are going up this mountain crying. Or, when he tells someone to do something, they do it.

Note: these are hundreds of people who have left their homes, their farms and their livelihood (except for the soldiers who are there). David's mistakes have negatively impacted the lives of possibly hundreds of thousands of people. Only the soldiers continue in their responsibilities, but their work will continue until the Absalom revolution is put down.

2Samuel 15:30f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:30f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
There appears to be a military component in the use of this verb in some contexts. That is, it sometimes does <i>not</i> mean <i>to go up [in elevation]</i> or <i>to go up [in a northerly direction]</i> , but <i>to go up against</i> an enemy in battle or <i>to go to a specific place in order to position oneself ready for war</i> .			
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
A Qal infinitive absolute is a verb which can act like noun, a verb or an adverb. Generally it takes the place of a noun and serves to intensify meanings. When used as a complement of affirmation, it may be rendered <i>surely, indeed, definitely</i> ; and when it is a complement of improbability and condition, we render it <i>at all, freely, indeed</i> . The Qal infinitive absolute can also serve as an adverbial complement; or, as a verb, it can replace finite verbs, imperatives, participles, and the infinitive constructs. ¹⁰⁶			
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâkâh (בָּכָה) [pronounced <i>baw-KAW</i>]	<i>to weep [for] (in grief, humiliation, or joy), to weep [bitterly], to weep upon [i.e., to embrace and weep], to cry [for], to bewail</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #1058 BDB #113

The **infinitive absolute** has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add *ing* to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form.¹⁰⁷

Translation:....[also] going up and weeping. The people follow David's lead. He is their leader and they follow him.

Application: One of the tough questions that people struggle with—particularly in our democracy—is what about war? What if your country is involved in a bad, unjust war? What do you do? Notice what these people do—they are following David. He may die and they would die with him. They will not follow Absalom. So, let's say the United States (or wherever you live) goes to war against some other nation, or within another nation (as we have done of late)—and you think it is a bad idea—what do you do? It is quite simple, and this principle is found over and over again in the Bible: if your country is that wrong, then you need to join the other side. Now, I don't mean like Jane Fonda, who provided a propaganda photo opportunity for Communists, because, after doing that, she just came back to the United States and continued to make money. She was not willing to throw in with the communists. She just wanted to act like she believed that they were the right side, but she was not about to live there. However, if your government is wrong, then you put your life on the line and you join the opposition. If the opposition is right and the United States is wrong, then you join the opposition and you need to be willing to die for their cause. If Jane Fonda believed so strongly in the cause of the North Vietnamese, then she should have stayed there, supported their war, and lived in their society. These people are following David. If he dies, then they might die as well. He is still their leader. If you choose to remain a citizen of the United States (or wherever

¹⁰⁶ Taken from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2277.

¹⁰⁷ *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

you live), then your support should be for your troops. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. often used to say, when FDR plunged us into WWII, everyone in the United States was then at war with Germany, Italy and Japan. We as a nation became a part of that war; we as individuals, whether we agree or not, were a part of this war.

Application: Maybe you want to pick and choose your wars, and say, “Well, I like this war, but I don’t like that war. I think we should have been at war in Afghanistan but not in Iraq.” As a member of the United States, you are at war in Iraq as well as Afghanistan. If the choice is not so clear-cut that you believe that you ought to ship out and fight with and support the Taliban, then you need to support the soldiers in both wars, because, as a member of the United States, you are involved in both wars.

Application: Because most people do not have a historical perspective, they cannot grasp what the United States is doing, and they think, “We just have too many bases in too many countries.” In quick succession, this world saw two world wars, separated only by two decades, barely a generation. With the power that the United States has exhibited all over the world, the world has not fallen into another world war nearly 70 years (I write this in 2012). Now, there is plenty of hatred in the world; there is no shortage of that. But the exercise of our power where we have gone in and put down this or that marker, what has been the result is, no more world wars. We may be close to falling into another one, but we have not, and God has given us a great deal of peace where very few veterans have sacrificed their lives, numerically speaking. A bad day in WWI or WWII might involve the loss of 10,000 men. I think so far in Iraq and Afghanistan, in two very lengthy wars, we have not lost that many men combined. That is great blessing from God. So, even if the U.S. makes a misstep and gets involved in a war that we ought not to be involved in, this exercise of power often keeps other nations from wanting to advance militarily, or they may face the wrath of the United States.

Application: Just as God has a corporate relationship with men (in a city, a neighborhood, a country, a business, a school); so we have a corporate relationship with one another (in that city, neighborhood, country, business or school). A leader chooses the direction of the corporate body, which commits that corporate body. However, God does not always deal primarily with the leadership—for instance, we see God working directly with prophets who are often at odds with the political leadership. However, in the Church Age, things are even more egalitarian, in the sense that, each one of us has an important spiritual life, no matter who we are. So, the example that R. B. Thieme, Jr. has given: a corporation has its annual meeting, and they met and surpassed all of their corporate goals, and in this meeting, they are patting each other on the back for being such brilliant businessmen. But, what they do not know is, wandering through the halls of their main business headquarters every night is a lone janitor who is in **supergrace**, and, because of the janitor, God pours great blessing out upon this corporation, because of their association with this janitor.

Our concentration upon David in this narrative is because he is the believer who is in supergrace; and he is being molded by God the Father through the circumstances of his life, many of which David brought upon himself.

V. 30: And David is going up the ascent of [the Mount] of Olives, going up and weeping, his head covered, and he is going barefoot. All the people who [are] with him also have covered each one his head while they go up, [also] going up and weeping.

Here is a brief summation of David leaving Jerusalem, so far:

The Pulpit Commentary’s Order of Events

1. David, being informed of the rising in favour of Absalom, calls upon his friends to flee from Jerusalem, in order to avoid its being smitten by a sudden attack.
2. His servants being willing to go with him, he leads out his entire household, with the exception of a few to take care of the house.
3. In his departure he is accompanied by his bodyguard, and the six hundred men which followed him from Jerusalem.
4. Observing Ittai in the company, he suggests that, being a stranger and exile, he should not risk his fortunes with his own; but, on receiving an assurance that it was his deliberate desire so to do, he permits him to pass on.

The Pulpit Commentary's Order of Events

5. The people of the district weep with a loud noise as he crosses the brook Kidron, and passes on toward the wilderness.
6. The ark of the covenant being brought out into the procession, when the people have passed the brook, David urges on Zadok that the ark be conveyed back to the city, expressing his humble hope that it might please God to allow him to see it once more, and, in any case, he submits to the appointments of
7. David requests Zadok and others with the ark to return to the city, and to inform him in the wilderness should anything of great importance arise.
8. The king expresses his grief by passing up the Mount of Olives, with covered head and weeping, accompanied by a covered and weeping multitude.

From *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:13.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And so to David he makes known, to say, "Ahithophel [is] in the conspirators with Absalom." And so says David, "Frustrate, please, the counsel of Ahithophel, Y^ehowah." 2Samuel 15:31

It is made known to David, saying, "Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom." Therefore, David said [in prayer], "Frustrate, please, the counsel [or, *advice*] of Ahithophel, O Y^ehowah."

One made known to David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators who have thrown in with Absalom." Therefore, David prayed to God, "Frustrate, O Jehovah, the counsel and advice of Ahithophel."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And it was told David that Achitophel also was in the <u>conspiracy</u> with Absalom, and David said: Infatuate, O Lord, I ask you, the counsel of Achitophel.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so to David he makes known, to say, "Ahithophel [is] in the conspirators with Absalom." And so says David, "Frustrate, please, the counsel of Ahithophel, Y ^e howah."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they told David, saying, Ahithophel has <u>conspired</u> with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, nullify the counsel of Ahithophel.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it was reported to David, saying, Ahithophel also is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord my God, disconcert, I pray, the counsel of Ahithophel.

Significant differences: The verb *to say* appears not to be in the Latin. Whereas, the Hebrew uses the masculine plural, present active participle of *to conspire*; the Latin appears to translate this as a singular noun and the Syriac as a simple verb.

At the end, the verbs found in the English above are roughly similar to *frustrate*, which is found in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	David was told that Ahithophel was also among the conspirators with Absalom, so he prayed, "Please, Lord, make Ahithophel's advice foolish."
Contemporary English V.	Someone told David, "Ahithophel is helping Absalom plot against you!" David said, "Please, LORD, keep Ahithophel's plans from working!"
Easy English	Someone told David, 'Ahithophel is with Absalom. He is among the group of men who made secret plans against you.' So David prayed, 'Lord, please ruin Ahithophel's advice. Make his words seem foolish.'
Easy-to-Read Version	A person told David, "Ahithophel is one of the people who made plans with Absalom." Then David prayed, "Lord, I ask you to make Ahithophel's advice useless."
Good News Bible (TEV)	When David was told that Ahithophel had joined Absalom's rebellion, he prayed, "Please, LORD, turn Ahithophel's advice into nonsense!"
<i>The Message</i>	David was told, "Ahithophel has joined the conspirators with Absalom." He prayed, "Oh, GOD--turn Ahithophel's counsel to foolishness."
New Berkeley Version	Then someone brought David the announcement, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David petitioned, "LORD, I pray Thee, turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness."
New Life Bible	Now David was told, "Ahithophel is among those who are making plans with Absalom." And David said, "O Lord, I pray, make the words of Ahithophel foolish."
New Living Translation	When someone told David that his adviser Ahithophel was now backing Absalom, David prayed, "O Lord, let Ahithophel give Absalom foolish advice!"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, when David was told that AhiThophel had joined the confederation with AbSalom, he said, 'O Jehovah my God; Confuse the counsel of AhiThophel!'
Beck's American Translation	Then someone told David, "Ahithophel is among those conspiring with Absalom." "LORD," David said, "Make Ahithophel's advice foolish."
Christian Community Bible	Humiliation for David When David was informed that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom, he said, "O Yahweh, turn the counsel of Ahitophel into folly." Psalm 33:10
New American Bible	When David was told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom," he said, "O LORD, turn the counsel of Ahithophel to folly!" 2Sam. 16:23; 17:14, 23.
NIRV	David had been told, "Ahithophel is one of those who are making secret plans with Absalom against you." So David prayed, "Lord, make Ahithophel's advice look foolish."
New Jerusalem Bible	David was then informed that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. David said, 'I beg you, Yahweh, turn Ahithophel's advice to folly.'
New Simplified Bible	Someone told David: »Ahithophel is helping Absalom conspire against you!« David said: »Please Jehovah keep Ahithophel's plans from working!«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	David was told, saying, "Ahithophel conspired with Absalom!" David said, "Yahweh, please counsel Ahithophel with idiocy."
Bible in Basic English	And word came to David, saying, Ahithophel is among those who are joined to Absalom. And David said, O Lord, let the wisdom of Ahithophel be made foolish.
Complete Jewish Bible	One of them told David, "Achitofel is among the conspirators with Avshalom." David said, "ADONAI, please! Turn Achitofel's advice into foolishness!"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then it was reported to David that Akhitophel was in the conspiracy with Absalom, when David exclaimed, "LORD frustrate the counsels of Akhitophel!"
New Advent Bible	And it was told David that Achitophel also was in the conspiracy with Absalom, and David said: Infatuate, O Lord, I beseech you, the counsel of Achitophel.

NET Bible®

Now David [The translation follows 4QSam^a, part of the Greek tradition, the Syriac Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate uldavid in reading “and to David,” rather than MT וְדָוִד (vÿdavid, “and David”). As Driver points out, the Hebrew verb הִגִּיד (higgid, “he related”) never uses the accusative for the person to whom something is told (S. R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel, 316).] **had been told, "Ahithophel has sided with the conspirators who are with Absalom. So David prayed [Heb "said."], "Make the advice of Ahithophel foolish, O LORD!"**

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	David was told, Ahithophel [your counselor] is among the conspirators with Absalom. David said, O Lord, I pray You, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness.
Concordant Literal Version	...and David declared, saying, `Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom;’ and David said, `Make foolish, I pray You, the counsel of Ahithophel, O Yahweh.
Context Group Version	And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O YHWH, I beg of you, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into shameless behavior.
exeGesés companion Bible	And one tells David, saying, Achiy Thophel is among the conspirators with Abi Shalom. And David says, O Yah Veh, I pray you, in follying, folly the counsel of Achiy Thophel.
The Geneva Bible	And [one] told David, saying, Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel [The counsel of the crafty worldlings does more harm than the open force of the enemy.] of Ahithophel into foolishness.
Syndein	{Necessity for Counter-Insurgency} Now {an intelligence agent} reported to David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." Then David prayed, "O Jehovah/God, please/'I pray you', frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel." {Note: Ahithophel is a genius and was David's former Secretary of State. He is the grandfather of Bathsheba who apparently despised David (possibly for raping Bathsheba and/or for murdering Uriah the Hittite). He is the true brains of the Absalom revolution.}.
World English Bible	One told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. David said, Yahweh, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.
Young’s Updated LT	And David declared, saying, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom;” and David says, “Make foolish, I pray You, the counsel of Ahithophel, O Jehovah.”

The gist of this verse:

When David finds out that Ahithophel is with the opposition, he prays to God that Ahithophel’s advice be frustrated.

2Samuel 15:31a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:31a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The lâmed preposition below is explicit in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QSam ^c); and implicit in the MT. ¹⁰⁸ This reference only has the English translation (and the footnote that says that). I am assuming here that the preposition is the lâmed.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Most of the translations ignore this point altogether. However the NET Bible has the following note: The translation follows 4QSam ^a , part of the Greek tradition, the Syriac Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate uldavid in reading “and to David,” rather than MT דָּוִד (vǝdavid, “and David”). As Driver points out, the Hebrew verb דיגה (higgid, “he related”) never uses the accusative [particle] for the person to whom something is told (S. R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel, 316). ¹⁰⁹			
Keil and Delitzsch write: דיגה דוד gives no sense; for David cannot be the subject, because the next clause, “and David said,” etc., contains most distinctly an expression of David's on receiving some information. Thenius would therefore alter דיגה into the Hophal דגה, while Ewald would change it into דיגה, an unusual form of the Hophal, “David was informed,” according to the construction of the Hiphil with the accusative. But although this construction of the Hiphil is placed beyond all doubt by Job. 31:37; Job. 26:4, and Eze. 43:10, the Hiphil is construed as a rule, as the Hophal always is, with ל of the person who receives information. Consequently דוד must be altered into דודל, and דיגה taken as impersonal, “they announced to David.” ¹¹⁰			
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דִּי־דָּוִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i>]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Translation: It is made known to David, saying,... As you will notice, there are problems in the Hebrew here. All of the notes that you need are in the Hebrew exegesis. The tiny word *to* is not found in the Masoretic text (that means that one letter is missing); however, it is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (this is actually one of the very few times that the Dead Sea Scrolls are helpful¹¹¹ to us). In any case, this is not a big problem, and the context makes it clear that it is not David making this known, but someone is making it known to him.

¹⁰⁸ *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*; translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999, p. 253.

¹⁰⁹ From <http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?2sa15.htm> accessed September 20, 2012.

¹¹⁰ From Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:30–31.

¹¹¹ Many times, there are portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls which are unreadable, and therefore, cannot help us with a difficult translation.

We do not know what the time frame is between this and the previous verse. This may have been a month or two later, and one of the priest's sons have come to him with this information. Or this could have occurred immediately in the time frame of this passage (which is the mostly likely).

Essentially, this is an intelligence briefing. King David attended all of his intelligence briefings.

2Samuel 15:31b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾĂchîythôphel (אֲחִיתֹּפֶל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qâshar (קָשָׁר) [pronounced <i>kaw-SHAHR</i>]	<i>conspirators; those who conspire; those who are bound [joined to]; those in a compact</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #7194 BDB #905
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
ʾĂbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>ub-ee-shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation:...“[Ahithophel \[is\] among the conspirators with Absalom.](#)” This is an important thing to know. Ahithophel is apparently a brilliant tactician. One of the most important things to a leader is the men that he has around him. Ahithophel is also Bathsheba's grandfather, who apparently never forgave David (discussed further back in the exegesis of 2Sam. 15:12).

David is no doubt considering how he will respond to what Absalom has done; will he attack, will he lay in wait, will he set a trap? He has a lot of options. However, Ahithophel probably knows David, knows his thinking, and will give excellent advice to Absalom.

Matthew Henry: *Nothing, it seems, appeared to David more threatening in Absalom's plot than that Ahithophel was in it; for one good head, in such a design, is worth a thousand good hands. Absalom was himself no politician, but he had got one entirely in his interest that was, and would be the more dangerous because he had been all along acquainted with David's counsels and affairs; if therefore he can be baffled, Absalom is as good as routed and the head of the conspiracy cut off. This David endeavours to do.*¹¹²

It is possible that David wrote about Ahithophel in two psalms: [For it is not an enemy reproaching me, or I could bear it; it is not one who hates me who is magnifying himself against me; or I would hide myself from him. But it is you, a man of my rank, my friend and my associate. We sweetened counsel together; we marched into the house of God with the throng. Desolation be upon them! They go down into Sheol alive, for evils are among them in their dwelling \(Psalm 55:12–15\). All those hating me whisper together against me; they plot evil against me, saying, A thing of ruin is poured out on him; and, He who lies down shall not rise again. Even a man desiring my welfare, I trusted in him, eating of my bread; this one has lifted up his heel against me \(Psalm 41:7–9\).](#) In fact,

¹¹² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:31–37.

the latter psalm seems so on point, that it probably should be exegeted as a part of this study. It could be that David was speaking of his own son Absalom in either case as well.

As an aside, Jesus quotes from this psalm, to speak of Judas, saying that this psalm was fulfilled by Judas. So, although this psalm is all about David being betrayed (written by David, the human author), it also looks forward the Jesus being betrayed as well (that being authored by God the Holy Spirit). So, what we have here are the exactly same words, but with a different application: one application by David and another by God the Holy Spirit.

2Samuel 15:31c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
çâkal (סָכַל) [pronounced <i>saw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to make foolish [vain, fruitless], to frustrate [another's counsel, purpose]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #5528 BDB #698
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced <i>naw</i>]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êtsâh (אֵצֶה) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
'Ăchîythôphel (אֲחִיִּיתוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Therefore, David said [in prayer], “Frustrate, please, the counsel [or, advice] of Ahithophel, O Y^ehowah.” David offers up a quick short prayer to God. He asks God to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. He wants his advice to be fruitless or vain.

Gill sums up this prayer: *Either cause 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.*¹¹³ Job 5:12 tells us that God frustrates the plans of the crafty.

¹¹³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:31.

Application: You need to notice just how quickly a prayer is given to God. David probably whipped off this prayer to God in 5 seconds, giving it perhaps a little more thought. However, if he is in fellowship—and there are no clues to suggest otherwise—then this prayer has great power and strength. There is nothing flowery about the language; this is not going to be remembered and emulated by great men of God in years to come, but this is an effective prayer that glorifies God.

The counterinsurgency spy network that David sets up is of God.

Now, although I would love for the tension to build up, let me show you that (1) David's prayer was answered and (2) the counterinsurgency spy network that David sets up is of God. 2Sam. 17:14 **And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite [who is David's mole inside the Absalom organization] is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For Jehovah had ordained [in eternity past] to defeat the excellent counsel of Ahithophel, so that Jehovah might bring evil on Absalom.**

In fact, not only does God answer David's prayer, but He answered David's prayer in eternity past. Isa. 64:25 **And it will be, before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear [their prayer].** As an aside, you may ask, *well, if God already knows all of this stuff and He has answered my prayers before I even given them, why pray?* Two reasons: (1) Jesus told us to pray (Matt. 7:7–11 John 14:13¹¹⁴ James 1:5); and (2) prayer glorifies God (1Sam. 2:1-11 1Chron. 29:10-14 Daniel 2:17-2 Luke 1:46-55).

The Pulpit Commentary lays out David's prayer and how God will answer it.

The Pulpit Commentary Lays Out David's Prayer and How God Will Answer it

1. David, hearing that Ahithophel was among the conspirators, prays that God would turn his counsel into
2. On reaching the top of the Mount of Olives, the aged Hushai expresses his desire to go with David into exile, but David declines his offer on account of his infirmities.
3. On the other hand, David suggests that he can render him good service by returning to the city and living as a servant of Absalom, and he advises him to act in concert with Zadok and Abiathar.
4. Acting on this suggestion, Hushai returns to the city, and, some time after, Absalom also enters. There passed a pang through the heart of David as he heard of the treachery of his trusty counsellor Ahithophel, bitter because he had relied so much on this wise man's honesty and sagacity, and more bitter still as he remembered the cruel conspiracy which he once entered into with Joab against the life of Uriah. Yet the forgiven and renewed king, in the fulness of his anguish, was true to his revived religious instincts in at once raising his heart to God with the prayer that he would bring his own wisdom to bear so as to defeat the wisdom of this man. We see here

From *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:31.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

One of the questions I had early on as a Christian was, *what is the deal with glorifying God? Is He some kind of an egoist who requires us to glorify Him all the time? Glorifying God* means we reveal Who and What God is. His character is revealed when we pray to Him and by His answers to our prayers. Part of the Angelic Conflict is to reveal God's essence not just to man but to the angelic world. Recall that a third of the angels fell, following Satan. God reveals throughout human history Who He is and how deceptive and evil that Satan is. Our interaction with God glorifies God, revealing His essence.

¹¹⁴ Be careful of the context here.

And so is David coming in as far as the head which he bowed down to there to Elohim. And behold, to meet him, Hushai the Archite, torn his tunic and dirt upon his head. 2Samuel 15:32

And David has gone as far as the summit, where he bowed down to Elohim, and, suddenly [lit., *behold*], Hushai the Archite [has come] to meet him. His tunic [was] torn and [there was] dirt upon his head.

Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. His tunic was torn and there was dirt upon his head, to indicate that he commiserated with David's situation.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And when David was come to the top of the <u>mountain</u> , where he was about to adore the Lord, behold Chusai the Arachite, came to meet him with his garment rent and his head covered with earth.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is David coming in as far as the head which he bowed down to there to Elohim. And behold, to meet him, Hushai the Archite, torn his tunic and dirt upon his head.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And when David came to a <u>place</u> where he used to worship God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth upon his head.
Septuagint (Greek)	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.

Significant differences: The Hebrew, in the first phrase, is somewhat difficult. There is no word for *mountain* or for *place* (see the Latin and the Syriac respectively) in the Hebrew. However, those are reasonable attempts to interpret what is being said in that first phrase.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	David and Hushai When David came to the summit where people used to worship God, Hushai from Erek met him. Hushai's clothes were ripped, and dirt was on his head.
Contemporary English V.	When David reached the top of the Mount of Olives, he met Hushai the Archite at a place of worship. Hushai's robe was torn, and dust was on his head.
Easy English	David reached the top of the mountain where people *worshipped God. Hushai the *Arkite met him there. Hushai had torn his coat and put dust on his head.
Easy-to-Read Version	David came to the top of the mountain. This was where he often worshiped God. At that time, Hushai the Arkite came to him. Hushai's coat was torn, and there was dust on his head.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When David reached the top of the hill, where there was a place of worship, his trusted friend Hushai the Archite met him with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head.
<i>The Message</i>	As David approached the top of the hill where God was worshiped, Hushai the Arkite, clothes ripped to shreds and dirt on his head, was there waiting for him.
New Berkeley Version	Besides, when David reached the summit, where God was worshiped, there came to meet him Hushai the Archite, with his coat torn and earth on his head [Compare 2Sam. 1:2].
New Life Bible	When David reached the top of the mountain where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite came to meet him. Hushai's coat was torn, and there was dirt on his head to show how sad he was.

New Living Translation When David reached the summit of the Mount of Olives where people worshiped God, Hushai the Arkite was waiting there for him. Hushai had torn his clothing and put dirt on his head as a sign of mourning.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Then, when David got to Ros, he bowed there before God. And {Look} coming to meet him was HushAi, David's best friend, ripping his clothes and piling dirt on his head.

Beck's American Translation When David came to the top where people worshiped God, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him; his garment was torn and he had dirt on his head.

Christian Community Bible When David reached the summit where God is worshipped, Hushai the Archite met him with his coat torn and dust strewn on his head.

God's Word™ When David came to the top of the Mount of Olives where people worshiped God, Hushai from Archi's family was there to meet him. His clothes were torn, and he had dirt on his head.

New American Bible *David and Hushai.*
When David reached the top, where God was worshipped, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him, with garments torn and dirt upon his head. 2 Sm 16:16.

NIRV David arrived at the top of the Mount of Olives. That's where people used to worship God. Hushai, the Arkite, was there to meet him. His robe was torn. There was dust on his head.

New Jerusalem Bible As David reached the summit, where God is worshipped, he saw Hushai the Archite, his friend, coming to meet him with his tunic torn and with earth on his head.

New Simplified Bible David reached the top of the Mount of Olives. He met Hushai the Archite at a place of worship. Hushai's robe was torn, and dust was on his head.

Revised English Bible As David was approaching the top of the eridge where it was the custom to prostrate oneself to God, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him with his tunic torn and dust on his head.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear David was coming to the peak. There he bowed to God and beheld Hushai the Archite greet him with his coat rent, and earth over his head.

Bible in Basic English Now when David had come to the top of the slope, where they gave worship to God, Hushai the Archite came to him in great grief with dust on his head:...

Complete Jewish Bible When David reached the top of the ascent, where it was customary to worship God, Hushai the Arki came to meet him with his tunic torn and earth on his head.

Ferar-Fenton Bible But when David came to the peak, where they worship GOD, Hushai, the Arki, came to meet him, tearing his robes and with earth on his head.

HCSB When David came to the summit where he used to worship God, there to meet him was Hushai the Archite with his robe torn and dust on his head.

Judaica Press Complete T. And David was coming to the top where he would prostrate himself to God, and behold, towards him came Hushai the Archite with his shirt torn, and earth upon his head.

New Advent Bible And when David had come to the top of the mountain, where he was about to adore the Lord, behold Chusai the Arachite, came to meet him with his garment rent and his head covered with earth.

NIV – UK When David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When David came to the summit [of Olivet], where he worshiped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent and earth upon his head.
Concordant Literal Version	And it comes to pass, David has come unto the top, where he bows himself to Elohim, and lo, to meet him [is] Hushai the Archite, his coat rent, and earth on his head;...
English Standard Version	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.
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, David comes to the top, and he prostrates to Elohim; and behold, Hushai the Arkiy comes to meet him with his coat ripped and soil on his head.
Modern KJV	And it happened <i>when</i> David had come to the top, where he worshiped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth upon his head.
New King James Version	Now it happened when David had come to the top <i>of the mountain</i> , where he worshiped God-there was Hushai the Archite coming to meet him with his robe torn and dust on his head.
Syndein	{Answer to David's Prayer in V. 31 - Hushai (2Samuel Chapter 17 is the Full Story)} And it came to pass, {change in historical sequence} that when David ascended to the top of the mount {Mount of Olives}, where people/heathen had worshipped 'Elohim/gods, {RBT says this was the old site of a phallic cult false religion} behold, Hushai the Archite {see 1Chronicles 27:33 where Hushai is called the 'friend of the king' He will remain loyal to David but be the worlds first 'CIA' type agent} meet him with his 'valuable robe' torn/ripped to shreds', and dust upon his head. {Hushai was alert and left Jerusalem before the others and waited for David.} {Note: Hushai will have to be a counter-insurgent. This is one of the most difficult and confusing doctrines. To murder is sin. To kill in battle in defense of your nation is not. To lie is sin. To deceive in defense of appropriate authority is not sin. This was the same issue with Rahab the prostitute in Jericho. She had to lie to protect the Jewish spies. She was a believer and knew this was God's will so she lied. Hushai will be asked to deceive Absalom and gather intelligence for David. It takes great maturity and great humility to be able to violate your own norms and standards in defense of your nation. The only way to defeat revolutionaries is to fight dirty yet keeping your high set of norms and standards in your personal soul.}
World English Bible	It happened that when David had come to the top <i>of the ascent</i> , where God was worshiped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn, and earth on his head.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass, David has come unto the top, where he bowes himself to God, and lo, to meet him is Hushai the Archite, his coat rent, and earth on his head.

The gist of this verse: Hushai the Archite comes to David, an answer to David's prayer.

2Samuel 15:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

2Samuel 15:32a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דִּיּוּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'ad (עַד) [pronounced gahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
rô'sh (שָׂרֵס אוּשָׂר) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Translation: *And David has gone as far as the summit,...* There are some difficulties with this translation; David has gone as far as the *head*. I have interpreted that to mean *summit*, which is in line with most translations. Furthermore, this is logical simply because David goes down Mount Zion, into the valley of the Brook Kidron, and then back up the Mount of Olives, which he continues to go up. Barnes suggests that this word is used almost like a proper noun here and in 2Sam. 16:1, which explains why some translators transliterate this as *Ros* or *Rosh*.

Notice how God can work. Less than an hour ago, David tossed out this quick prayer for God to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel, and now, he was reached the summit of the mountain. So, he has not walked very far.

2Samuel 15:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
The two word 'ăsher + shâm can be rendered <i>where, in what place, to what place</i> when found together. Sometimes, the addition of the verb <i>to be</i> might be appropriate to smooth out the phrasing.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

2Samuel 15:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...where he bowed down to Elohim,... Although there may be something to interpreting this as a place where heathen gods were worshiped, this seems to easily fit in with the context, where David himself bows down to God. It is a sad time, no doubt, for all those on this march; yet they stand at the top of this beautiful summit, and David bows down to worship God. What David is thinking is not revealed to us. Perhaps he re-prays his prayer about Ahithophel. Perhaps he prays on behalf of himself and the people with him. Perhaps he is not praying at all at this point, but this simply refers to what David had done on previous occasions.

Also, it ought to be pointed out that this is in the perfect tense, which suggests possibly that this is where David had prayed to God before (an imperfect tense would indicate that David was stopping to pray there in particular. It is possible that he is not praying to God at this point in time.

You may ask, *why does God the Holy Spirit include this in the text, if David is not stopping to pray?* The idea is, David is coming to a place where he has prayed before, and, suddenly, God answers David's 5 second prayer from before. So it does not matter if David prayed there or not at this summit; the prayer that God answered was that quick prayer from a few verses back.

Application: It does not take some lengthy prayer with flowery expressions to appeal to God. David's prayer was short and to the point: "**Frustrate, please, the counsel [or, advice] of Ahithophel, O Y^ehowah.**" God, in His grace, answers David's prayer. We do not earn anything from God. Some extra-special prayer yields no answer from God that is better than the answer to a quick, 5-second prayer.

2Samuel 15:32c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ' (אָרַךְ) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896

2Samuel 15:32c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Chûwshay (יִשׁוּחַ) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry;</i> transliterated <i>Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
ʾArkîy (אַרְכִּי) [pronounced <i>ahr-KEE</i>]	<i>from Arkansas,</i> ¹¹⁵ transliterated <i>Archite</i>	Gentilis adjective with the definite article	Strong's #757 BDB #74

Translation: ...and, suddenly [lit., behold], Hushai the Archite [has come] to meet him. Hushai is the answer to David's prayer. And, it just so happens that Hushai is looking for David.

At this point in time, we do not know Hushai the Archite; he is new to us, but well-known by David. He will play a prominent role as David's ally in 2Sam. 15–17, although it will become clear to us that he is an old man.

Application: If you are alive, then God has a purpose for your life. We are not left on earth to simply coast along until death takes us. God has a purpose for every believer in the Church Age at all points along the road of life. Hushai will not just be an ally to David; Hushai's assistance will turn the tide for David.

Application: If you are getting along in years, you still have a ministry. Often, older people have more flexibility with their time, and are not tied down to working 50 or 60 hours a week. If you have free time, then use it wisely, to the glory of God. What does God have for you? I have no idea. Prayer, visiting the sick, explaining the gospel to your friends and acquaintances, teaching Sunday school. We all have different strengths and interests.

Application: I have had friends and associates go on and on about the poor¹¹⁶; if that is your burden, then help the poor. If your passion is teaching, then teach. If your passion is explaining the gospel, then find opportunities to do that. God will open whatever door He wants open. We do not all have the same gifts. We do not all have the same interests or burdens. And just because you are a foot, you don't say to the hand, "The body of Christ does not need you; it needs a foot, like me." (1Cor. 12:12–20). You function in the realm of your own spiritual gift. The do what a *foot* ought to do, and I will do with a *hand* ought to do.

Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. In this translation, I suggest that David bows down to pray here, so let's assume for a moment, that he does. God the Holy Spirit does not reveal to us what his prayer is or if it was answered; but God the Holy Spirit makes certain that we know that David's little 5-second prayer was heard and answered, immediately.

I find it interesting that, right here, at this point in time; all of David's friends and associates know where to find him. Absalom¹¹⁷ apparently does not. Just as, years ago, when David was deep in southern Judah, Saul could not find him, but hundreds of people came to David and found him, simply to be led by him (1Sam. 22:1–2 26:1–2).

I think what is being illustrated here is, our path to God, through Jesus Christ. People go through all kinds of searches for God, because, they really do not want to find God; they want to find the god they want to find. However, whoever wants to find God, he is not far from them. As Paul said in one of his sermons: "And God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined the time frame for each nation as well as its boundaries, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward

¹¹⁵ Just a joke, derivation unknown.

¹¹⁶ Some of these friends were liberals, so sometimes, when they speak about the government taking care of the poor, they simply want to take away from the rich.

¹¹⁷ It is possible that Absalom is not yet ready to pursue David.

him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for 'In him we live and move and have our being'; and, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.'" (Acts 17:26–28).

Here is something that some people have a hard time relating to: if a person is positive toward God and willing to engage in a relationship with God as God is, God will bring the gospel to him. God will make certain that person has a chance to believe in Jesus Christ, no matter where he lives. However, if a person has no interest in God as He really is, then God is under no compunction to bring to gospel to him. And since God can both read our thoughts and He knows the end from the beginning, we know that God is just and fair when it comes to the presentation of the gospel.

Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. The Archites are only mentioned here and in Joshua 16:2, where it appears that the Archites are not a family in Israel, but probably the remnants of a heathen group of people who still lived in the land. There is no indication that the various peoples mentioned in Joshua and Judges and the only heathen who lived in the land of Israel. We know by this passage, that there is at least one Archite who has his head screwed on straight. We know that there were other small groups, tribes and nationalities who continued to live in the Land of Promise after Israel took the land; and that they formed alliances with Israel (the Gibeonites, for instance—Joshua 9).

2Samuel 15:32d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qâra ^c (עָרָק) [pronounced kaw-RAHG]	<i>bent; torn [in pieces]; cut into pieces</i>	Qal passive participle	Strong's #7167 BDB #902
k ^e thôneth (תֹּנֶת) [pronounced keith-OH-neath]	<i>tunic; under-garment, garment worn next to the skin; a long shirt-like garment usually made of linen [generally with sleeves and coming down to the knees]</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3801 BDB #509
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ, וֹ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾădâmâh (הַמָּדָא) [pronounced uh-daw-MAWH]	<i>ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #127 BDB #9
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
rô'sh (שָׂרֵשׁ אוֹ שָׂרָא) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Translation: His tunic [was] torn and [there was] dirt upon his head. Hushai was very sympathetic toward David, and believed that what was going on was not right, and he indicated his solidarity with David by tearing his tunic and putting dirt on his head. Dirt, dust or ashes on the head often represents mourning (Joshua 7:2 1Sam. 4:12 ?13:19 Job 2:12), but here, it is mourning what David has lost and commiserating with him as well.

Less literally, we have: [Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. His tunic was torn and there was dirt upon his head, to indicate that he commiserated with David's situation.](#) Where David is could be one of the most beautiful places to be, at that time. However, he is leaving Jerusalem with hundreds of people with him. He takes a moment at the summit, and he bows down to God; and God answers his prayer of perhaps an hour ago with Hushai the Archite.

God obviously determined that this would all come to pass in eternity past. Hushai was already en route when David was prayer. So, why pray? Prayer glorifies God. It shows man and angels alike that we depend upon God and we understand that He is gracious to us. It reveals that, in our souls, we understand some of the characteristics of God. This is a teaching lesson to angels. We, who have never seen God, who have never heard His voice, look to Him and ask Him for deliverance—do you see how powerful that is? Do you see what a statement this makes about Who and What God is? This glorifies God, because it reveals His character and it reveals our understanding of His character, which is based upon the Word of God. We hear these words, and the Holy Spirit makes their impression on our souls, and then we act based upon these words. It is a powerful statement to make in the Angelic Conflict. [“And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear \[them\].”](#) (Isa. 65:24). [And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He rewards those who seek Him](#) (Heb. 11:6).

[Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. His tunic was torn and there was dirt upon his head, to indicate that he commiserated with David's situation.](#) Hushai is probably a relatively rich man at his age. He probably has a nice home and a reasonable number of possessions, and a nice lifestyle. However, this whole Absalom thing changed everything for him. He comes to David with a torn tunic and dirt upon his head. Circumstances in his country suddenly changed, and Hushai adapted to them. His honor and flexibility will be discussed in more detail as we view what David says to him.

One commentator made a big deal out of David stopping to pray when he is in a hurry. That is really not the case here. In fact, if anything, David's quick prayer that he gave an hour or so ago is the effective prayer. It was quick, to the point, and God answered it before David spoke it. If David prayed for something here, we are not told what it was.

David has a head start; he is pretty certain that he is far enough away from Absalom to be safe; and he will be waiting to hear from the sons of the priests as to what is going on in Jerusalem. It is intelligence which is going to help David determine his next move.

And so says to him, David, “If you have passed over with me and you have been upon me for a burden.

2Samuel
15:33

Then David said to him, “If you pass over with me, you will be a burden upon me.

Then David said to Hushai, “If you pass over with me, will be a burden to me.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And David said to him: If you come with me, you will be a burden to me:...
And so says to him, David, “If you have passed over with me and you have been upon me for a burden.

Peshitta (Syriac)
Septuagint (Greek)

And David said to him, If you pass on with me, then you will be a burden to me;...
And David said to him, If you should go over with me, then will you be a burden to me;...

Significant differences: Although the verb in the English translation of the Latin, *to come*, is not exactly the same as what is found in the Hebrew, it is close.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. David told him: If you come with me, you might slow us down.
 Easy English David said to him, `You will give me more responsibilities if you come with me.
 Easy-to-Read Version David said to Hushai, "If you go with me, then you will be just one more person to care for.
 Good News Bible (TEV) David said to him, "You will be of no help to me if you come with me,...
The Message David said, "If you come with me, you'll be just one more piece of luggage.
 New Berkeley Version David said to him, "If you keep on with me, you will become a burden to me [Perhaps because he was too old.]

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

NIRV David said to him, "If you go with me, you will be too much trouble for me.
 New Simplified Bible David told him: »You might slow me down if you come with me.«
 Revised English Bible David said to him, 'If you come with me you will only be a hindrance;...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear David said, "If you pass with me, you will be a burden over me.
 Bible in Basic English David said to him, If you go on with me, you will be a trouble to me:...
 HCSB David said to him, "If you go away with me, you'll be a burden to me,...
 NET Bible® David said to him, "If you leave [Heb "cross over."] with me you will be a burden to me.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version ...and David said to him, `If you have passed on with me then you have been on me for a burden,...
 Syndein Then David said to him, "If you march on with me, then you shall become a burden unto me. {Note: Hushai is apparently an old man now with great genius and wisdom. But going along with David would mean he might fall behind and David would have to have men protect him or the chasing revolutionary army would take and kill him.}
 World English Bible David said to him, If you pass on with me, then you will be a burden to me:...
 Young's Updated LT And David says to him, "If you have passed on with me then you have been on me for a burden."

The gist of this verse: David suggests to Hushai that he would be a burden to him, if he came along with him.

2Samuel 15:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

2Samuel 15:33a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: *Then David said to him,...* David knows Hushai and he knows Ahithophel. David is a very observant person; he knows people and their thinking and how they interact. He also recognizes that Hushai is an answer to prayer. So David has, in an instant, a plan. Whether he thinks of this plan suddenly, when he sees Hushai or whether such a plan was forming in his mind as he walked, we don't know.

Application: Remember awhile ago when David was walking, barefooted, and crying with his head covered? At that point, he was unable to think. He was overcome with emotion. What he felt was normal emotion and there is no reason to denigrate him for feeling sad, but now David is thinking—that means, he has stopped crying and stopped feeling sorry for himself; and he has stopped feeling badly for all of his supporters. You cannot think and make good decisions if you are overcome with emotion. And David now has a brilliant plan.

2Samuel 15:33b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'îm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
'âbar (אָבַר) [pronounced áaw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to pass over, to pass through, to pass on, to pass, to go over [beyond], to cross, to cross over; to go away, to depart; to violate [a law]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation:... *"If you pass over with me,...* Hushai is sympathetic toward David—hence the torn tunic and the dirt on his head—but he is an old man as well. So David wants him to consider the options here.

The verb here suggests that David is going to cross over the wilderness and then over the Jordan, which is some difficult traveling.

2Samuel 15:33c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
massâ' (מַשָּׂא) [pronounced <i>mahs-SAW</i>]	<i>a bearing, a carrying; load, burden [which is carried]; that which the soul lifts up [desires]; something uttered, a sentence, an oracle, an utterance; singing; a gift</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4853 BDB #672

Translation: ...you will be a burden upon me;... If Hushai crosses over the wilderness and then over the Jordan River on this trip with David, he is going to be a burden to David. He will be of no use to David. Hushai and David both know this. Hushai has to come to David, because he knows David and cares deeply for him. But, he also recognizes the truth of what David is saying.

Gill: David having but scanty provisions, and so could not receive useless persons, as Hushai might be, perhaps an old man, that could be of no service to him, and unfit for traveling, and so would rather be an hindrance than an help unto him.¹¹⁸

Hushai, although brilliant, is unsure of what to do at this juncture. His heart is with David, and, even as an older man (which is what is suggested here), both he and David both realize that, if he is to move with David, he will not make things better for David.

However, what David will suggest is brilliant. David was also thinking outside of the box (recall, when He wanted to build a permanent residence for God in Jerusalem).

Clarke: It appears that Hushai was not a warrior, but was a wise, prudent, and discreet man, who could well serve David by gaining him intelligence of Absalom's conspiracy; and he directs him to form a strict confederacy with the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and to make use of their sons as couriers between Jerusalem and David's place of retreat.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:33.

¹¹⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:33.

And if [to] the city you return, and you have said to Absalom, ‘Your servant I, the king, will be. A servant of your father and from that time and now and I [am] your servant.’ And you have frustrated for me a counsel of Ahithophel.

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But, if you return [to] the city and say to Absalom, ‘I will be your servant, O king. I also [was] formerly a servant of your father; now, therefore, I [am] your servant.’ And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel.

But, if you instead return to the city and go to Absalom, saying, ‘I will be your servant, O king, just as I was formerly a servant to your father; therefore, I stand here as your servant today.’ By doing this, you will be in position to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	But if you return into the city, and wilt say to Absalom: I am your servant, O king: <u>as</u> I have been your father’s servant, so I will be your servant. [By this], you will defeat the counsel of Achitophel.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And if [to] the city you return, and you have said to Absalom, ‘Your servant I, the king, will be. A servant of your father and from that time and now and I [am] your servant.’ And you have frustrated for me a counsel of Ahithophel.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But if you return to the city, <u>say</u> to Absalom, ‘I am your servant, O king, as I was your father’s servant hitherto.’ And now, I the king, want you to go and defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.
Septuagint (Greek)	...but if you shall return to the city, and shall say to Absalom, <u>your brethren have passed over, and the king your father has passed over after me</u> : and now I am your servant, O king, <u>permit me to live</u> . At one time even of late I was the servant of your father, and now I am your humble servant — so shall you defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel.
Significant differences:	The English translation of the Syriac has the imperative of <i>to say</i> . It is simply a Qal perfect in the Hebrew. The Greek throws in a whole new sentence not found in the Hebrew (and this is unreadable text in the Dead Sea Scrolls). Then it adds in a phrase not found in the Hebrew. The Latin appears to simplify what Hushai is to say to David.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, ‘King, I am your servant [Correction, LXX; MT King, I will be your servant.]! Please spare my life! I was your father’s servant in the past, but now I am your servant,’ then you can help me by countering Ahithophel’s advice.
Contemporary English V.	Go back into the city and tell Absalom, “Your Majesty, I am your servant. I will serve you now, just as I served your father in the past.” Hushai, if you do that, you can help me ruin Ahithophel’s plans.
Easy English	But you can help me if you return to Jerusalem. You can make Ahithophel’s advice worth nothing. Say to Absalom, “My king, I am your servant. In the past, I was your father’s servant. But I will be your servant now.”
Easy-to-Read Version	But if you go back to Jerusalem, you can make Ahithophel’s advice become useless. Tell Absalom, ‘King, I am your servant. I served your father, but now I will serve you.’

Good News Bible (TEV)	...but you can help me by returning to the city and telling Absalom that you will now serve him as faithfully as you served his father. And do all you can to oppose any advice that Ahithophel gives.
<i>The Message</i>	Go back to the city and say to Absalom, 'I'm ready to be your servant, O King; I used to be your father's servant, now I'm your servant.' Do that and you'll be able to confuse Ahithophel's counsel for me.
New Century Version	But if you return to the city, you can make Ahithophel's advice useless. Tell Absalom, 'I am your servant, my king. In the past I served your father, but now I will serve you.'
New Life Bible	But if you return to the city, you can bring trouble to the words of Ahithophel for me. Say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king. I will work for you as I have worked for your father in the past.' Then you can make the words of Ahithophel foolish for me.
New Living Translation	Return to Jerusalem and tell Absalom, 'I will now be your adviser, O king, just as I was your father's adviser in the past.' Then you can frustrate and counter Ahithophel's advice.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But if you return to the city, I want you to say to Absalom, Your brothers left me to follow your father. So I'm your servant now, O king; please allow me to live. For, although I was once your father's servant, I'm yours now. 'And if you'll do this for me, you will confuse the counsel of Ahithophel.
Beck's American Translation	But if you go back to the city and tell Absalom, 'King, I will be your servant. As I was your father's servant in the past, I will now be your servant,' then you will help me by defeating Ahithophel' advice.
Christian Community Bible	It would be better for you to return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king! Just as I have been your father's servant in the past, I will now be your servant.' In that way you will be useful to me in thwarting the counsel of Ahithophel.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	But if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, 'Your Majesty, I'll be your servant. I was your father's servant in the past, but now I'll be your servant,' then you'll help me by undoing Ahithophel's advice.
New American Bible	...but if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'Let me be your servant, O king; I was formerly your father's servant, but now I will be yours,' you will thwart for me the counsel of Ahithophel. 2Sam. 16:19
NIRV	So return to the city. Say to Absalom, 'King Absalom, I'll be your servant. In the past, I was your father's servant. But now I'll be your servant.' If you do that, you can help me by making sure Ahithophel's advice fails.
New Jerusalem Bible	But if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, "I am at your service, my lord king; once I was in your father's service, but now I shall serve you," you will be able to thwart Ahithophel's advice for me.
New Simplified Bible	Go back into the city and tell Absalom: »Your Majesty, I am your servant. I will serve you just as I served your father in the past. Hushai, if you do that you can help me ruin Ahithophel's plans.
Revised English Bible	...but you can help me to frustrate Ahithophel's plans if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, "I shall be your majesty's servant. In the past I was your father's servant; now I shall be yours."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When you return to the city, say to Absalom, 'King, I am your servant. Then, I was your father's servant; now, I now am your servant.' Void for me the counsel of Ahithophel.
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Bible in Basic English	But if you go back to the town and say to Absalom, I will be your servant, O king; as in the past I have been your father's servant, so now I will be yours: then you will be able to keep Ahithophel's designs against me from being put into effect.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But if you return to the city and say to Absalom; 'I was a minister of the king your father and will be the same to you,' then you can be of service to me, and can break the contrivances of Akhitophel for me.
HCSB	...but if you return to the city and tell Absalom, 'I will be your servant, my king! Previously, I was your father's servant, but now I will be your servant,' then you can counteract Ahithophel's counsel for me.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	But if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; I was your father's servant formerly, and now I will be yours,' then you can nullify Ahithophel's counsel for me.
NET Bible®	But you will be able to counter the advice of Ahithophel if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king! Previously I was your father's servant, and now I will be your servant.'
NIV, ©2011	But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'Your Majesty, I will be your servant; I was your father's servant in the past, but now I will be your servant,' then you can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	...but if you return to the city, and say to Abʿshalom, 'I am your servant, O sovereign – once servant of your father, but now I am your servant,' then you shall nullify the counsel of Ahithophel for me.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...and if to the city you do turn back, and have said to Absalom, Your servant I am, O king; servant of your father I [am] also hitherto, and now, I [am] also your servant; then you have made void for me the counsel of Ahithophel;...
Context Group Version	...but if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, I will be your slave, O king; as I have been your father's slave in time past, so I will now be your slave; then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and if you return to the city and say to Abi Shalom, I become your servant, O sovereign; and I become the servant of your father from now on, and I now also become your servant: and you break down the counsel of Achiy Thophel for me.
The updated Geneva Bible	But if you return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be your servant [Though Hushai was deceitful here at the kings request, we may not use this example to excuse our deceit.], O king; [as] I [have been] your fathers servant hitherto, so [will] I now also [be] your servant: then mayest you for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.
LTHB	But if you return to the city, and shall say to Absalom, I also will be your servant, O king; I was servant of your father before now; and now I am also your servant. Then you can break down the counsel of Ahithophel for me.
Syndein	{Counter-Espionage} But if you return to the city, and say unto Absalom, "I will be your 'loyal servant', O king; as I have been your father's 'loyal servant' in the past . . . now I will also be your 'loyal servant'. Therefore, you will help me by frustrating the counsel of Ahithophel. {Note: So, Hushai was the answer to David's prayer to God. Hushai will have to fight an unconventional war and it is all condoned by God. Hushai will have to 'lie'. But to lie for your country, without the motivation of personal benefit, is not a sin. Just as killing in a war, is not murder. The principal is the same.}.

A Voice in the Wilderness	But if you return to the city, and say to Absalom, I will be your servant, O king; as I was your father's servant previously, so I will now also be your servant, then you may frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel for me.
World English Bible	...but if you return to the city, and tell Absalom, I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so will I now be your servant; then will you defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel.
Young's Updated LT	And if to the city you will turn back, and have said to Absalom, Your servant I am, O king; servant of your father I am also hitherto, and now, I am also your servant; then you have made void for me the counsel of Ahithophel.

The gist of this verse: David suggests to Hushai to return to Jerusalem and to become his counterinsurgent.

2Samuel 15:34a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
îm (אם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
îyr (עיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
shûwb (שב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

Translation: But, if you return [to] the city... David had prayed to God to frustrate the counsel of Absalom. So, since then, he was possibly even thinking of how such a thing could be done. Bear in mind, when you pray to God, that does not mean that you turn off your mind and don't do anything. It is a fine line between "helping God" and recognizing the opportunity that God places before you. Hushai is God answering David's prayer, and David recognizes that. Therefore, David first tells Hushai to return to Jerusalem.

Hushai will appear as if he has deserted David and is willing to support Absalom. Part of the brilliance here is, Absalom is still a young, feisty kid, who thinks he knows it all. Although he will listen to his counselors, it will never occur to him that Hushai would actually work against him (his egotism would not allow him to think that, because he sees himself as superior to this old man).

2Samuel 15:34b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:34b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ăbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישׁלֹוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	<i>my father is peace</i> and is transliterated <i>Absalom</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5

Translation: ...and say to Absalom,... In order to speak to Absalom, Hushai will have to go to the palace. Now, it is very possible that Hushai had regular access to the palace as an advisor to David. What appears to be the case is, Hushai is an old army veteran, and now he is no longer able to go out to battle, but his mind is designed for making battlefield decisions.

The Greek adds in a phrase, at this point, which is not found in the Hebrew: “Your brothers have passed over, and the king your father has passed over after me.” The word *after* is a word not found in the New Testament, so its meaning is more difficult to ascertain. The Greek word in question is κατοπισθεν, and it is an adverb that means *behind, after*; and with respect to time, *hereafter, afterwards, henceforth*. None of these really make sense, except perhaps, *behind me*, depending upon where Hushai and Absalom are both standing. David is going to assume that Absalom, therefore, simply takes his throne and sets up shop there.

2Samuel 15:34c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
'ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced aw-NEE]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

Translation:...‘I will be your servant, O king. Hushai is to go to Absalom and offer him his services. All that Hushai will say will probably left to him. David lays out the basics. Hushai might, when talking to Absalom, give him some background on his relationship and services to David.

The Greek adds the phrase: ...*permit me to live*;... Hushai is to show great deference to Absalom. This would be such a ego boost for Absalom to have this old man, whom he knows is a brilliant tactician, come to him and, essentially say, “Please let me live.” Absalom will be thinking, “I’ve got you now, old man; one false move, and you know you are dead.”

However, let me quickly point out that, Hushai did not say to Absalom exactly what David suggests here. David pictures Hushai walking into the throne room and speaking to Absalom. However, that is not how it will go down, and this is how we understand the brilliance of Hushai. Hushai will improvise what he says, appropriate to his meeting with Absalom. This is called flexibility.

2Samuel 15:34d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE ^b -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced aw-NEE]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'âz (אָז) [pronounced awz]	<i>then, after that, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so, therefore, because of that</i>	adverb	Strong's #227 BDB #23

Min and 'âz together mean *from that time, from of old, formerly, long since; from [any] time, from when, since.*

Translation: I also [was] formerly a servant of your father... Hushai is not to hide his former relationship to David. He is to tell Absalom, "I used to work for your father in this capacity." David is asking Hushai to be his mole in the Absalom revolution.

Application: Let me make an odd application. In Europe and in the United States, we have been brainwashed to believe that at age 55, 60 or 65, we ought to be retired. We ought to travel and putter around in our garden, and society owes us that. This is not what the Word of God teaches. God has designed the believer in Jesus Christ and the unbeliever to work very nearly until he drops. Work is our part in life, and, if you are careful to match your skills and training with your interests in work, then work becomes one of the most fulfilling parts of your life.

Application: Our society here in the United States and in Europe are going broke, because, in most cases, we put politicians in charge of our retirement, so that, based upon their actions over the years, we mistakenly think that this great retirement should be there waiting for us when we are ready to live in retirement. Obviously, that is not going to turn out as we expected. If you intend to retire early (for me, this is anytime before 70 or 75), then you take care of funding this retirement yourself. Or, better yet, if you want to continue in the plan of God, you find work that is suitable to your age and energy.

Application: When you are a young man, you have great energy and strength, so that working a 10 or 12 or 14 hour day is not something which will wear you out. Now, you will be tired when you return home, but that is the nature of life. As the 2nd Person of the Trinity promised Adam, "In toil you will eat from the ground all the days of

your life.” (Gen. 3:17c). Or as David had taught Solomon: Go to the ant, you lazy sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest (Prov. 6:6–8). The lazy sluggard who does not plow in the autumn; will seek at harvest and have nothing (Prov. 20:4). As an older man, you find something more appropriate to your strength; and you may work 4 or 6 hours in a day. But, all of this time, you have been gathering wealth and setting it aside, so that you can reduce your work requirements.

Application: In any case, what the Bible does not teach is for man to have an extended vacation at the end of his life. Now you may point to Europe and say, “Well, they do it; and I think it is a good idea.” Bear in mind, Europe is becoming more degenerate, less productive, less solvent financially; and probably cannot afford all of the retirees that it has promised early retirement to. All of this comes out of people rejecting what the Bible says we should do: work.

Hushai is such an old man, he would be a burden to David if he joined him. But, if he is within the bowels of the Absalom revolution, he can be quite helpful to David. Hushai will not just help David; Hushai, this old man, will save David here. It is Hushai’s duplicity which will deliver David’s establishment army.

2Samuel 15:34e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
‘attâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong’s #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ‘attâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
’ânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong’s #589 BDB #58
‘ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #5650 BDB #713

Translation:... *now, therefore, I [am] your servant.* Hushai is to offer his services to Absalom. Now, Absalom cannot have too many military advisors, as, insofar as we know, Absalom has never even lifted a sword. Remember when he had Amnon killed? He didn’t do that. He had his servants do it for him. He was not trained to use a sword; he was not trained for battle. He is a civilian running a military revolution; so he needs people around him who know something about fighting.

This is a place where Hushai has a distinct advantage. As we will find out, Hushai knows how to play to Absalom’s weaknesses. He can appeal to Absalom’s ego in order to get Absalom to move left or right. Absalom doesn’t know if left is good or if right is good, but if Hushai says “Go left” and manages to stroke Absalom’s ego at the same time, Absalom is going to go left.

The Greek is quite a bit more wordy; this is what David told Hushai to say: “Your brothers have passed over, and the king your father has passed over behind me: and now I am your servant, O king: permit me to live. At one time

even most recently, I was the servant of your father, and now I am your humble servant” David has this pictured in his mind; Hushai will go to the palace, and ask for an audience before Absalom, and he will say these words. However, this is not how it went down.

2Sam. 16:15–19 (God’s Word™): Meanwhile, Absalom and all Israel’s troops came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him. When David’s friend Hushai from Archi’s family came to Absalom, he said, “Long live the king! Long live the king!” “Is that how loyal you are to your friend?” Absalom asked Hushai. “Why didn’t you go with him?” Hushai answered Absalom, “No, I want to be with the one whom the LORD, these people, and all Israel have chosen. I will be his friend and stay with him. And besides, whom should I serve? Shouldn’t it be his son? As I served your father, so I’ll serve you.”

You will note that Absalom will ask Hushai a question, and that changes the direction of their conversation. However, Hushai easily adjusts, and speaks naturally and normally to Absalom. He does not go there with a canned speech, nor does he become flustered because Absalom does not go along with the script. We know immediately that Hushai will do wonderfully in his position as mole in Absalom’s inner circle.

Now, I want you to notice one thing: Hushai is lying to Absalom’s face. Just as killing in war is legitimate, so is lying to the enemy. And I want you to note how this all works out: [Since the LORD had decreed that Ahithophel’s good advice be undermined in order to bring about Absalom’s ruin, Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than Ahithophel’s advice.”](#) (2Sam. 17:14; HCSB). Hushai’s deception was a part of God’s decrees in eternity past.

I realize that some Christians have difficulties with this, but let me simply make the logical argument: killing in war is legitimate. We nearly all believe that, if an American detachment could have killed the few hundred Germans who ran the concentration camp at, say, Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, that would have been a good thing in World War II, to save the thousands of Jews who were exterminated in that camp. Apart from God’s plan, which allowed the evil of the Nazis to manifest itself, this would have been a good thing. Killing Nazi soldiers in WWII was a good thing. Now, if you believe that, then how difficult a leap is it to understand that God allows those on His side to lie in war; to lie when questioned by the enemy; to lie, if it means the preservation of the lives of His army? I realize that there are some prissy Christians who think, “Well, killing is just bad. Nobody should kill anybody. We just shouldn’t have wars at all. In fact, what if we gave a war and nobody showed up?” That is not what the Bible says; and that is not how a believer should react when faced with war—and particularly when at war with what is easily understood as evil (only a Christian completely lacking in doctrine is confused about whether the Muslim religion is evil or not, using the Muslim religion as an example from today).¹²⁰

David is facing a revolution. Now, he is, in part, responsible for this, because he did not take the time to raise his son Absalom when he needed it. Every son needs a father’s firm, strong hand,¹²¹ or he will get out of control and stay out of control for most of his life. However, as an adult, Absalom is responsible for his choices, despite David’s shortcomings as a father. David has no choice but to respond in such a way as to put this revolution down. Absalom will pursue him, and David cannot spend the rest of his life running from his son.

You should take note: Nathan the prophet *never* comes to David, saying, “You need to turn the other cheek. If Absalom wants to rule over Israel, then give it to him. Our kingdom is not of this [present-day] world.”

Because David is about to go to war with his own son, we ought to examine the [Doctrine of War \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

¹²⁰ The same thing would be true of socialist or communist dictatorships; only a Christian lacking doctrine is confused about these governments. They are extremely evil.

¹²¹ I am not saying that a male child needs to be beat every week. A firm hand means that the father raises the child with wisdom and carefully goes up the ladder of increasingly harsh discipline. Spanking is legitimate, but it is something a child ought to fear more than experience, and it is pretty much at the top of scale of the parental discipline hierarchy.

2Samuel 15:34f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pârar (פָּרַר) [pronounced <i>paw-RAHR</i>]	<i>to break, to make [or, declare] void, to make of no effect, to bring to nothing, to make ineffectual; to take away, to violate (a covenant), to frustrate</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #6565 BDB #830
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êtsâh (אֲצִיחַ) [pronounced <i>gay-TZAW</i>]	<i>counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose; plan</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6098 BDB #420
'Ăchîythôphel (אֲחִיתּוֹפֵל) [pronounced <i>uhkh-ee-THOH-feh</i>]	<i>my brother is foolish; and is transliterated Ahithophel, Achitophel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #302 BDB #27

Translation: And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. I threw in a lot of extra words here to translate this verse. David is speaking to Hushai, the Archite. “But, if you return [to] the city and say to Absalom, ‘I will be your servant, O king. I also [was] formerly a servant of your father; now, therefore, I [am] your servant.’ And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate [or, make ineffectual] the counsel of Ahithophel.” That is the end result that David desires. If Hushai manages to become Absalom’s close advisor, then he is putting himself in a position to be able to make ineffectual Ahithophel’s advice. Ahithophel is a brilliant strategist—as is Hushai—and David hopes that Hushai somehow neutralize the advice that he will give Absalom. Ahithophel knows David and he knows Joab; so he is going to know the best way to trip these men up.

The Greek adds in an extra sentence and then an extra phrase (both are in bold).

Comparing the Greek and Hebrew of 2Samuel 15:34

Kukis (mostly literal)	But, if you return [to] the city and say to Absalom, ‘I will be your servant, O king. I also [was] formerly a servant of your father; now, therefore, I [am] your servant.’ And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel.
Brenton (updated)	...but if you will return to the city, and will say to Abessalom, Your brothers are passed over, and the king your father is passed over after me: and now I am your servant, O king, suffer me to live: at one time even of late I was the servant of your father, and now I am your humble servant — so will you disconcert for me, the counsel of Achitophel.
Complete Apostles Bible	...but if you shall return to the city, and shall say to Absalom, your brethren 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 defeat

Comparing the Greek and Hebrew of 2Samuel 15:34

for me the counsel of Ahithophel.

As we have previously noticed, these additional words were likely found in the Hebrew originally.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The reasonably literal translation is: *But, if you instead return to the city and go to Absalom, saying, ‘I will be your servant, O king, just as I was formerly a servant to your father; therefore, I stand here as your servant today.’ By doing this, you will be in position to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel.* So, David, recognizing that Hushai is God’s answer to his prayer, and he will put Hushai to work as a mole in the Absalom organization.

Application: The believer must know enough doctrine to recognize that God has answered his prayers. And the believer must have enough doctrine in his soul to know what to do with God’s answers to prayers.

David understands that God has answered his prayer by sending him Hushai. He also knows exactly how to make use of Hushai. In less than two hour’s time, David has set up his spy network in Jerusalem, which will be key to his being able to defeat Absalom. He’s had conversations with Hushai and with Zadok and Abiathar; and these conversations took less than 20 min. each (perhaps less than 5 min. each); yet, he sets up a brilliant defense against Absalom.

Luckily, I first heard this passage taught to me by R. B. Thieme, Jr., so I got the straight of it from the beginning. However, and not surprisingly, some Christian exegetes, don’t like the idea of believers just running around lying to the enemy.

Commentators Who Don’t Like David’s Covert Warfare

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Matthew Henry	<i>Thus Hushai might insinuate himself into Absalom’s counsels, and defeat Ahithophel, either by dissuading Absalom from following his advice or by revealing Ahithophel’s strategy to David, that he might know where to stand upon his guard. How this gross deception, which David put Hushai upon, can be justified, as a stratagem in war, I do not see. The best that can be made of it is that Absalom, if he rebel against his father, must stand upon his guard against all mankind, and, if he will be deceived, let him be deceived.</i> ¹²²
Poole	<i>David’s suggesting this crafty counsel may be reckoned among his errors; which, proceeding from a violent temptation, and his present and pressing straits, God was pleased mercifully to pardon, and to direct this evil advice to a good end.</i> ¹²³

¹²² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:31–37 (his quote was modified with more up-to-date language).

¹²³ Matthew Poole, *English Annotations on the Holy Bible*; ©1685; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:34 (Edited). John Wesley says nearly the exact same thing.

Commentators Who Don't Like David's Covert Warfare

Scripture	Text/Commentary
The Pulpit Commentary	<p>And as well: <i>David was thus meeting treachery by treachery, and we cannot approve of it, even granting that Ahithophel's conduct was base and selfish, while Hushai was risking his life for his master. Still, he was sent back to tell a falsehood, and his excuse was necessity; for Ahithophel was so sagacious that, if his counsel were not upset, David's cause was lost. It was not Christian morality, but yet it has a sort of nobleness about it in Hushai's devotion to his king. And even now, in war and diplomacy, such acts are not uncommon, and a distinction is unhappily drawn between political and social morality. Even in common life immoral doings are often sanctioned by use. Thus many customs of trade are frauds, considered legitimate because generally practised. Even among ourselves Christian morality is far below the level of our Master's teaching; and the Old Testament must not be taken as approving all that it records. Similar blame does not attach to Zadok and Abiathar. They were known to be David's friends, and had even tried to go with him, bearing with them the ark. They professed no friendship for Absalom, and returned for no covert purpose, looking for protection, not to guile, but to their sacred office. And Absalom would be glad to have them in his power, and would make them continue the customary sacrifices, and, if his rebellion proved successful, would force them to anoint him, and so give his usurpation a religious sanction. But he would tell them none of his plans, nor would they try to insinuate themselves into his confidence. They would have a perfect right to be useful in any way they could to their true master, but would do so at the risk of severe punishment. Hushai's way of defeating Ahithophel was treacherous; but there was no deceit in the young men carrying a message from him, for they were openly David's friends.</i>¹²⁴ You can just envision these great commentators wringing their hands, often staring heaven-ward, having to write some kind of commentary about this, and just struggling with it. "Hushai will deceive Absalom! Oh, mercy me! What has life come to?" So the Pulpit Commentary concludes, "It's a very bad thing; but then, it is a very bad situation; oh well!" I love that, by the way: <i>oh well</i>.</p>

One has to understand the Bible and war first; and then covert tactics logically proceed from there.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Again, what David did was legitimate. If you can legitimately kill in war then you can legitimately engage in deception of your enemy in war. Let me repeat what God the Holy Spirit had to say on this matter: **Since the LORD had decreed that Ahithophel's good advice be undermined** in order to bring about Absalom's ruin, Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than Ahithophel's advice." (2Sam. 17:14; HCSB). Ahithophel's advice is going to be undermined by Hushai the Archite, who, acting as a lying mole in the Absalom war cabinet, will appeal to Absalom's ego in order to nullify Ahithophel's counsel. What Hushai will do is brilliant. Not only does he have to get Absalom to take his bad advice over Ahithophel's good advice; but he has to somehow sell his bad advice as being better than Ahithophel's good advice. Do you see just how brilliant Hushai is?

I must pay homage to R. B. Thieme, Jr. at this point, who was a military man and understood the relationship between Christianity and the military, and even instituted the military communion in his church, which was very much a new thing on the earth, just as David's idea to build a permanent dwelling for God was a new thing (2Sam. 7). Bob taught this passage, and just drove home the fact that, what David and Hushai are doing here is honorable and God blessed their deception of Absalom, no matter how many commentators acts like ninnies when they come to this passage.

¹²⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary*; 1880-1919; by Joseph S. Exell, Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 15:34.

I should point out that not all Christian commentaries are full of prissiness. Gill writes: *[David is] telling the priests how things were at court, and they sending their sons with messages to David; which was a good scheme to get intelligence, and easy to be put into execution.*¹²⁵ Keil and Delitzsch similarly said: *David then commissioned Hushai to communicate to the priests Zadok and Abiathar all that he should hear of the king's house, and send word to him through their sons.*¹²⁶ So, some recognize this spy network as being legitimate.

Let me add, do you see how brilliant David is? His world has been turned upside down, and it is clear that this has emotionally wounded him; but he can still think, and he is thinking 3 steps ahead of his son Absalom. Absalom, to his credit as a man of plots, thought up a very slick way to take over his father's position; but he has not even begun to realize just how smart his old man is, and how King David is going to think circles around Absalom. David is applying doctrine when under pressure.

One more thing: this spy network is a part of a testimony to David's greatness. I don't know if anyone has ever actually defined why David is great and why the Bible recognizes him in this way.

David's Greatness as a Man and as a King; Attested to by the Word of God

1. David is the king by which all other kings in Israel were measured. 1Kings 15:1–3, 11 2Kings 14:1–3 16:1–2 18:1–3 22:1–2
2. David took direction from God. 1Sam. 23:2, 9–10 2Sam. 2:1
 - 1) As an aside, we notice that David more frequently called upon God and guidance from God at the beginning of his life than he did at the end of his life. This is because David knew more and more doctrine as he grew spiritually, and therefore needed less prompting and direct guidance.
3. David, when brought into the palace to entertain and calm King Saul, he never forgot about his duties at home, and checked back in to take care of those responsibilities. 1Sam. 16:15–23 17:15, 20
4. David understood that, when Goliath, the giant Philistine, stood up and challenged the army of Saul, he was actually challenging the God of Israel. Therefore, he could defeat Goliath because God was with Israel. 1Sam. 17:23–51
5. David understood grace and he understood the power of God. 1Sam. 17:45–46
6. Nearly everyone recognized that God was with David. 1Sam. 18:12
7. David was able to make great lasting friends. 1Sam. 18:3 19:1–7 20:1–4, 17, 42
8. David, as a leader, inspired great loyalty. 1Sam. 19:1–7 20:1–4
9. Because of David's natural leadership capabilities, as well as his honor and his relationship to God, even David's enemies had a grudging respect for him. 1Sam. 26:25 2Sam. 3:21 (Abner began as an enemy of David's and then offered his loyalty to David) 2Sam. 5:1–3
10. David was a great soldier who killed thousands of Philistines and other enemies of Israel. 1Sam. 18:5–8
11. Throughout all the reign of Saul, despite Saul's arrogance and mental illness, David was loyal to him; and, when he had no other choice, he ran from Saul. 1Sam. 18:11
12. However, even when given the opportunity to kill Saul, David did not. 1Sam. 24:3–8 26:7–11, 22–23
13. David was able to do the right thing, even when under pressure and even when the end result might not be good for him. 1Sam. 23:1–8
14. David made fair and equitable decisions, based upon grace. 1Sam. 30:20–25
15. Many people, prior to his being made king, recognized that David would be king over all Israel. 1Sam. 16:1, 11–13 23:16–17 24:20–22
16. David did not hold a grudge.
 - 1) When a man came to David, claiming to have killed Saul, David had this man executed. 2Sam. 1:1–17
 - 2) David paid homage in song to Saul and Jonathan. 2Sam. 1:22–27

¹²⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:36.

¹²⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:36–37.

David's Greatness as a Man and as a King; Attested to by the Word of God

- 3) David treated a city with respect that stood by Saul, even after his death. 2Sam. 2:4–7
- 4) David went out of his way to honor the house of Saul and those who remained. 2Sam. 9
17. David, as a leader, was able to guide his people in the direction that they should go, despite their being emotional about the difficulties that they are in. David could think under pressure. He was able to lay aside his emotions and function as a great leader who could make brilliant decisions in the most difficult of circumstances. 1Sam. 30:3–7 2Sam. 15:30–36
18. David defeated the enemies of Israel (and, therefore, the enemies of God) round about. 1Sam. 18:30 2Sam. 5:17–25 8:1–14 10:1–19
19. David understood the importance of the Ark and brought it from a period of disuse into Jerusalem. This did take two tries, because the first time, he attempted to move it as the heathen had, and that did not work out. Then he studied the Word of God and found how the Ark of God should be moved. 2Sam. 6 1Chron. 13 16
20. David had original ideas. Without any prompting, he wanted to build a Temple for Y^ehowah. 2Sam. 7
21. David executed justice throughout the land of Israel, which indicates that he ruled, guided by the Word of God. 2Sam. 8:15
22. Despite falling into a deep hole of degeneracy, David, by the grace of God, climbs out of that hole to continue as a great king. 2Sam. 15–23
23. David wrote most of the psalms; taught Solomon most of the proverbs which he later recorded, and it is possible that he recorded portions of 1 and 2 Samuel. This makes him one of the most prolific writers of Scripture.
24. David guided Solomon to be one of the wisest men on earth.
25. Insofar as we know, counterinsurgency and covert warfare was invented by David. Again, he was an original thinker. 2Sam. 15:24–36

This does not mean that David was perfect. When he lied to and used the priests in 1Sam. 21, he essentially had sentenced them to death. When he behaved like a madman before the king of Gath, he was telling them that Israel could be attacked. He married a myriad of women and had children he did not raise properly. He made raids on various tribes of people, not at the behest of God, but simply for his own survival. Obviously, his adultery with Bathsheba and the killing of her husband were low points in David's life. However, despite these mistakes, David still comes back and is restored by God to rulership over Israel.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

And [are] not with you there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? And has been all the word that you hear from a house of the king, you will make it known to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

2Samuel
15:35

[Are] not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, with you there? Therefore, all matters which you hear from the king's palace, you will make [them] known to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests.

Your compatriots will be Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. Therefore, whatever information that you pick up while in the king's palace, you will pass that along to them.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And you have with you Sadoc, and whatever you hear out of the king's house, you will tell it to Sadoc and Abiathar the priests.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And [are] not with you there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? And has been all the word that you hear from a house of the king, you will make it known to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Behold, there are with you <u>in the city</u> Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Therefore it shall be that every word you hear from the king's house, you shall tell to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Septuagint (Greek)	And behold, Zadok and Abiathar the priests are with you; and it shall be that every word that you shall hear of the house of the king, you shall report it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Significant differences:	Both the Latin and the Greek appear to lack <i>there</i> in the first phrase; and the Syriac has, instead, <i>in the city</i> . <i>Abiathar</i> is mentioned once in the Latin; twice in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Zadok and Abiathar the priests will be there with you, and you can tell them everything you hear in the palace.
Easy English	Abiathar and Zadok the priests will be there with you. Tell them everything that you hear in the royal palace.
Easy-to-Read Version	The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you. You must tell them everything you hear in the king's house.
<i>The Message</i>	The priests Zadok and Abiathar are already there; whatever information you pick up in the palace, tell them.
New Berkeley Version	Will not the priests Zadok and Abiathar be there with you? In this way, anything you hear from the royal palace you can tell Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
New Life Bible	Will not Zadok and Abiathar the religious leaders be there with you? Tell Zadok and Abiathar whatever you hear from the king's house.
New Living Translation	Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, will be there. Tell them about the plans being made in the king's palace,...

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Look, there are the Priests ZaDok and AbiAthar. Go with them and report everything that you hear from the [palace] of the king to them.
Christian Community Bible	The priests Zadok and Abiathar are there to help you. Report whatever you hear from the king's house.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you there. When you hear anything from the royal palace, tell it to the priests Zadok and Abiathar.
New Simplified Bible	»Zadok and Abiathar the priests will be there with you. You can tell them everything you hear in the palace.
Revised English Bible	You will have with you, as you know, the priests Zadok and Abiathar; report to them everything that you hear in the royal palace.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	"Were you not there with Zadok and Abiathar the priests? All words that you are hearing from the king's house, tell to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Bible in Basic English	And have you not there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? so whatever comes to your ears from the king's house, give word of it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Complete Jewish Bible	You have Tzadok and Evyatar the cohanim there with you. So whatever you hear from the king's house, you tell to Tzadok and Evyatar the cohanim.

Ferar-Fenton Bible	Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be assisting you? So that all the talk that you here in the king's palace you can communicate to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
HCSB	Won't Zadok and Abiathar the priests be there with you? Report everything you hear from the king's palace to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
NET Bible®	Zadok and Abiathar the priests will be there with you [Heb "Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be there with you?" The rhetorical question draws attention to the fact that Hushai will not be alone]. Everything you hear in the king's palace [Heb "from the house of the king."] you must tell Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
NIV – UK	Won't the priests Zadok and Abiathar be there with you? Tell them anything you hear in the king's palace.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Will not Zadok and Abiathar the priests be with you? So whatever you hear from the king's house, just tell it to [them].
Concordant Literal Version	...and are there not with you there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? and it has been, the whole of the matter that you hear from the house of the king you do declare to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests.
Context Group Version	And are there not with you Sadoq and Abi Athar the priests? And so be it, whatever word you hear from the house of the sovereign, tell it to Sadoq and Abi Athar the priests.
LTHB	And <i>do you</i> not <i>have</i> there with you Zadok and Abiathar, the priests? And it shall be, you shall declare everything that you hear from the house of the king; you shall report to Zadok and to Abiathar, the priests.
Syndein	And is there not with you there Zadok and Abiathar the priests {dual high priests}? Therefore it shall come to pass, that all information that you shall hear from the palace of the king, you shall report to Zadok and Abiathar the {high} priests. {Note: this is a summary verse of the briefing David gave to Hushai. David told him of the two 'spies' already planted in.
World English Bible	Don't you have Zadok and Abiathar the priests there with you? therefore it shall be, that whatever thing you shall hear out of the king's house, you shall tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Young's Updated LT	And are there not with you there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? And it has been, the whole of the matter that you hear from the house of the king you will declare to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests.

The gist of this verse: David identifies for Hushai his allies in the city of Jerusalem; and he is to get any and all information to them.

2Samuel 15:35a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

2Samuel 15:35a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i>]		interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied. This can be used in an indirect interrogation and translated <i>whether</i> .	Strong's #none BDB #209
lô' (לא or לוּל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
Hă lô' together expect an affirmative answer and can be translated <i>is not?</i> Let me suggest, this might be understood to mean, <i>is it not true that?</i> Or, <i>isn't this the case that?</i> Or, <i>is it not obvious that?</i> These two words together present a question with an obvious, self-evident answer. This combination is found in Gen. 4:7 20:5 Job 1:10 Num. 23:26 1Kings 1:11.			
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדֹק or צִדְקָה) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿEb ^e yâthâr (אֲבִיָּאֵתָר) [pronounced <i>eb^e-yaw-THAWR</i>]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5
kôhên (כֹּהֵן) [pronounced <i>koh-HANE</i>]	<i>priest</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3548 BDB #463

Translation: [\[Are\] not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, with you there?](#) This is David's way of telling Hushai that Zadok and Abiathar will be his allies in Jerusalem. These are men that he can trust.

David, in a few hours time, is setting up the key to his victory: a deeply rooted spy network in the heart of Jerusalem. As discussed, the entire time that David spends on this might be 10–20 minutes; and yet, this is the key to his eventual victory over Absalom.

There are some things that we do not know—did David discuss Absalom's weaknesses with Hushai? If so, it is not recorded in Scripture. However, I would think it more likely that Hushai recognizes Absalom's weaknesses much more quickly than the indulgent father, David, would. In fact, it is this recognition that will be key to Hushai out-thinking Absalom and Ahithophel.

2Samuel 15:35b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâma ^c (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: Therefore, all matters which you hear from the king's palace,... Hushai will be in the palace and the priests will not. Therefore, whatever tidbit of information that Hushai gets, he is to remember and pass along to the priests.

From Sun Tzu: *So it is said that if you know your enemies and know yourself, you can win a hundred battles without a single loss. If you only know yourself, but not your opponent, you may win or may lose. If you know neither yourself nor your enemy, you will always endanger yourself.*¹²⁷ This is exactly what David is doing, 500 years before Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War*.

As R. B. Thieme, Jr. said on several occasions: "Who knew before Sun Tzu?"

¹²⁷ From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Art_of_War#Quotations accessed October 20, 2012.

2Samuel 15:35c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâgad (נָגַד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדִיק or צִדְיָק) [pronounced tzaw-DOHK]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿEb ^e yâthâr (אֲבִי־אֶתָר) [pronounced eb ^e -yaw-THAWR]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5
kôhên (כֹּהֵן) [pronounced koh-HANE]	<i>priest</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3548 BDB #463

Translation: ...you will make [them] known to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. David leaves many of the details up to Hushai. How he will make initial contact with the priests, how they will meet in future times. Quite obviously, Hushai can easily have time with the priests, as he will interact with them as a believer in Y^ehowah Elohim.

The less literal translation: Your compatriots will be Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. Therefore, whatever information that you pick up while in the king's palace, you will pass that along to them. David identifies Hushai's allies, and tells him to pass along important information to them, which we will see in 2Sam. 17:15–16.

David begins to lay out the entire spy network to Hushai, so that he knows who all of the operatives are in Jerusalem.

Behold, there with them [are] two of their sons, Ahimaaz to Zadok and Jonathan to Abiathar. And you [all] have sent by their hand unto me every word which you [all] hear." 2Samuel 15:36

Look, with them [are] their two sons, Zadok's [son] Ahimaaz and Abiathar's [son] Jonathan. You [all] will send by their hand anything which you [all] hear to me."

Look, Zadok and Abiathar have two sons, Abhimaaz and Jonathan, respectively, and they will act as couriers to me. Send any information that you hear by means of them."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And there <u>are</u> with them their two sons Achimaas; the <u>son of</u> Sadoc, and Jonathan <u>the son of</u> Abiathar: and you shall send by them to me every thing that you shall hear.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Behold, there with them [are] two of their sons, Ahimaaz to Zadok and Jonathan to Abiathar. And you [all] have sent by their hand unto me every word which you [all] hear."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Behold, they <u>have</u> there with them their two sons Ahimaaz Zadok's <u>son</u> and Nathan Abiathar's <u>son</u> ; and by them you shall send to me everything that you can hear.
Septuagint (Greek)	Behold, their two sons <u>are</u> with them, Ahimaaz the <u>son of</u> Zadok, and Jonathan the <u>son of</u> Abiathar; and by them you shall report to me every word which you shall hear.

Significant differences: The Latin appears to lack *behold* at the beginning. There are verbs inserted in the first sentence all of the English translations from the Greek, Latin, and Syriac, which is to be expected.

The second phrase has the word *son* used twice in the Latin, Greek and Syriac; but only once in the Hebrew in a different sort of construction. *Everything* (Syriac and the Latin) is a legitimate translation of *every word*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Their two sons, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan, are also there. Use them to report to me everything you hear."
Contemporary English V.	Then have them send their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan to tell me what you've heard.
Easy English	Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, are there too. Send the two sons to me. Then they will tell me anything that you have heard.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan will be with them. You will send them to tell me everything you hear."
Good News Bible (TEV)	They have their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan with them, and you can send them to me with all the information you gather."
<i>The Message</i>	Their two sons--Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan--are there with them--anything you pick up can be sent to me by them."
New Berkeley Version	You see, they have their two sons there with them, Ahimaaz of Zadok and Jonathan of Abiathar, and by their hands you can send me any word you hear."
New Living Translation	...and they will send their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan to tell me what is going on."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And there are their two sons, AhiMaAz (ZaDok's son) and JoNathan (AbiAthar's son). Use them to send back every word that you hear.'
Christian Community Bible	Both their sons are there, Ahi maaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abia thar's son, and you shall report to me through them everything you hear."
<i>God's Word</i> ™	They have two sons with them: Zadok has Ahimaaz, and Abiathar has Jonathan. Send them to report to me anything you hear."
New Simplified Bible	»Have them send their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan to tell me what you hear.«

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Behold, there with them are their two sons, Ahimaaz of Zadok, and Jonathan of Abiathar. By their hand send to me any word that you hear."
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Bible in Basic English	See, they have with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar; by them you may send word to me of everything which comes to your ears.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	They also have two lads, Akhimatz with Zadok, and Jonathan with Abiathar, and they will transmit by their hand to me everything that you may hear."
HCSB	Take note: their two sons, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan, are there with them. Send me everything you hear through them."
NET Bible®	Furthermore, their two sons are there with them, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan. You must send them to me with any information you hear [Heb "and you must send by their hand to me every word which you hear." Both of the second person verb forms are plural with Zadok, Abiathar, and Hushai being the understood subjects.]"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Context Group Version	Look, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them you { pl } shall send to me everything that you { pl } shall hear.
Darby Translation	Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's [son], and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send to me everything that ye shall hear.
exeGesés companion Bible	Behold, their two sons are with them, Achiy Maas of Sadoq and Yah Nathan of Abi Athar; and every word you hear, send me by their hand.
Fred Miller's Revised KJV	Behold, <i>they have</i> there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them you shall send to me every thing that you can hear.
LTHB	Behold, there are with them their two sons, Ahimaaz to Zadok, and Jonathan to Abiathar. And you shall send to me by their hand anything that you hear.
New RSV	Their two sons are with them there, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan; and by them you shall report to me everything you hear.'
Syndein	{Couriers} Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz . . . Zadok's son, and Jonathan . . . Abiathar's son; and by them you will send to me all the information that you shall happen to hear.
World English Bible	Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them you shall send to me everything that you shall hear.
Young's Updated LT	Lo, there with them are their two sons, Ahimaaz to Zadok, and Jonathan to Abiathar, and you have sent by their hand unto me anything that you hear."

The gist of this verse: David reveals to Hushai that the couriers are the sons of the high priests.

2Samuel 15:36a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243

2Samuel 15:36a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
sh ^e nêy (שְׁנַיִ) [pronounced <i>sh^en-Ā</i>]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
bânîym (בְּנֵי־אִם) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: Look, with them [are] their two sons,... Hushai is informed of the entire counterinsurgency organization. The two priests have sons, and it is these sons who will act as couriers.¹²⁸ Hushai and the two high priests will keep their ears open for information which is helpful to David, and this information will be passed along by means of the sons of the two priests.

Furthermore, Hushai will have the added responsibility of countermanding whatever good ideas Ahithophel comes up with. By the way, this is going to be a tough job. Let's say Ahithophel has a really good idea. Can Hushai simply offer up an opposing idea which is inferior? Won't that just be too obvious? So Hushai has to not only come up with a worse idea, but his bad idea must be something that he can sell to Absalom and to his top brass. You see, this is really tricky stuff, and David recognizes that Hushai is the man for such a job. And all the time that Absalom looks at Hushai, he is going to see this helpless, sycophantic old man, whose time is almost past. Absalom will recognize his intelligence and heed his counsel, but he will not think much of Hushai beyond that. And it will be this old man who brings Absalom down to defeat (ultimately, it will be God Who does that, but God will use Hushai).

2Samuel 15:36b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾĀchîymaʿats (אָחִימָאֵץ) [pronounced <i>uh-khee-MAH-ġahtz</i>]	<i>my brother is wrath, and is transliterated Ahimaaz</i>	proper noun	Strong's #290 BDB #27
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Tsâdôwq or Tsâdôwq (צָדֹק or צִדִּיק) [pronounced <i>tzaw-DOHK</i>]	<i>just, righteous; transliterated Zadok</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6659 BDB #843

¹²⁸ Later, there will be an additional layer of couriers added (2Sam. 17:17).

2Samuel 15:36b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y ^e hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y^e-hoh-naw-THAWN</i>]	<i>Jehovah has given, whom Jehovah gave, a gift of Jehovah; alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Eb ^e yâthâr (אֲבִיָּאֵר) [pronounced <i>eb^e-yaw-THAWR</i>]	<i>the Great One is father; my father is great; transliterated Abiathar</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #54 BDB #5

Translation: ...Zadok's [son] Ahimaaz and Abiathar's [son] Jonathan. The two sons are named, and it is possible that these priests have several sons, so that Hushai is being told who exactly it is who he can trust. So, in Jerusalem, there are 5 people who can trust one another Hushai, Zadok, Abiathar, Ahimaaz and Jonathan—this is David's spy network, which will be key in defeating Absalom.

2Samuel 15:36c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
This combination of the bêyth preposition and <i>hand</i> literally means <i>in [the] hand of</i> ; and can be rendered by <i>the hand of</i> ; <i>in [under] the power [control] of</i> ; <i>by the power of</i> ; <i>with</i> ; <i>through, by, by means of</i> ; <i>before, in the sight of</i> .			
'el (אֵל) [pronounced <i>eh</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

2Samuel 15:36c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâma’ (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHÇ]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

Translation: You [all] will send by their hand anything which you [all] hear to me.” When David uses the masculine plural verb, it means that he is either speaking to Hushai and possible a couple of other men who will act as his moles; or that, whether he or the priests hear anything, that they will pass this along through these two couriers. Since this is not an imperative, but a Qal imperfect, it is more likely that the latter is the situation.

A more relaxed translation of this verse: **Look, Zadok and Abiathar have two sons, Abhimaaz and Jonathan, respectively, and they will act as couriers to me. Send any information that you hear by means of them.**” One of the keys to warfare is surprise; if David knows what Absalom is planning, that removes the element of surprise and possibly gives David the upper hand. This is an entire intelligence network which David has set up. They all know each other; David knows about them; and the enemy, Absalom, has no idea about any of this.

We will later find out that there will be an additional layer of security in 2Sam. 17:17.

It is going to take awhile before this all plays out. David’s plan actual goes into action in 2Sam. 17–18.

Insofar as we know, David may have invented military intelligence.

Military Intelligence

1. War is a part of human history; and, in many cases, it is legitimate. Eccles. 3:3 Matt. 24:6
2. 3 elementary principles of war are mass, movement and surprise.¹
 - 1) Mass is the concentration and synchronization of a subset of elements of combat power at a specific place and time, with the intent of having a decisive effect on the enemy force during this relatively short period of time.
 - 2) There are five forms of tactical maneuver: envelopment, turning movement, infiltration, penetration, and frontal attack.
 - 3) Surprise means, you strike the enemy at a time, place or manner that is unexpected, and therefore, the enemy finds himself unprepared for such a strike. Surprise can often make up for an imbalance of mass.
3. If one general learns about the mass and movement or the opposing army, then they can tailor their assault to best fit what the opposing army is doing, often gaining in the area of surprise.
4. Often, military intelligence is the difference between winning and losing a war.

Military Intelligence

5. The key to winning a war is the vigorous gathering of intelligence. This is why David will be able to defeat Absalom. Remove military intelligence from David's function as a military commander, and he would have likely been defeated by Absalom.
6. As will become clear in this chapter, God not only allows for military intelligence, He approves of it; including of the deception which is involved.
7. War involves a complete different set of values. You cannot fight a war using the Ten Commandments.
8. Therefore, not only may an army kill in war; but intelligence operatives may lie when gathering intelligence as well. It is not a sin.
9. Intelligence operatives must develop great personal honor to tether their souls to, even though they may be involved in lying, stealing and all manner of sin against the enemy.
10. Christians who are intelligence operatives do not need to confess lying and stealing and other similar activities to God, when these things are done as a part of clandestine warfare.
11. Therefore, King David develops some of the great principles of warfare—including intelligence gathering—as much as 500 years before Sun Tzu, who wrote *The Art of War*.
12. This may have been the incident of covert warfare which brought this strategy into common military practice.
13. Covert warfare against criminals in peacetime is similarly legitimate.

¹ See The **Doctrine of the Military** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

2Sam. 15:33–36 gives much of what David says to Hushai. Then David said to him, “If you pass over with me, you will be a burden upon me. But, if you return [to] the city and say to Absalom, ‘I will be your servant, O king. I also [was] formerly a servant of your father; now, therefore, I [am] your servant.’ And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. [Are] not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, with you there? Therefore, all matters which you hear from the king's palace, you will make [them] known to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. Look, with them [are] their two sons, Zadok's [son] Ahimaaz and Abiathar's [son] Jonathan. You [all] will send by their hand anything which you [all] hear to me.” Although Hushai's verbal response is not given here, we know that he agreed to what David asked him to do, because, in the next verse, Hushai, David's friend, enters into Jerusalem.

Hushai had one idea when he came to David, which was to join up with David. However, David made another suggestion to him entirely, and this squares with his thinking. Hushai is brilliant, authority oriented, and flexible. He appears to immediately adapt to David's approach, even though counterinsurgency was, insofar as we know, not a commonly-done or known thing.

Many people would not respond like this. Here Hushai has hiked out to find out where David is, and David says, “Look, you are an old man and it would be more difficult for me if you joined me.” David did not say that exactly, but that is what a different man might have heard. Surely you have had a relationship with a woman, and you said one thing, but she heard something completely different, and she did not like what she heard. So, a different man could have reacted very differently. But not Hushai. Hushai heard what David was saying, and he understood the concept of counterinsurgency, even if this had not been a part of his thinking ever before. Furthermore, Hushai immediately adapted to that approach. I doubt that he said, “You want to explain that to me one more time, my lord.” Hushai is a brilliant man and he got it immediately. He understood David's plan and he signed on. That is flexibility and loyalty. He is humble and objective.

This is an important relationship; and who Hushai is, is fundamental to the next two chapters. So let's take this in points.

Hushai and David

1. From all that we can pick up, taking this narrative at face value, Hushai is an older man who would have slowed David down.
2. David is leading a **flying column** of men, which Hushai would have difficulty keeping up with.
3. One thing that old people are not is flexible. Have you ever tried to change the mind of a 60 year old? That just isn't going to happen. But Hushai will show himself to be flexible.
4. David takes cognizance of who Hushai is. David does not try to put every peg into a round hole. He doesn't tell Hushai, "We're going this way, and if you want to come, you need to keep up." That would be thoughtless and inconsiderate.
5. But, instead of forcing Hushai to try to keep up, or instead of simply leaving Hushai behind, David has an assignment for him, which is appropriate. Furthermore, this assignment will be the key to David defeating Absalom.
6. David got his daily intelligence briefing that Ahithophel had allied himself with Absalom, so that, all of Absalom's military weaknesses were no more—he had a brilliant man on his team now. So, the one area where David had a clear advantage over Absalom was no longer an advantage.
7. David quickly prays that God frustrate the advice of Ahithophel, a prayer which God heard and answered, even before David prayed this prayer. Angels are learning Who and What God is based upon His interaction with us. So God made provision for David with Hushai, and even before David utters this prayer, Hushai is on his way to meet with David.
8. This is amazing to angels, to see all of these interrelated parts all functioning at once; and David his praying, and, at the same time, the answer to his prayer is coming up the other side of the mountain to him.
9. David goes up on one side of the Mount of Olives, and he quickly prayed. At the same time, Hushai is coming up the other side of the mountain to meet David. So, Hushai figured out where David would be and that is where he went. This indicates his brilliance.
10. Hushai abandoned all that he had and came to David wearing a torn tunic and he had dust on his head. He had made the change from routine life to life's adversity settings. This shows flexibility.
11. Hushai went to David; this shows loyalty.
12. Hushai figured out where David would be, and that is where he went; this shows great intelligence.
13. Hushai made his way without being discovered; that shows craftiness. He is possibly the kind of man who can just blend into a crowd and look like anyone else, and yet, be the smartest man in that crowd with a clear purpose and objective.
14. R. B. Thieme, Jr. said, *a believer must have a different scale of values for prosperity and for adversity, and doctrine must be at the top of that scale of values for either.*¹
15. Hushai has two scales of values and is able to shift gears from a routine prosperous life to a life of adversity. He shifted gears so quickly that he was waiting for David when David came up to the summit.
16. Hushai is very likely a wealthy and successful man, as many people come out of the military with great business skills. However, he walked away from all of this to support David. He knew that he could abandon his temporal riches but still have the source of these riches.
17. Hushai is just the man for this assignment. He will appear to be harmless to Absalom, who will also appreciate his brilliance. Absalom is too great of an egotist to recognize that Hushai may still be loyal to David. No one could have the guts to stand before Absalom and be loyal to David. He could not conceive of this.
18. David, while in fellowship, organized a great intelligence network designed to deceive his son Absalom and thereby defeat him.
19. Hushai is the first mole in recorded human history.
- 20.

¹ Not an exact quote. From R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David series, lesson #631_0407. Some points may have come from lessons #407–408, 426.

Hushai becomes one of the great operatives way back in the 10th century B.C.; possibly the first in human history.

Hushai, the Counterinsurgent

1. The fact that Ahithophel supports and advises Absalom is a problem for David. He knows that Ahithophel can make up for Absalom's deficiencies in military strategy and tactics.
2. So David prayed for God to frustrate Ahithophel's counsel.
3. God answers this prayer by sending Hushai to him.
4. David had spies in Jerusalem; but he had no one inside of the palace to feed Absalom bad information.
5. There are a different set of values for war than for peace.
6. It is the duty of a counterinsurgent to lie and deceive, and this is what Hushai will do. He does not have to confess lying and deceiving as sins, because they are not sins in counterinsurgency.
7. To be an operative, one needs to have great honor, discipline, intelligence and flexibility. This perfectly describes Hushai.
8. What is sin in times of peace can be honorable in times of war. You may have disputes with your neighbors; this does not mean that you stack up their dead bodies out in front of your house to make a point. However, on the other hand, when dealing with enemies in war, you stack up their dead bodies as high as possible, to make a point and to achieve victory.
9. Lying, cheating, stealing and fornicating can all be legitimate activities in counterinsurgency.
10. Similarly, an operative like Hushai must be willing to lie and deceive his enemies when face to face with them.
11. David is not just telling Hushai to infiltrate Absalom's organization, but he expects Hushai to lie and deceive as well.
12. A spy must have two standards of modus operandi: one for his job and one for home life outside of his job.
13. The greater Hushai's personal integrity, the greater mole he will be.
14. Hushai does not bristle with self-righteousness, saying, "You want me to lie? You want me to deceive? I am a Christian, David; you know that!"
15. When David proposed all of this to Hushai, he understood what David wanted immediately, and possibly changed this history of war forever.
16. We know that counterinsurgency, when on the right side of history, is legitimate, as is testified to in 2Sam. 17:14 [And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel \[advice\] of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For Jehovah had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that Jehovah might bring disaster on Absalom.](#)
17. Hushai is the first recorded mole in history. Whether such an idea was original with David or known at this time, we don't know—but David was very capable of original thinking (as we saw with the Temple of God that he proposed to build).

Although Hushai will be confined to lies and misinformation, and playing upon Absalom's weaknesses, the counterinsurgent will bribe, he will commit violence, he will intimidate, and he will murder or assassinate when called upon to do so.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. likened counterinsurgency to a woman going on a first date with a man in whom she is interested.¹²⁹ She decides to wear makeup and clothing so that her best features are accented and worst features are hidden. She does the same thing with her personality. That is counterinsurgency on a date.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Application: David's victory will depend upon counterinsurgency. At the present time, our CIA used to gather intelligence from captured Al Qaeda leaders. Now we kill enemies without capturing them and without interrogating them. Our current president Obama has no problems with killing our enemies by drone attack, but

¹²⁹ R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0408

has great problems with using waterboarding to uncover information about enemy operations. This is inconsistent and subjective.

One thing ought to be noted to differentiate between the lies of the revolutionist and the lies of the counterinsurgent. The former lies to the people, to gain popular support and to foster support from reformers. The counterinsurgent is not going to deliver on his promises; he just wants the power. Once he has the power, he will do what he believes is the best thing (sometimes, in a democracy, this may mean the best thing for his reelection). The counterinsurgent lies to a limited specific group of people: the revolutionaries who are anti-establishment and therefore anti-God. The counterinsurgent lies to the liars.

The counterinsurgent lies to the liars.

And enters Hushai, friend of David, [into] the city and Absalom enters [into] Jerusalem.

2Samuel
15:37

So Hushai, David's confidant, entered [into] the city just as [lit., and] Absalom entered Jerusalem.

So, David's confidant, Hushai, entered into Jerusalem as the same time that Absalom entered into the city.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Then Chusai the friend of David went into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And enters Hushai, friend of David, [into] the city and Absalom enters [into] Jerusalem.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So Hushai, David's friend, came to the city, just as Absalom entered Jerusalem.
Septuagint (Greek)	So Hushai the friend of David went into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	David's advisor Hushai slipped back into Jerusalem, just about the same time that Absalom was coming in.
Easy English	So David's friend Hushai arrived at Jerusalem at the same time as Absalom.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then David's friend Hushai went into the city. And Absalom arrived at Jerusalem.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Hushai, David's friend, returned to the city just as Absalom was arriving.
<i>The Message</i>	Hushai, David's friend, arrived at the same time Absalom was entering Jerusalem.
New Berkeley Version	So Hushai, David's confidant [This had been his cabinet post with David (1Chron. 27:33).], came into the city at about the time Absalom was entering Jerusalem.
New Living Translation	So David's friend Hushai returned to Jerusalem, getting there just as Absalom arrived.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, Hushai (David's best friend) returned to the city, and then Absalom entered Jerusalem.
<i>God's Word™</i>	So Hushai, David's friend, went to the city as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.
New American Bible	So David's friend Hushai went into the city, Jerusalem, as Absalom was about to enter it.

NIRV	So David's friend Hushai went to Jerusalem. He arrived just as Absalom was entering the city.
New Jerusalem Bible	Hushai, David's friend, entered the city just as Absalom was reaching Jerusalem.
New Simplified Bible	David's advisor Hushai slipped back into Jerusalem. Absalom came into the city at the same time.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	Hushai, David's neighbor, came to the city, and Absalom came to Jerusalem.
Complete Jewish Bible	So Hushai, David's friend, went into the town, and Absalom came to Jerusalem.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So Hushai David's friend came into the city when Avshalom was about to enter Yerushalayim.
HCSB	Hushai consequently went to watch for David in the city after Absalom came to Jerusalem.
	So Hushai, David's personal adviser, entered Jerusalem just as Absalom was entering the city.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Conservative Version	So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.
Context Group Version	So Hushai, David's confidant, came into the city; and Absalom came into Jerusalem.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	So Hushai, David's friend, went into the city,—when, Absalom, was about to enter Jerusalem.
English Standard Version	So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.
exeGesés companion Bible	So Hushay the friend of David comes to the city and Abi Shalom comes to Yeru Shalem.
Syndein	Now, Hushai . . . David's friend came into the city . . . just as Absalom was arriving into Jerusalem. {Note: This is Jesus Christ controlling history. The timing was just right for Hushai to arrive just as Absalom arrived.}
Young's Updated LT	And Hushai, David's friend, comes in to the city, and Absalom comes in to Jerusalem.

The gist of this verse: Both Hushai and Absalom arrive at Jerusalem at approximately the same time.

2Samuel 15:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Chûwshay (חֹשַׁי) [pronounced <i>khoo-SHAH-ee</i>]	<i>to make haste, to hurry; transliterated Hushai</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #2365 BDB #302
rê'eh (רֵעֵה) [pronounced <i>ray-ĠEH</i>]	<i>friend, friend of the king [in the technical sense], companion; confidant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7463 BDB #946

2Samuel 15:37a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ġyr (עִיר) [pronounced ġeer]	encampment, city, town	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: [So Hushai, David's confidant, entered \[into\] the city...](#) This final verse is all about God's perfect timing. After speaking to David, Hushai returned to Jerusalem. The last thing he needs is for someone to observe him coming back into the city and then running the Absalom to tell him. However, Absalom and his entourage are arriving at the same time.

Hushai is a true man of brilliance, who has recalibrated his life to serve David in a unique way.

2Samuel 15:37b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾĀbîyshâlôwm (אָבִישַׁלֹּוֹם) [pronounced ub-ee-shaw-LOHM]	my father is peace and is transliterated Absalom	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #53 BDB #5
bôw ³ (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Keil and Delitzsch: <i>The wâw conjunction before the second clause, followed by the imperfect אוּב, indicates contemporaneous occurrence.</i> ¹³⁰			
Y ^e rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced y'roo-shaw-LAH-yim]	possibly means founded upon peace or city of the Jebusites (or both); it is transliterated Jerusalem	proper singular noun, location; pausal form; pausal form	Strong's #3389 BDB #436

Translation: [...just as \[lit., and\] Absalom entered Jerusalem.](#) The wâw conjunction can also mean *when*, and the sense of this verse appears to be that these two men come into the city of Jerusalem at the same time. This way, as far as Absalom knows, Hushai never left Jerusalem. He does not know that Hushai spoke to David or that he just came back into the city. Insofar as Absalom knows, Hushai has been there waiting all of this time for his new savior, Absalom.

Although Absalom is brilliant (note the two plots he has conceived thus far¹³¹); this whole spy network never really occurs to him. He is a suspicious person and no doubt wonders about the loyalties of some; but he is also an egotist, and such leaders are able to shut out of their minds their opposition. In fact, they hold themselves in such high regard, that they have a difficult time understanding others who do not.

¹³⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 2Sam. 15:37.

¹³¹ That is, killing Amnon and then becoming king in all Israel.

Application: Let me use President Barack Obama as an example.¹³² In his mind, he believes that he has the solutions the all that ails America. He is too much of an egotist to admit that he is wrong, or to recalibrate based upon the actions of the American public, as seen in the 2010 election, one of the greatest repudiations of a president's program ever recorded in United States history. George W. Bush, his predecessor, was a much more moderate man in office. When Republicans were voted out of office in 2006, he both admitted that Republicans had received a *thumping* and he recalibrated his policies and began to work more closely with Democrats than before (he had worked with them in the past). He was not a grand egotist who had a set of plans that he was going to implement no matter what—alone if he had to. On the other hand, we have seen President Obama, in the year 2012, abandon any attempts to work with Congress on anything difficult, refuse to consider Republican ideas, and he primarily worked alone, with his lawyers, to achieve what he wanted to achieve.

For Absalom, it is all about him. He is the power. Insofar as we know, Absalom did not really have any real initiatives or programs which were important to him to put into place. His only initiative was to put himself in place, with one possible exception. We may reasonably assume that he truly did see a problem with David's execution of justice, as Amnon was never tried, nor was Absalom ever taken to court and exonerated.

I do not mean to imply that Absalom's take over of the throne was simply him and him alone. We will find out in the first verse of 2Sam. 17 and he will be able to choose from many men to pursue David with an army of 12,000. So the people of Israel were very much taken in by this new, shiny object who had promised them so much.¹³³

Guzik: *Absalom came into Jerusalem as a cunning, wicked rebel. David came into Jerusalem as a brave, noble conqueror (2Samuel 5:6-7). Jesus came into Jerusalem as a servant-king (Matthew 21:4-10).*¹³⁴

So here is where we leave our heroes: David, and those who have followed him, are not too far outside of Jerusalem at this point in time. The priests, Zadok and Abiathar, Davidic supporters, have returned to Jerusalem (it is very likely that Abiathar was previously ministering outside of Jerusalem). Their sons will take their positions, which will actually be outside of Jerusalem (not noted in this chapter). Hushai, a brilliant man and a supporter of David, has entered into Jerusalem with the intent of fouling the counsel of Ahithophel. And, from the south, Absalom and his men have entered into Jerusalem, and they go to the royal palace (presumably), where Absalom will set up shop and determine his next move.

At this point, Clarke waxes poetically: *Reader, behold in the case of David a sad vicissitude of human affairs, and a fearful proof of their instability. Behold a king, the greatest that ever lived, a profound politician, an able general, a brave soldier, a poet of the most sublime genius and character, a prophet of the Most High God, and the deliverer of his country, driven from his dominions by his own son, abandoned by his fickle people, and for a time even by his God! See in his desolate state that there is none so exalted that God cannot abase, and none so abased that God cannot exalt. He was forsaken for a time, and his enemies triumphed; God returned, and his enemies were confounded. His crime, it is true, was great and God had declared by Nathan what had now come to pass. God is just, and in numberless instances sees right to show his displeasure even at those sins which his mercy has forgiven. In all cases it is a fearful and bitter thing to sin against the Lord.*¹³⁵

We have to be careful here. God is not still punishing David for the sins which He was forgiven. David is facing the natural results of a lifetime of neglect of his own sons (which will plague him again at the very end). David is under a set of changing circumstances, partially related to his sin, but as suffering for blessing. How does David go from being a skirt-chaser while his own soldiers are fighting battles away from their homes, to return as a great king? This is part of it. David is given a great deal of time to think about his life; to think about the mistakes he

¹³² I only use him because he is the commander-in-chief at the time of this writing; and he is a good example.

¹³³ Sound like anyone you know?

¹³⁴ *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 15:31-37.

¹³⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 15:37.

has made; and he is sowing what he has reaped. But this will not be where God leaves him, because God is gracious, and David loves the Word of God.

One thing which has not occurred here is, God has **not** deserted David. God may have beat David down for his sins, but God has not left him. David is still alive. He is under changing circumstances; and sometimes, that is where we find ourselves as well. David is going to emerge from this final crisis and be greater than ever.

One more thing: David, either during this time, or looking back on this time, will compose many psalms. Many commentators cover as many as 10 psalms in conjunction with this one chapter alone. We know that David is thinking logically and militarily; it is apparent, from these many psalms, that David is thinking doctrinally as well.

So, David's confidant, Hushai, entered into Jerusalem as the same time that Absalom entered into the city. Two men, one of them authority orientated and the other arrogant, both enter into Jerusalem at the same time. Hushai will slip in quietly; no one will even know that he was gone. Absalom will come with a big fanfare, and there will be a large group of people—fans, if you will—waiting for him, waiting for him and cheering. Hushai is a man of truth, who will surround that truth with a bodyguard of lies for the next few months; and Absalom, who is a man of lies, and will say anything to achieve his own ends.

Our final verse reads: *So Hushai, David's confidant, entered [into] the city just as [lit., and] Absalom entered Jerusalem.* Interestingly enough, we will not pick up here next time, but we have many psalms to cover, and half the chapter of 2Sam. 16, before we come to the words: *And Absalom, and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him* (2Sam. 16:15). At that point, we will pick up with the narrative, where Absalom comes into Jerusalem from the south (or southwest) and Hushai enters Jerusalem from the north (or northeast).

Here is how these fit together: *So Hushai, David's confidant, entered [into] the city just as [lit., and] Absalom entered Jerusalem. And Absalom, and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him And it happened, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend [mole], had come to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, Let the king live! Let the king live! And Absalom said to [interrogates] Hushai, Is this your kindness [grace, loyalty] with [to] your friend? Why have you not gone with your friend? And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, for he whom Jehovah and this people have chosen, even all the men of Israel, his I shall be, and I shall remain with him. And a second time [Furthermore], Whom should I serve? Should I not serve before the face of his son. As I served before the face of your father, so shall I be before your face* (2Sam. 15:37 16:15–19).

So, Absalom, as he goes by in his chariot, who knows David's friends and associates, see Hushai, calling out, "Long live the king." And he stops and speaks with Hushai, checking him out, asking why he is not with David. Hushai says that God has chosen Absalom to reign, and how can Absalom disagree with that?

For a normal Christian, just out-and-out lying is difficult to do. It does not strike us as something that we ought ever to do, and yet, here we find Hushai the Archite, the friend of David, lying directly to Absalom's face, which is within the directive will of God. The mature believer lies to the liars. Hushai's deception of Absalom is evidence of Hushai's personal honor and great patriotism. Absalom is building his whole movement upon lies, and Hushai will use lies to bring Absalom down. As Bob Thieme said,¹³⁶ "Absalom is a dishonorable, sinful liar and Hushai is an honorable, unsinful liar."

Here Hushai is speaking to Absalom, in a conversation which probably took place over maybe 5 or 10 minutes, and already, Hushai has insinuated himself into the upper echelons of Absalom's cabinet.

Hushai and Absalom

1. Hushai has willingly placed himself under David's authority; and David represents both God and establishment. Therefore, Hushai's involvement is patriotic and is in favor of his country.

¹³⁶ From R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s 1972 David Series, lesson #631_0426. Not an exact quotation.

Hushai and Absalom

2. As we have seen, Absalom may have begun with some good intentions, to stick up for his sister. However, criminal behavior led to more criminal behavior, and he had turned into a revolutionary desiring to overthrow his father by any means possible.
3. Absalom is not under anyone else's authority and he is out to gain power for himself.
4. Absalom has spend 4 years lying to people to whom he could care less about. He was only getting popular support and appealing to some who might become dedicated reformers.
5. Absalom, without feeling, would kill anyone who stood in his way of power. Absalom's only interest is power; he sold one platform, but he desired power instead.
6. God will use counterinsurgency to defeat Absalom. Hushai will feed Absalom bad advice and Absalom will take this advice, which will result in his destruction.
7. Absalom admitted Hushai into his inner circle without any serious interrogation. Hushai appeals to Absalom's arrogance, and Absalom falls for it, giving him top secret clearance. 2Sam. 16:15–19
8. It is right and patriotic for Hushai to lie to Absalom. It would have been sinful of him to tell Absalom the truth. If Hushai told Absalom the truth, he would have been a traitor to his country.
9. Lies and deceit are stratagems of counterinsurgency; and God approves of using them against a degenerate enemy.
10. Winston Churchill gave¹ the epigram of clandestine warfare: "In wartime truth is so precious that she should be attended by a bodyguard of lies."
11. In fact, today we have people who are offended by spies who lie and governments that lie in order to preserve order, and they seek to expose them.
12. Hushai is a man of great character, and he acts out of honor and patriotism.
13. Hushai is David's establishment mole high up in the Absalom revolution. Absalom's revolution is evil, and God will frustrate this evil by appealing to Absalom's arrogance (as we will see).
- 14.

¹ From <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jul/26/wikileaks-end-churchills-bodyguard-of-lies> accessed October 17, 2012.

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Application: One more thing: you, as a believer, are not involved in counterinsurgency. Hushai was; you are not. I only mention that, just in case you were up for some fornication and lying right now.

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Addendum

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time

Antiquities of the Jews - Book VII

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF FORTY YEARS. FROM THE DEATH OF SAUL TO THE DEATH OF DAVID.

CHAPTER 9A

CONCERNING THE INSURRECTION OF ABSALOM AGAINST DAVID AND CONCERNING AHITHOPHEL AND HUSHAI

1. NOW Absalom, upon this his success with the king, procured to himself a great many horses, and many chariots, and that in a little time also. He had moreover fifty armor-bearers that were about him; and he came early every day to the king's palace, and spake what was agreeable to such as came for justice and lost their causes, as if that happened for want of good counselors about the king, or perhaps because the judges mistook in that unjust sentence they gave; whereby he gained the good-will of them all. He told them, that had he but such authority committed to him, he would distribute justice to them in a most equitable manner. When he had made himself so popular among the multitude, he thought he had already the good-will of the people secured to him; but when four years (16) had passed since his father's reconciliation to him, he came to him, and besought him to give him leave to go to Hebron, and pay a sacrifice to God, because he vowed it to him when he fled out of the country. So when David had granted his request, he went thither, and great multitudes came running together to him, for he had sent to a great number so to do.

2. Among them came Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counsellor of David's, and two hundred men out of Jerusalem itself, who knew not his intentions, but were sent for as to a sacrifice. So he was appointed king by all of them, which he obtained by this stratagem. As soon as this news was brought to David, and he was informed of what he did not expect from his son, he was affrighted at this his impious and bold undertaking, and wondered that he was so far from remembering how his offense had been so lately forgiven him, that he undertook much worse and more wicked enterprises; first, to deprive him of that kingdom which was given him of God; and secondly, to take away his own father's life. He therefore resolved to fly to the parts beyond Jordan: so he called his most intimate friends together, and communicated to them all that he had heard of his son's madness. He committed himself to God, to judge between them about all their actions; and left the care of his royal palace to his ten concubines, and went away from Jerusalem, being willingly accompanied by the rest of the multitude, who went hastily away with him, and particularly by those six hundred armed men, who had been with him from his first flight in the days of Saul. But he persuaded Abiathar and Zadok, the high priests, who had determined to go away with him, as also all the Levites, who were with the ark, to stay behind, as hoping that God would deliver him without its removal; but he charged them to let him know privately how all things went on; and he had their sons, Ahimmaz the son of Zadok, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar, for faithful ministers in all things; but Ittai the Gitrite went out with him whether David would let him or not, for he would have persuaded him to stay, and on that account he appeared the more friendly to him. But as he was ascending the Mount of Olives barefooted, and all his company were in tears, it was told him that Ahithophel was with Absalom, and was of his side. This hearing augmented his grief; and he besought God earnestly to alienate the mind of Absalom from Ahithophel, for he was afraid that he should persuade him to follow his pernicious counsel, for he was a prudent man, and very sharp in seeing what was advantageous. When David was gotten upon the top of the mountain, he took a view of the city; and prayed to God with abundance of tears, as having already lost his kingdom; and here it was that a faithful friend of his, whose name was Hushai, met him. When David saw him with his clothes rent, and having ashes all over his head, and in lamentation for the great change of affairs, he comforted him, and exhorted him to leave off grieving; nay, at length he besought him to go back to Absalom, and appear as one of his party, and to fish out the secretest counsels of his mind, and to contradict the counsels of Ahithophel, for that he could not do him so much good by being with him as he might by being with Absalom. So he was prevailed on by David, and left him, and came to Jerusalem, whither Absalom himself came also a little while afterward.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-7.htm> accessed September 22, 2012. Josephus *Antiquities*; Book VII, Chapter 12.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Edersheim's commentary on this chapter, which some slight updating and editing.

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 15

Once more we notice here the consequences of David's fatal weakness, as manifest in his irresolution and half-measures. Morally paralyzed, so to speak, in consequence of his own guilt, his position sensibly and increasingly weakened in popular estimation, that series of disasters, which had formed the burden of God's predicted judgments, now followed in the natural sequence of events. If even before his return from Geshur Absalom had been a kind of popular hero, his presence for two years in Jerusalem in semi-banishment must have increased the general sympathy. Whatever his enemies might say against him, he was a splendid man - every inch a prince, brave, warm-hearted, and true to those whom he loved - witness even the circumstance, told about Jerusalem, that he had called that beautiful child, his only daughter, after his poor dishonored sister (2Samuel 14:27), while, unlike an Oriental, he cared not to bring his sons prominently forward [It is remarkable and exceptional that the name of his daughter is mentioned, and not those of his sons.]. Daring he was - witness his setting Joab's barley on fire; but an Eastern populace would readily forgive, rather like in a prince, what might almost be called errors on the side of virtue. And now Absalom was coming forward like a real prince! His state-carriage and fifty outrunners would always attract the admiration of the populace. Yet he was not proud - quite the contrary. In fact, never had a prince taken such cordial interest in the people, nor more ardently wished to see their wrongs redressed; nor yet was there one more condescending. Day by day he might be seen at the entering of the royal palace, where the crowd of suppliants for redress were gathered. Would that he had the power, as he had the will, to see them righted! It might not be the king's blame; but there was a lack of proper officials to take cognizance of such appeal cases - in short, the government was wrong, and the people must suffer in consequence. As we realize the circumstances, we can scarcely wonder that thus "Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." [Keil notices that by similar means Agamemnon obtained the supreme command of the Greek army (Euripides, *Iphigenia*, 5. 337, seq.).] How long this intrigue was carried on we cannot accurately determine [The notice in the text: "after forty years" (2Samuel 15:7) is manifestly a clerical error. Most interpreters (with the Syrian, Arabic, and Josephus) read "four years;" but it is impossible to offer more than a hypothesis.], and only once more wonder at the weakness of the king who left it so entirely unnoticed. That the conspiracy which Absalom had so carefully prepared, though kept very secret, was widely ramified, appears from the circumstance, that, immediately on its outbreak, he could send "spies throughout all the tribes," to ascertain and influence the feelings of the people generally, and to bid his adherents, on a preconcerted signal, gather around him. More than that, it seems likely that Ahithophel, one of David's privy councilors, and deemed the ablest of his advisers, had, from the first, been in the secret, and, if so, probably directed the conspiracy. This would explain the strange coincidence of Ahithophel's absence from Jerusalem at the time of the outbreak, and his presence at his native Giloh, not far from Hebron (Joshua 15:51). Nor is it likely that a man like Ahithophel would so readily have obeyed the summons of Absalom if he had been until then a stranger to his plans, and had not had good reason to expect success. And, indeed, if his advice had been followed, the result would have answered his anticipations.

The place chosen for the rising was Hebron, both on account of the facilities it offered for retreat in case of failure, and as the city where formerly (in the case of David) a new royalty had been instituted; perhaps also as the birthplace of Absalom, and, as has been suggested, because the transference of the royal residence to Jerusalem may have left dissatisfaction in Hebron. Absalom obtained the king's permission to go thither, on pretense of paying a vow made at Geshur. It was a clever device for entrapping two hundred influential persons from Jerusalem to invite them to accompany him, on pretext of taking part in the sacrificial feast. Arrived at Hebron, the mask was thrown off, and the conspiracy rapidly assumed most formidable proportions. Tidings of what had passed speedily reached Jerusalem. It was a wise measure on the part of the king to resolve on immediate flight from Jerusalem, not only to avoid being shut up in the city, and to prevent a massacre in its

Edersheim Summarizes 2Samuel 15

streets, but to give his adherents the opportunity of gathering around him. Indeed, in the hour of danger, the king seemed, for a brief space, his old self again. We can quite understand how, in David's peculiar state of mind, trials in which he recognized the dealings of God would rouse him to energy, while the even tenor of affairs left him listless. No weakness now - outward or inward! Prudence, determination, and courage in action; but, above all, a constant acknowledgment of God, self-humiliation, and a continuous reference of all to Him, marked his every step. In regard to this, we may here notice the progress of David's spiritual experience, marking how every act in this drama finds expression in the Book of Psalms. As Abraham perpetuated his progress through the land by rearing an altar unto Jehovah in every place where he sojourned, so David has chronicled every phase in his inner and outer life by a Psalm - a waymark and an altar for lone pilgrims in all ages. First, we turn to Psalms 41 and 45 -the former in which the designation Jehovah, the latter in which that of Elohim, prevails [The circumstance that some are "Jehovah" and some "Elohim" Psalms often determines their position in the Psalter.], - which become more full of meaning if (with Professor Delitzsch) we infer from them, that during the four years Absalom's plot was ripening, the king was partially incapacitated by some illness. These two Psalms, then, mark the period before the conspiracy actually broke out, and find their typical counterpart in the treachery of Judas Iscariot [Psalm 55:22, in the version of the LXX, is quoted by St. Peter (2Peter 5:7)]. Read in this light, these Psalms afford an insight into the whole history of this risings political as well as religious. Other two Psalms, 3 and 63, refer to David's flight; while the later events in, and the overthrow of the conspiracy, form the historical background of Psalms 61, 39, and 62.

When leaving Jerusalem in their flight, the king and his followers made a halt at **"the far house"** [Probably the last house in the suburbs of Jerusalem. The rendering in our Authorized Version (2Samuel 15:17): **"in a place that was far off,"** is not only incorrect, but absolutely meaningless.]. Besides his family, servants and officials, his body-guard (the Cherethi and Pelethi), and the six hundred tried warriors, who had been with him in all his early wanderings, accompanied him [It is impossible to suppose that these six hundred were natives of Gath. Everything points to his old companions-in-arms, probably popularly called **"Gathites,"** as we might speak of our Crimean or Abyssinian warriors.]. In that hour of bitterness the king's heart was also cheered by the presence and steadfast adherence of a brave Philistine chieftain, Ittai, who had cast in his lot with David and with David's God. He had brought with him to Jerusalem his family (2Samuel 15:22) and a band of adherents (ver. 20); and his fidelity and courage soon raised him to the command of a division in David's army (18:2).

It was winter, or early spring [Kidron - "the dark flowing" - was only a brook during the winter and early spring rains.], when the mournful procession passed through a crowd of weeping spectators over the Kidron, to take the way of the wilderness that led towards Jericho and the Jordan. At the foot of the Mount of Olives they again paused. Here the Levites, headed by Zadok the priest, put down the Ark, which had accompanied David, until the high-priest Abiathar, and the rest of the people who were to join the king, came up out of the city. They were wise as well as good words with which David directed the Ark of God to be taken back. At the same time he established communication with the city through the priests [The expression (2Samuel 15:27), rendered in the Authorized Version: **"Art thou not a seer?"** is very difficult. Keil and others, by slightly altering the punctuation, translate: "Thou seer !"]. He would wait by "the fords" of the wilderness [So the Chethib, or written text, has it; the Keri, or emendated text, has "plains." The former seems the more correct. The "fords" were, of course, those where the Jordan was crossed.] until the sons of the two priests should bring him trustworthy tidings by which to guide his further movements. It reads almost like prophecy, this description of the procession of weeping mourners, whom Jerusalem had cast out, going up "the ascent of the olive-trees," and once more halting at the top, **"where it was wont to worship God!"** [This is the correct rendering, and not as in the Authorized Version (2Samuel 15:32): **"where he worshipped God."**]

A little before, the alarming news had come that Ahithophel had joined the conspiracy. But now a welcome sight greeted them. Hushai, the Archite (comp. Joshua 16:2), David's friend and adviser, came to meet the king, and offered to accompany him. But the presence of unnecessary non-combatants would manifestly have entailed additional difficulties, especially if of the age of Hushai. Besides, a man like the Archite might render David most material service in Jerusalem, if, by feigning to join the conspirators, he could gain the confidence of Absalom, and so, perhaps, counteract the dreaded counsels of Ahithophel. Accordingly, Hushai was sent back to the city, there to act in concert with the priests.

From <http://www.levendwater.org/books/v5bhot.pdf> accessed September 22, 2012. Footnotes were interspersed in the text and bracketed.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 15	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Absalom Deceives and then Wins the Hearts of Israelites	
And so it is after this [lit., <i>thus</i>] that Absalom acquires for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men running before him.	And it happens after all of this that Absalom acquired a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him.
Furthermore Absalom used to rise up early and remain by the road of the gate and [speak to] any man who had a legal dispute to bring to the king for a judgment. And Absalom called out to him and said, "Which city are you from?" And he would answer [lit., <i>and so he says</i>], "Your servant [is] from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom said to him, "Look, your matter [is] good and just [and straightforward]. [There is] none to hear you directly from the king."	Furthermore, Absalom made a habit of rising up early and waiting by the road into the city to speak to any man who had a legal dispute to bring before the king for a resolution. And Absalom would then call out to him, saying, "Which city are you from?" And he would answer, "You servants is from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, it is clear that your claim is valid and just, but there is no one designated by the king to properly listen to you."
Then Absalom would say, "Who will [or, <i>O that one might</i>] appoint me a judge in the land? Then comes any man to me who has a dispute or a judicial decision and I will give him justice [or, <i>I will vindicate him</i>]."	Then Absalom would then say, "O that I would be appointed as a judge in the land! Then any man could come to me with a dispute or an appeal and I would see to it that he received a just outcome."
And it was when a man came to bow down to him, that Absalom [lit., <i>he</i>] would reach out his hand [to shake], or he would embrace him, or he would kiss him. So, according to this manner, Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment. Therefore, Absalom deceived the hearts of the men of Israel.	And it was whenever a man came to bow before Absalom that he would, instead, reach out his hand or he would embrace him or he would kiss him. As so described, Absalom interacted with all Israel who came to the king for judgment. In this way, Absalom deceived the men of Israel.
Absalom Plots the Final Details of His Revolution in Hebron	
And it is after [lit., <i>from</i>] the end of four years that Absalom said to the king, "Let me go, please, so that I can complete in Hebron my vow that I vowed to Y ^e howah. For your servant vowed a vow when living in Geshur, in Aram, saying, 'If indeed Y ^e howah returns me [to] Jerusalem, then I will serve Y ^e howah.' "	And after four years passed, Absalom said to the king, "Please allow me to go to Hebron, so that I can complete my vow that I vowed to the Lord. For your servant made a vow while living in Geshur in Aram, saying, "If Jehovah indeed returns me to Jerusalem, then I will serve Him by completing this vow.' "
So the king said to him, "Go in peace [and prosperity]."	So the king said to him, "Go in peace and prosperity."
Therefore, Absalom [lit., <i>he</i>] rose up and went to Hebron. He [lit., <i>Absalom</i>] also sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling [them] [lit., <i>to say</i>], "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you will say, 'Absalom reigns at Hebron.' "	Therefore, Absalom got up and went to Hebron. He then sent revolutionaries throughout all the tribes of Israel, telling them, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then cry out, 'Absalom reigns as king at Hebron.' "

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 15

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Two hundred men from Jerusalem [went] with Absalom, those who had been invited. And those going, [went] in innocence; they did not know anything.

Absalom also invited two hundred men from Jerusalem who were ignorant of his plot.

Furthermore, Absalom sent [for] Ahithophel the Gilonite, a counselor [to] David from his city [of] Giloh, while he was offering up [lit., *slaughtering*] animal sacrifices. Consequently, the conspiracy became strong, while people are departing [from David] and [becoming] great with Absalom.

Furthermore, Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gilonite, from his city of Giloh, while he was making a show of offering up sacrifices in Hebron. Ahithophel had been a brilliant counselor for David. Consequently, the conspiracy grew in strength as people departed from David and went in large numbers to Absalom.

David Leaves Jerusalem

And a messenger came into David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are [gone] after Absalom."

Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The men of Israel have had their hearts swayed by Absalom."

Then David said to all of his servants that [were] with him in Jerusalem, "Rise up and let us flee for [there] will not be to us an escape from the face of Absalom. And let us go quickly so that he does not hasten and overtake us, and thrust evil upon us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

Then David commanded all of his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Rise up as we must move quickly or there may not be a way to escape the attack of Absalom. We must leave quickly or he may hasten and overtake us, and bring evil upon us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

Then the servants of the king said to David [lit., *the king*], "According to all that my lord the king chooses, observe, [we are] your servants."

Then the servants of the king said to David, "Listen, whatever you want us to do, that we will do. We are your obedient servants."

Therefore, the king went out with all his household at his feet, but he [lit., *the king*] left [behind] [his] ten mistresses [lit., *10 women mistresses*] to keep the palace. And the king went out with all the people at his feet. They later remained [at] Beth-merhak [possibly, the house of the distance].

Therefore, the king left quickly with all of his household behind him, but he left behind his 10 mistresses to keep and watch over the palace. And the king went out with all the people behind him. They later stopped at Beth-merhak (or, *the last house*).

David and His Immigrant Supporters

And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath; those passing before the king.

All of the king's military passed by him as per his command: the Cherethites, the Pelethites and the Gittites (600 men who had followed David from Gath); all of these men passed before the king.

And all of his servants passed under his guidance: and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and they stand by the olive tree in the desert wilderness. And all the people pass by clinging to him, and all those around him, and all the court personnel, and all those [who] fight, 600 men, and they are arriving by his help; and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, 600 men who advanced at his feet from Gath; those passing before the king.

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 15

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
<p>So the king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why do you also go with us? Return and stay with the [new] king for you [are] a foreigner and, furthermore, you are emigrating with regards to [possibly, from] your place. Yesterday, you arrived and today, I am leading you about with us to go [wherever]. And I am going in that I am going. Return and cause your brothers to return with you. Grace and truth [be to you].”</p>	<p>So the king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why do you also go with us? Return and stay with the new king, for you are a foreigner and, furthermore, you have just recently immigrated from your place. You arrived here but yesterday, and today, I am leading you about with the rest of us wherever I am going. And I am going without a clear destination. Therefore return to Jerusalem and take your brothers with you. Let grace and truth be with you.”</p>
<p>But [lit., and so] Ittai answered the king and said, “[By the] life [of] Y^ehowah and [by the] life [of] my adonai the king, that in the place where my adonai the king is—whether for death or for life [with great prosperity]—there will your servant be.”</p>	<p>But Ittai the Gittite answered the king, saying, “By the life of Jehovah and by the life of my lord the king, wherever my lord the king is—whether I die or live in great prosperity—there will I, your servant, be.”</p>
<p>Therefore, David said to Ittai, “Advance and pass by.” And Ittai the Gittite passed by with all his followers and all of the families who [are] with him.</p>	<p>Therefore, David said to Ittai, “March and pass before me.” And Ittai the Gittite passed before David with all of his soldiers and their families.</p>
<p>David Uses the Priest to Set Up a Counterinsurgency Network stopped here</p>	
<p>So all the land was crying [with] a great voice and all the people are passing by. Then the king passes through the Kidron Brook. Then all of the people pass upon the face of the road to the desert-wilderness.</p>	<p>So the entire country was weeping with a loud voice as all the people advanced. Then the king himself passed through the Kidron Brook. And the people advanced near to the road which leads into the desert-wilderness.</p>
<p>And also, observe, Zadok [has come] and all the Levites with him, who are bearing the Ark of the Covenant of Elohim. And they set the Ark of Elohim down. Abiathar also came up while all the people were passing [in review] out from the city.</p>	<p>It was also observed that Zadok, the priest, had come out, along with the Levites who were bearing the Ark of the Contract of God. They set the Ark down (while David spoke with Zadok). Abiathar also came up as the people were passing in review going out of the city.</p>
<p>Then the king said to Zadok, “Bring back the Ark of Elohim [to] the city. If I find grace in the eyes of Y^ehowah, then He will bring me back and He will make me see it [the Ark] and its habitation. But if He says this [lit., thus]: ‘I do not take pleasure in you;’ [then] here I am [lit., behold me]; He will do to me just as is good in His sight.”</p>	<p>Then the king said to Zadok, “Take the Ark of God back into the city. If I find grace in the estimation of Jehovah, then He will bring me back and He will allow me to see the Ark in its habitation. But if God says, ‘I take no pleasure in you;’ then here I am, and He will do to me as is good in His sight.”</p>
<p>Then the king said to Zadok, the priest, “[Are] you a seer? Return [to] the city in peace [and tranquility] with [lit., and] Ahimaaz your son; and [with] Jonathan the son of Abiathar; both of your sons with you. Look, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region until a word directly from you is made known to me.”</p>	<p>Then the king said to Zadok the priest, “Are you not a seer? Therefore, return to the city quietly and peacefully. Make certain that you take your son, Ahimaaz and Abiathar’s son Jonathan; take both of your sons with you. Listen, both of you, I will be waiting in the plains of the desert region until I hear from you.”</p>

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 15	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Zadok returned the Ark of Elohim [to] Jerusalem with Abiathar; and they remained there [in Jerusalem].	Zadok returned the Ark of God to Jerusalem, accompanied by Abiathar. Then they remained in Jerusalem.
Hushai the Archite Appears as an Answer to David's Prayer	
And David is going up the ascent of [the Mount] of Olives, going up and weeping, his head covered, and he is going barefoot. All the people who [are] with him also have covered each one his head while they go up, [also] going up and weeping.	David is going up the ascent to the Mount of Olives, and he is weeping as he goes up. His head is uncovered and he is barefoot. Accordingly, all of the people who are with him also have their heads covered, and they are weeping as they go up.
It is made known to David, saying, "Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom."	One made known to David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators who have thrown in with Absalom."
Therefore, David said [in prayer], "Frustrate, please, the counsel [or, <i>advice</i>] of Ahithophel, O Y ^e howah."	Therefore, David prayed to God, "Frustrate, O Jehovah, the counsel and advice of Ahithophel."
And David has gone as far as the summit, where he bowed down to Elohim, and, suddenly [lit., <i>behold</i>], Hushai the Archite [has come] to meet him. His tunic [was] torn and [there was] dirt upon his head.	Once David had come to the summit of the mountain, he bowed down there to God, and, out of nowhere, Hushai the Archite appeared, looking for David specifically. His tunic was torn and there was dirt upon his head, to indicate that he commiserated with David's situation.
Then David said to him, "If you pass over with me, you will be a burden upon me;... But, if you return [to] the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king. I also [was] formerly a servant of your father; now, therefore, I [am] your servant.' And [by doing this], you will [be in a position to] frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. [Are] not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, with you there? Therefore, all matters which you hear from the king's palace, you will make [them] known to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. Look, with them [are] their two sons, Zadok's [son] Ahimaaz and Abiathar's [son] Jonathan. You [all] will send by their hand anything which you [all] hear to me."	Then David said to Hushai, "If you pass over with me, will be a burden to me;... But, if you instead return to the city and go to Absalom, saying, 'I will be your servant, O king, just as I was formerly a servant to your father; therefore, I stand here as your servant today.' By doing this, you will be in position to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel. Your compatriots will be Zadok and Abiathar, the priests. Therefore, whatever information that you pick up while in the king's palace, you will pass that along to them. Look, Zadok and Abiathar have two sons, Abhimaaz and Jonathan, respectively, and they will act as couriers to me. Send any information that you hear by means of them."
So Hushai, David's confidant, entered [into] the city just as [lit., <i>and</i>] Absalom entered Jerusalem.	So, David's confidant, Hushai, entered into Jerusalem as the same time that Absalom entered into the city.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

R. B. Thieme, Jr. covered this same material in his David series, lessons #364–427. As an aside, Bob also recommends the books *Bodyguard of Lies* and *War in the Shadows* as supplements to the study of this chapter of the Bible.

It ought to be noted that this revolution and its being resolved will take us through 2Sam. 19.

When covering 1Sam. 15, Bob Thieme also covered Eccles. 3 Psalms 3 25 39 41 43 55 61 62 63 64 Rom. 8:28–32 (Bob covered more psalms for this chapter than any other that I can recall).

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time: according to R. B. Thieme, Jr., Psalm 39 fits in here after v. 12. Psalm 3 definitively belongs with David fleeing from Absalom. R. B. Thieme, Jr. suggests that David composed Psalm 3 when ascending the Mount of Olives. McLaughlin suggests that Psalm 4 also be studied with this (as does the Pulpit Commentary, which adds to this list 27 41 55 61 and 62 when in Mahanaim 63). Chuck Smith suggests that Psalm 55 is appropriate. Psalm 41 seems particularly on point, when it comes to a conspiracy against him, and perhaps should be studied when David is on the mountain, leaving Jerusalem. The Pulpit Commentary adds Psalm 31, but adds perhaps it belongs in the time period of Jeremiah. Guzik suggests Psalms 3, 41, 55, 61, 62, and 63. Given what R. B. Thieme, Jr. covered and this list, that apparently there were more Psalms related to this event than probably any other.

Acknowledgments: Any person who was quoted here means that I looked at that person’s commentary about this chapter. Although I did not quote direction from James Burton Coffman, I did examine his **commentary** and used some points which he made. I have spent 40 years under the ministry of **R. B. Thieme, Jr.**, so his influence is overriding. However, this commentary is not a rehash of my notes on Bob’s study of David, as 285 pages of this commentary had been written prior to looking back at my notes from his Bible classes.

Chapter Outline		Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines
Forward	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
Introduction	Text	Addendum
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Samuel