

The Three Kings of Israel

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Date: 09 July 2017

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[0:00] 2 Samuel 15, and I will begin in verse 1.

! 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 come to him and say, from what city are you? And he said, your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel. Absalom would say to him, see, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you. 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.

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. Then Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment.

[1:22] So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. And at the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord in Hebron.

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 the Lord. The king said to him, go in peace.

So he arose and went to Hebron. 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 of Hebron. With Absalom went 200 men from Jerusalem who were invited guests, and they went in their innocence and knew nothing. And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahitophel, the Gileadite, David's counselor from his city, Gilead.

And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing. And a messenger came to David, saying, the hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.

[2:39] Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, arise and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom.

Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down ruin on us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword. And the king's servants said to the king, Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides.

So the king went out, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. And the king went out, and all the people after him.

And they halted at the last house. And all his servants passed by him, and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why do you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your home.

[3:53] You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, since I go and I know not where? Go back and take your brothers with you, and may the Lord show steadfast love and faithfulness to you.

But Ittai answered the king, As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be.

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, and all the land wept aloud as all the people passed by.

And the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness. 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. Then the king said to Zadok, Carry the ark of God back into the city.

[5:03] For if I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his dwelling place. But if he says, I have no pleasure in you, behold, here I am.

Let him do to me what seems good to him. The king also said to Zadok the priest, Are you not a seer? Go back to the city in peace with your two sons, Ahemaz your son and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me. So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went.

And it was told David, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

[6:19] While David was coming to the summit where God was worshipped, behold, Hushai the archite came to meet him with his coat torn and dirt on his head.

David said to him, If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, I will be your servant, O king, as I have been your father's servant in times past. So now I will be your servant. Then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there?

So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, their two sons are with them there, Ahima, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son.

And by them you shall send to me everything you hear. So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

[7:22] Okay, so there's quite a bit here in this passage of scripture. There's a couple of things we want to review before we dig into this chapter.

First one is in chapter 12. This is when the prophet Nathan confronts David of his sin. And he says a few things after speaking of the little ewe lamb and David pretty much condemns himself when he basically says that man is guilty and deserving of death and also says that he has a fourfold retribution.

You know, pay this man back fourfold, which is what the Levitical law said that someone should do if they steal a sheep from someone else there to pay him back fourfold.

But if you go back to chapter 12, you will see in verses, let's say start in verse 9, it says, why have you despised the word of the Lord to do what is evil in his sight?

You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Verse 10, now 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.

[8:39] So you got this line here, the sword shall never depart from your house. As a matter of fact, it's not just departing from his house, but it's going to be fourfold retribution.

We've already noticed two of his sons that have died. The son that he had, he bore to Bathsheba and he died.

And then Amnon. And we know that that particular story from chapter 13 and the rape of his sister Tamar. And now Absalom is looking to be number three.

I mean, it hasn't happened yet, but it's looking to go that direction. If you didn't know anything about this passage of scripture, you're like, okay, this guy's getting himself in some trouble. All right. Then we have another thing to review.

We talked about a couple of weeks ago, last time I got to preach. In chapter 14, the last part of it, it's also very important to remember in verse 25 in chapter 14, it says, Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom.

[9:46] From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him. And when he cut the hair of his head, it weighed 200 shekels.

And then he says something about his sons and daughter and all as well. But nonetheless, this is a guy that is known to be handsome. He is known for, he's a popular guy, a popular fellow.

He's known for attributes that are not necessarily attributes that people need in order to be good leaders. But nonetheless, he has these and that's what he's known by as well.

And Israel adores him for that. Okay. So we come to this passage of scripture and it starts off, I guess, okay.

I mean, it seems all right. But Absalom seems perhaps to be content with who he is. He is the crown prince. That is really who he is because his brother died.

[10:52] Of course, he killed his brother. But that's kind of been forgiven. You know, David kissed him. He was accepted back into the fold, so to speak. So he is the crown prince.

He is coming in now, filling that role. And so you would think what he is doing might be a way to handle that situation.

But what we find is, as we dig into this chapter, we find that perhaps there's something else to do. Something else why he's doing this.

So what is he doing? Okay, verse 1, it says that he is gathering himself chariots and horses and 50 men to run behind him. Now, as crown prince, that's okay.

I mean, you would think that it's fine for him to have his own men. I mean, David had more than 50 men as crown prince. He had, you know, a few hundred.

[11:50] So he's certainly more than 50. And so it's okay for this to happen. Not necessarily doing anything wrong just yet. And so there's symbols of royalty.

He is showing that he is being royal as well. Being behind a chariot. Riding that chariot. And also having some men. And then also going and standing by the gate early in the morning.

Now, the gate, the gate of the city at the time. You see this in all other places in scripture. This is the place where the business is done. This is the courthouse. City hall. And people would come by. And they would bring their concerns to the leaders of that city. Or the leaders of that country in this particular situation. And so, you know, there's all kinds of judges in that land.

Or David could set up anybody he wanted to. To handle cases that were less than something that a king ought to handle. But nonetheless, the king was to handle.

[12:56] He was to be the judge of the land. And we've noticed that from the last few chapters. Chapter 12, the prophet Nathan came to him with concerns. And David handled those concerns.

Chapter 14, this older lady came in. Older widow came in with her concern. And David helped her with that concern as well. Now, of course, that concern turned out to be fake for various reasons. But still, he handled that. And he handled it quite well. And so, we know that David is handling these things himself. He's doing what he's supposed to do in that regard.

So, what is Absalom doing here? Well, let's see what Absalom is doing. He is standing by the gate early in the morning as people are coming. Before they begin their work day.

They come with their disputes. They come with their concerns. And they're seeking something in particular. What we all seek when something's done wrong to us. We seek justice.

[13:55] We want what is right to happen. We want the right thing to happen. And for a good judge to come and give us a proper judgment. So, they're seeking what anyone, anyone with the right mind would be seeking.

And so, what is Absalom doing? He is being friendly to them. He's asking, what city are you from? They're telling him, okay, I'm from this tribe in Israel. And Absalom is hearing these people.

But there's something that Absalom is doing at the same time. Absalom is letting them say what their concern is. And he says, I feel your pain.

I know what you're dealing with. I understand. You are right. Everything, I can make things right if only I had the power to do it.

That's pretty much what he is saying. So, we come to our first king in Israel in this situation. It is the counterfeit king. The counterfeit king.

[14:59] And we can see that Absalom would be the counterfeit king. Now, it's interesting. This morning, Pastor Tim brought the message from James chapter 2. And some of the points he brought in are very much like this.

True and false. Or true and counterfeit. He talked about true faith and false faith. True faith produces works, good works. False faith is empty.

It's worthless. True works are works that are the fruit of salvation, fruit of true faith. And they show the person to be saved.

And false works are those that, well, they could be good in and of themselves. But Isaiah 64 talks about them as being filthy rags by the time all is said and done.

And then we talk about truth and counterfeit all the time when it comes to currency. People that deal with currency on a regular basis have to know what is counterfeit currency.

[16:00] And they deal with what is the true stuff. They deal with what is real. And they get to know what is real very well. They get to know what basic things are going on out there in the counterfeit world too.

Because it's important for them to know that. And you know, it's important for us too to recognize true and counterfeit as well. We come to an election year and we see all these ads that come up on the air, on the radio, on TV, on the internet.

And we see people that are saying things. And maybe they're attacking the other guy for what that other person is doing. Or maybe they're saying what they want to do. And what they would like to see happening in Washington or Oklahoma City or in City Hall or County Courthouse or whatever it might be.

Whatever they may be running for. Or they're wanting to see something happen. And we have to understand what is real about this. And we may have a presidential candidate that may say he's bringing in great hope.

He's bringing in great change. And I'm not talking about just anyone in particular. Several have said that kind of thing. One said, both. Hope and change. We all know who that is. But to be fair, another guy says he's going to make America great again.

[17:18] Well, Absalom's promising to make Israel great again in this situation. He's basically saying, you know, you're right. I understand what you're going through.

I'm one of you. Trust me. I'm here to help. I'm from the government and I'm here to help. Isn't that a fun phrase?

Alright. So this is Absalom bringing these guys. And you know what? What is he doing? They're believing him. I mean, what are they looking at? They're looking at this guy with, oh, he's got the flair.

He's got this hair that's going all over the place. He's Fabio. He's John F. Kennedy. He's everything. You know, he's Donald Trump 40 years ago.

I mean, this guy has it all. And so he's got everything going on. And so he's creating this campaign, so to speak.

[18:17] And it's taken a while. If you notice in verse 7, four years. He did this for four years. This kind of thing going on for four years. He won the hearts of the people of Israel over this four-year period.

What does that mean? Well, basically, he conned them in his deception. And he's saying, I'm going to be for you and I'm going to help you out.

But what's he doing in the process? He's helping himself out. He really is. And so we can think of those. We can think of many different situations, not just in politics, but even in our own lives as well.

I mean, how many times do we pray that, you know, God just give me that, you know, lots of money that I can help someone out. I can help someone out.

Yes, I want to help someone out with all that money God gives me. And how many times do we do something along those lines? So, you know, there may be something that we can see in Absalom as well.

[19:25] And then we see in verse 7 and following, we see this coup that's going on. Okay, first it starts off where he goes to his king. He goes to his father.

And he asks him permission for something. But what is he doing? He's saying that, you know, what's going on is, well, he may have vowed a vow. It's possible. I mean, it's possible that he vowed a vow.

But it didn't really mean much of anything to him because we find out later that he's not really doing that. So he's going to Hebron and he's going to sacrifice.

But perhaps it's not the lamb that he's sacrificing. Perhaps it's the 200 people that are going with him that do have no idea about the situation.

I'm not saying killing them. But certainly they are, in some ways, being sacrificed in this way. But you see that, you know, he's also bringing in other people as well.

[20:30] We see this guy named Ahithophel. I don't know if you remember that name. But back in chapter 11, when David did his horrible deed with Bathsheba.

I talked about Ahithophel is Bathsheba's grandfather. And so Bathsheba, of course, married to one of David's mighty men, Uriah the Hittite.

And she also was the daughter of one of David's mighty men as well. A guy named Eliam. And his father would be Ahithophel. And this guy is a counselor of all counselors.

I mean, if you want, if Ahithophel was a football coach, he'd be Bear Bryant. If Ahithophel was a basketball player, he'd be LeBron James.

I mean, he's the guy that you want. And so that's just the way it was. He was the counselor of counselors. Matter of fact, it's even said in Scripture that his words were taken like it was simply from God himself.

[21 : 38] Yes. So this is interesting. But Ahithophel was really trusted in that way. And now Ahithophel is coming alongside with Absalom.

Now part of it, I mean, I imagine David, you know, took Ahithophel's granddaughter and violated her and also killed her husband.

And nonetheless, he may have had some good reason. To not like him. However, David is, was the king. Ahithophel should have followed him. But he chose to follow this other person who turns out to now be a counterfeit king of sorts.

It is not just, it's not his time to be king yet. When is it his time to be king? When his father is no longer king and turns it over to him.

Usually that's by death. So, so all this is going on. So there's now a coup that's going on. Absalom has been able to win the hearts of the Israelites over.

[22 : 45] And it says in verse 12, that's the outcome of winning the hearts of the Israelites. It says, The conspiracy grew strong. The people of Absalom kept increasing.

We start seeing some similarities with something that's happened in the past. We see the house of Saul decreasing. While the house of David is increasing.

Is it now happening that the house of Absalom is increasing? The house of David decreasing. And we know the end of the story. But at this point, well, it's kind of looking that way.

And I'm sure David's got to recognize. He's got sin. He's got sin. He is paying the penalty of that sin. Could this be part of the penalty of that sin? Well, he's deserving of death. This is less than that. So yes, I think this could possibly be. If you're following along.

[23 : 43] So the counterfeit king. But we know that there was a true king of Israel. And that is David. And he comes in to this story. This account in verse 13.

It starts to turn on to David's side. And you see that something is going on. Some bad news. He's fleeing from Jerusalem.

So he's losing his throne. He's losing the palace. He's losing all of these things that people look at and say, That's the capital. That's where the king resides.

The person that's in charge of that capital is in charge of Israel. But yet, there's nothing in scripture that says, The king of Israel has to have a palace.

The king in Israel has to have all these accoutrements. All of these things. Those things don't make him king. What makes him king is God's will being done.

[24 : 47] So David is still the true king in this situation. However, he is definitely in some trouble. And he is fleeing. Now there are several reasons why he is fleeing.

There's one that's stated here. But there's also one that's really not stated here as well. And it's still a reason. Verse 14. The reason that's stated is, Arise, let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom.

We don't want to be overtaken. Well, it kind of refers back to verse 12. The fact that Absalom's men. The fact that his power is increasing. And this conspiracy is growing strong.

You know, as it's growing stronger every day. We don't know how much stronger it's going to get. And it could possibly overpower David's strength. And so that's possible.

Secondly, what's not really named here is, The fact is, as long as David's staying in Jerusalem, He doesn't really know who's on his side and who's not. So he leaves.

[25 : 51] He flees away from Jerusalem. Who's on his side? Well, the ones that go with him. They're the ones on his side. So that's part of the reality of that as well.

He's actually starting to mobilize his people and seeing who he asks and trying to figure out how to counter this situation from being able to get out of Jerusalem.

So what does he do? He leaves ten concubines to keep the house. And he takes care of it that way. And he goes out with his people. After him, this would be, you know, the army. Joab and Abishai commanders and all the other army, the mighty men, are going with him as well. So we have to understand, when David's fleeing this time, he's fleeing with a pretty strong army on his side as well.

He's not weak at this point. And so that's something we need to recognize as well. This is not the first time he fled as well. You need to remember that.

[27:01] Before he became king, he fled from Saul. You've got to remember that Jonathan was telling him, you know, the arrow is shot. You need to flee and those things. Well, if you were here when Pastor Don preached through 1 Samuel and preached through all of that material, you noticed that there were a lot of ugly things that happened during that time.

There were times that David was not doing the will of God through that time as well. Even one time that David and David's men were about to find themselves fighting against the Israelites and fighting against King Saul on the side of the Philistines.

If you can believe that, well, it was part of that. And they almost got to that point and thankfully were able to get out of that really by God's hand moving in that way.

So there's some ugly things that are happening, but we're going to find here that David's really grown quite a bit. And David's really finding something that really probably what he should have done before that he's able to do this time around.

And we see that. Before we get to that point, let's look at verses 17 and following. We find unlikely places for support.

[28:21] Unlikely people. So verses 17, they halted at the last house, kind of went to the end of the road, so to speak. And then all these servants passed by him and talked about people that hadn't really been in Jerusalem for very long.

That's what it says in a later verse. But these guys are Cherethites and Pelethites and 600 Gittites from Gath.

Gath. Where's Gath? Philistines. Yeah, that's where Goliath was from. Back in chapter 10, maybe chapter 8, one of those two chapters, David conquered Gath.

He fought the Philistines, was able to take Gath for his possession. So Gath was actually part of Israel by that point. And these were mercenaries. These were soldiers that simply fought on behalf of David.

And they were hired for various reasons, to give them some strength as well, and also to be supported by a very strong Davidic monarchy.

[29:37] But they actually are following David. You would think, well, you know, David has lost his strength. It's time to find a strong king to be supported by and support him.

Give our resources to him. No, they're following David. And so you look at this commander of the Gittites, Ittai. In verse 19, it says, The king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why do you also go with us?

Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your house. You're following the king of Israel? Absalom's taking that place.

Absalom's taking that throne. Go and follow Absalom. If you're going to be following Israel, you know, David's putting Israel in front of him. Putting the Israelites in front of him.

It's an interesting idea what's going there. But Ittai is saying something that I think we need to remember. Verse 21, A double oath.

[30:41] As the Lord lives, and as my Lord the king lives. And who's he calling my Lord the king? David. This is interesting.

Wherever my Lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be. They're serving not so much Israel, but David at this point.

A very unlikely place to receive some support. They're serving a man. They're serving a man that they know to be God's will for Israel.

An odd situation. An odd situation. And so, that's not going to be the last Gentile that we see in this story, in this account, that is going to be following David either.

Okay? And then, you know, so David gives him, gives him, you know, allows him to follow.

[31:51] But then verse 23, you see something about repentance in David's heart. He wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness.

Now, in this exile period, there are several places in the Psalms that are attributed to this period. And we'll read one of them at the end of the sermon.

but there's, there's several that, and it's really pointing to trusting in the Lord through a very difficult time. You know, that, that even whenever, you know, he's able to rest, because, because, the Lord's protecting him.

The Lord is his protection. And, and this is, and this is a guy that it's, it's, is not, he's following the Lord. At this point, he's, he's recognizing that, if the Lord, Lord's will is for him to no longer be the king, for him to be exiled, he's going to follow the Lord.

And, and this is an interesting idea. This is also second place, in verse 30, he's also going up the Mount of Olives, and he's going to be weeping as he went. The people are also weeping along with him.

[33:08] The ones that are with him, are, are, are also weeping. Recognizing, um, the fact that, that the Lord is, is doing this work in their life. And, and they are, well, he is, he is simply leading his people to trust in the Lord.

And to follow him, uh, even through this difficult time. And, and, and that's something that I think we can learn from as well. Uh, whenever we get caught in a, in a sinful situation, that we need to be sorry for more than just getting caught.

That we need to be truly trusting in the Lord to forgive our sin, and trusting in him to, uh, restore us, uh, to, uh, to his will, to be done in our lives.

And, you know, David in this particular situation doesn't have a clue if he's going to go back to Jerusalem or not. But he's trusting in the Lord at this time.

He's crossing the Burkidron. And during this time, it's about the winter season. So, a lot of water that he's crossing by, passing on toward the wilderness.

[34:19] So, we have a counterfeit king in Absalom. We have the true king of Israel in David. But we need to also remember the sovereign king of Israel in Yahweh, in God, in the Lord.

And we see that, we see the sovereign king working his, his way throughout this passage of scripture. Uh, the, uh, focus of this will be starting in verse 24.

But, but we certainly have seen all, already in this chapter how God has moved, how God has worked. In David's life. In this, in this situation.

Uh, it's all looking bad. Absalom looks like he has the upper hand. He really does. But we see something here in verse 24. And this is something to recognize as well.

And we talked about, um, already the, you know, the, the palace in Jerusalem is not what makes David the king. Even that throne is not really what makes David the king.

[35:21] It's God's will that makes David the king. Well, this is interesting, uh, uh, kind of similarity. In verse 24, Abiathar and Zadok, who are the high priests of Israel, um, um, at this, at this point.

They come up with all the Levites. They bear the Ark of the Covenant. Why are they doing this? Well, they say why. Thankfully.

It says, uh, the king said to Zadok, carry the Ark of God back into the city. Well, but they, you know, they brought it up because David's out there. That's the king. You know, if, if David's going to be, uh, out there in exile, and especially if a war is about to start, which is really what this is looking out to be, you know, the Ark needs to be on the side of Israel.

Wouldn't that make sense? The Ark needs to be on the side of the rightful king. That would make all kinds of sense. However, we've got to remember something. In, in chapter four of first Samuel, around the time of Eli, the priest, uh, they went to war with the Philistines.

And they went to battle, and they took that Ark out, Eli's sons. And they're like, well, God is on our side because we're going to take this Ark. Because that's, that's the presence of God, and that's who God is, right there in that Ark.

[36:55] And we're going to have, we're going to have that Ark on our side, which means God is on our side. Y'all remember what happened? The Philistines got the Ark. And then, that was kind of fun to see what the Ark did to the Philistines.

But, nonetheless, the Philistines got the Ark. What were the Israelites doing? What were, what were, not Samuel, but, Eli's sons doing, to the, to, with that Ark?

Treating that Ark like, someone might treat a rabbit's foot on the keychain. Treating an Ark like, someone might treat, a rosary, even. I mean, it's just a good luck charm.

Just, just something that's kind of, helps them, I guess. And, or they feel like it's helping them. You know, like reading the, your, your Zodiac message, in the paper.

I mean, it's just, it's, it's really just, they're treating it, like it's worth nothing. Like it's, it just doesn't really mean much of anything. God is not, encompassed in a box.

[38:01] I mean, even the Jewish, theology at the time, the Israelite theology at the time, would not talk about, God being encompassed in a box. Yes, the presence of God, is, is, is in that, tabernacle, in that Ark of the Covenant.

And that's what, that's representing that. But that's the point, representing it, it's a symbol. It is not, God's presence. God is here.

God is with them. And so, what's David saying here, and this is an important thought, something we need to recognize as well, in our lives. Carry the Ark of God, back into the city.

If I find favor, in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back. And let me see both it, and his dwelling place. He, he recognizes this.

If he's going to go back to Jerusalem, Jerusalem, it's God's will for him to do that. If it's God's will for him to not go back to Jerusalem, it doesn't matter what he brings with him.

[38:59] It doesn't matter what high priest happens to be on his side. It doesn't matter how many men happen to be on his side, ready to fight and battle hungry. If it's God's will for him to be defeated, he's going down.

And he's recognizing this. It's not by his power. It's by God's power. It's by God's strength. It's by God's will. that, that, you know, what his, whatever his life happens to be.

Whether he dies, or whether he lives, and thrives. And then verse 26, but if he says, I have no pleasure in you. Behold, here I am.

Let him do to me what seems good to him. Wow. That needs to be our thought. Every time we go and witness to someone, every time we go, and, and do what the Lord wills for us to do.

That needs to be our, our philosophy in life. That needs to be our resolve. You go to the, you go overseas and tell someone about Jesus.

[40:11] You go next door and tell someone about Jesus. That needs to be your resolve. To allow God to be, God's will to be done for whatever happens there.

Whatever seems good to him, that's going to be good to me. That's important. Then he has another thought. David's plan to use Zadok, and to use Abiathar, and their sons.

And I think this is also, God's will as well. They are to go back to Jerusalem. They are to go, and be friendly, with, Absalom.

And then, Zadok, and Abiathar's sons, their names, Amahaz, and Jonathan, are to come back to David, and report to him, what's going on, in Jerusalem.

To be spies. Double agents, so to speak. It's kind of cool. Actually. I think it's cool, at least. The way God works. I mean, can you imagine, two high priests, with their sons, who will be inheriting, the high priesthood, as well.

[41:24] Going back to Absalom, as in there, on his side. Wow, that's a big win, isn't it? He got the high priests. God must be on his side now.

That's a pretty interesting thought. And then, another guy, as well. It says in verse 31, he found out, that Ahithophel, was among the conspirators, with Absalom, which talked about Ahithophel.

And David says, a quick prayer. A very, you know, very, kind of, very quick prayer. Oh Lord, please turn, the counsel of Ahithophel, into foolishness.

That's, that's his prayer. He's just hoping, you know, don't, don't, don't hear what Ahithophel, has to say, or if Ahithophel, you're going to hear, what he has to say, make sure, it is the dumbest thing, on earth, to hear, nothing that he would, normally say.

God answers his prayer. It's kind of a cool thing. And he also answers it, from a very unlikely source. Maybe not so unlikely. At this particular time.

[42:28] But a, and it's, but not an Israelite. Let's just say that. Not an Israelite. A Gentile. It says, while David was coming to the summit, where God was worshipped, behold, Hushai, the archite, came to meet him, with his coat torn, and dirt on his head.

So, Hushai, Hushai, was obviously in mourning, along with David, and the people, as well. And, and so, certainly one of them.

But, the archite. Now, the archites were from Assyria. They're from, north of Damascus. If you remember, from, back in those chapters, where David conquered, north, south, east, and west.

He, way up north, he was going after, a lot of kings. And, the archites were one of those. Or, at least that, that area, as well. And, so, so, this, this particular fellow, was one of, considered one of David's friends.

In 1 Chronicles, it's listed in the same verse, as Ahithophel. It said, Ahithophel was, was one of David's major counselors. And then, and then Hushai was one of his friends.

[43 : 38] Which, simply speaking, that he was one of his trusted advisors. As well. So, Hushai and Ahithophel, were kind of right there, with one another. If Ahithophel was number one counselor, Hushai was number two.

And so, very trusted fellow. And, Hushai came along to David, not a soldier, a counselor. So, David says, hey, you know, you, you will be a burden to me, if you stay here, at that point.

That's really what he means. You're not going to be able to take a sword, and, and fight, alongside, because that's what we're going to be, getting to do. So, what I need you to do, is to, is to go back to Jerusalem.

So, what does he say? He tells them about the plan, with Zadok and Abithar, and his sons. About the, the go between, and be able to be a double agent, and spy of some sort.

And, he's to go to Jerusalem, and he is to simply say, the, the advice that Hithophel gives to Absalom, whatever that advice is, give him, advice that would be harmful to Absalom.

[44 : 43] You know, just start giving him advice, and, and make sure that Absalom follows that advice, and that it's going to be helpful to David, and harmful to Absalom, and, and make sure that any good advice that Hithophel gives to Absalom, is just not heard, at all.

And, and so that was, that was Hushai's job, was to give to that point. It was to, was to, you know, try to get Absalom off, in that way.

So, an answer to prayer, in, in this situation. And Hushai had the means to be able to do such a thing, as well. We're going to find later on, that Hushai actually saves David's life, in, in many ways, or probably saved David's life, at least.

Uh, we'll find that out, in chapter 17. But, uh, but nonetheless, this is, this is God's sovereign will, God's sovereign plan. Uh, the way God answers requests, sometimes come from unlikely sources, as well.

Uh, this is a fellow that, um, probably should not even be in Israel, but yet he is one of David's, most trusted advisors. And, and this is a, a person that he can trust, as well.

[45 : 55] And he is, he is showing, uh, himself, uh, to be quite trustworthy, even at a very dark time, when it's easy to run, when it's easy to find another, uh, place to, uh, to serve, uh, that would be more comfortable, uh, for him.

He had the means, he had the ability, as a counselor, to be able to, to serve about any king out there. And he, and it would be a lot more comfortable, but he's serving David. He is serving, um, he, he's, he's loyal to this king, and, and, and certainly showing loyalty to his Lord as well, to, to God. And so, every time we see a, uh, a Gentile in these passages of scripture, we've got to recognize the reality that, that the Lord's word, that his gospel is for the Jews and the Gentiles, for the Jews and the Greeks.

And we need to be thankful for that. Uh, I, I'm a Gentile. Um, I'm thankful that the Lord's word and the Lord's gospel, uh, saves me, and saves my family, and saves you.

And, and so, we need to be thankful for the Lord's sovereign ways, and the way he works. And this is just another example of great way that he works in, in, in David's life.

[47 : 21] And also, in the life of his line to come. It leads all the way to Jesus Christ, as well, to be the true salvation. Amen.