

Bible Readings

2 Samuel 15:1-16:14

Absalom's Conspiracy

15 In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ² 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." ³ Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." ⁴ 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."

⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

⁷ At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD. ⁸ 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.'"

⁹ The king said to him, "Go in peace." So, he went to Hebron.

¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'"¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. ¹² While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so, the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

David Flees

¹³ A messenger came and told David, "The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom."

¹⁴ 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."

¹⁵ The king's officials answered him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses."

¹⁶ The king set out, with his entire household following him; but he left ten concubines to take care of the palace. ¹⁷ So the king set out, with all the people following him, and they halted at the edge of the city. ¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ The king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you come along with us? Go back and stay with King Absalom. You are a foreigner, an exile from your homeland. ²⁰ 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."

²¹ But Ittai replied to the king, "As surely as the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether it means life or death, there will your servant be."

²² 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.

²³ The whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. The king also crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.

²⁴ 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.

²⁵ Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favour in the LORD's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. ²⁶ But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him."

²⁷ 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. ²⁸ I will wait at the fords in the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.” ²⁹ So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there.

³⁰ But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up. ³¹ Now David had been told, “Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.” So, David prayed, “LORD, turn Ahithophel’s counsel into foolishness.”

³² 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. ³³ David said to him, “If you go with me, you will be a burden to me. ³⁴ 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. ³⁵ Won’t the priests Zadok and Abiathar be there with you? Tell them anything you hear in the king’s palace. ³⁶ Their two sons, Ahimaaz son of Zadok and Jonathan son of Abiathar, are there with them. Send them to me with anything you hear.”

³⁷ So Hushai, David’s confidant, arrived at Jerusalem as Absalom was entering the city.

David and Ziba

16 When David had gone a short distance beyond the summit, there was Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, waiting to meet him. He had a string of donkeys saddled and loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred cakes of raisins, a hundred cakes of figs and a skin of wine.

² The king asked Ziba, “Why have you brought these?”

Ziba answered, “The donkeys are for the king’s household to ride on, the bread and fruit are for the men to eat, and the wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the wilderness.”

³ The king then asked, “Where is your master’s grandson?”

Ziba said to him, “He is staying in Jerusalem, because he thinks, ‘Today the Israelites will restore to me my grandfather’s kingdom.’”

⁴ Then the king said to Ziba, “All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours.”

“I humbly bow,” Ziba said. “May I find favour in your eyes, my lord the king.”

Shimei Curses David

⁵ As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul’s family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. ⁶ He pelted David and all the king’s officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David’s right and left. ⁷ As he cursed, Shimei said, “Get out, get out, you murderer, you scoundrel! ⁸ The LORD has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. The LORD has given the kingdom into the hands of your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a murderer!”

⁹ Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his head.”

¹⁰ But the king said, “What does this have to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the LORD said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who can ask, ‘Why do you do this?’”

¹¹ David then said to Abishai and all his officials, “My son, my own flesh and blood, is trying to kill me. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone; let him curse, for the LORD has told him to. ¹² It may be that the LORD will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.”

¹³ So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt. ¹⁴ The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

Sermon

Maybe the Lord will turn bad into good (2 Sam 15:1-16:14)

11-Oct-20

It would be great to have your **Bibles turned** to 2 Samuel chapter 15.

As we continue this amazing story of King David's life.

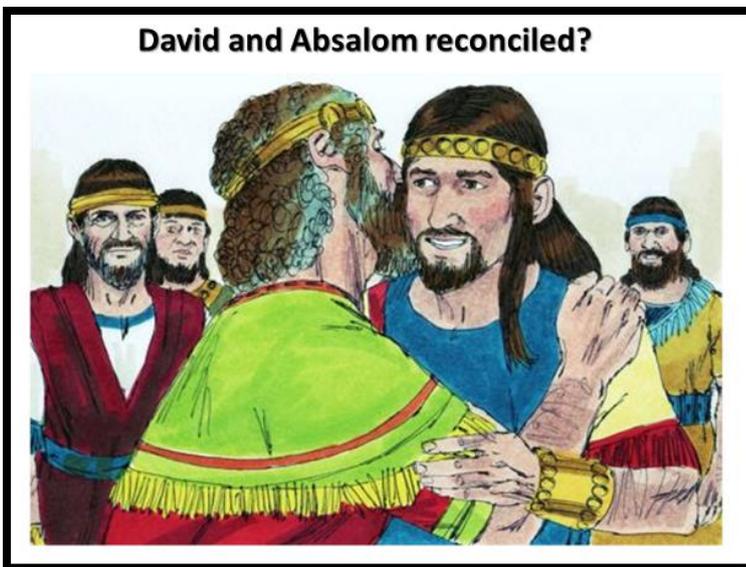
Let me **pray** before we begin...

Let's pray...

Context

- I don't know about you but when I **see** a little **boy** or little **girl** – and they are so innocent at a young age
- I always **say to myself** – I **wish** they could **stay like that** forever – and not let the **world spoil them**
- I teach **scripture** in a few schools and I **notice** the **difference** say between the **year 1 kids** and the **year 6 kids** – the **difference** is **amazing**
- By year 6 – their **innocence** has **gone** – they **backchat** – they **call out** – they **argue** – they **disagree** – they **disrespect** – it's such a shame
- I wonder if King **David looked** at **Absalom** like that?
- What has happened to my **little boy** – Absalom – now that he's a man – he's **self centred, super-ambitious, controlling, ruthless, aggressive** and so on ...

[PowerPoint 1-Reconciled?]



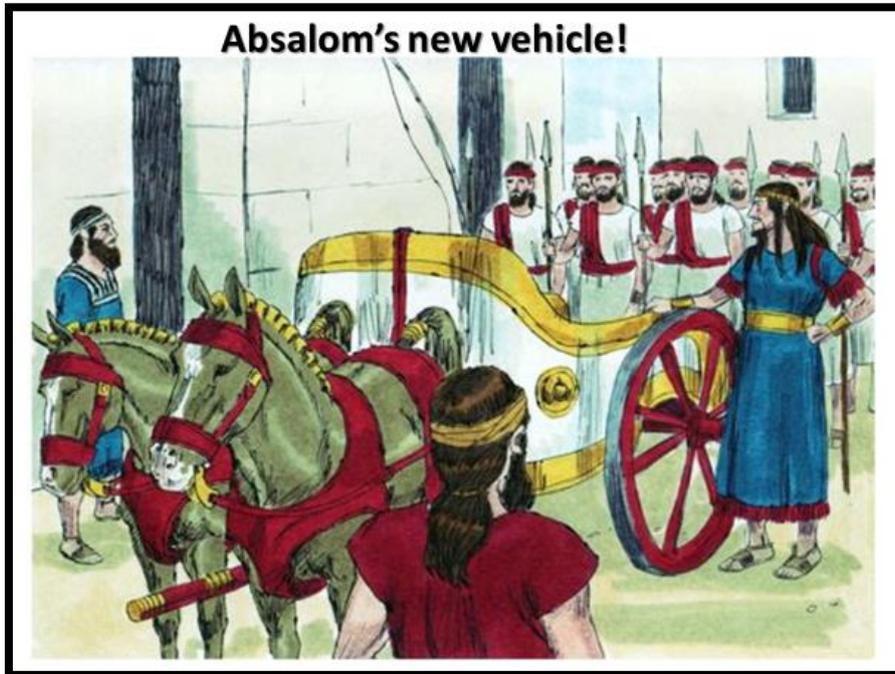
- Last week we saw **Absalom return to Jerusalem** [remember he had fled because he **killed his brother, Amnon**) but there was **no proper reconciliation** with his father, King David
- **David didn't address Absalom's behaviour** over the **murder** of his brother **Amnon**
- And **Absalom didn't repent** – in fact he **says** in 2 Sam 14:32 - **If I am guilty of anything, let him [King David] put me to death.**
- As far as Absalom is concerned, he's **not guilty** – even of murder
- And he has only **one thing on his mind**
- His single focus is **to become King** – and take his father's throne from him
- He's not going to wait until his father dies, he is going to **take the throne now!**
- But Absalom hasn't revealed that to anyone just yet
- Look at **last verse of chapter 14**
- **Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.**
- But **don't be fooled** – they haven't **kissed** and **made up**
- **Absalom has plans**

- Turn to 2 Sam 15

Absalom's Deceptive Takeover (2 Sam 15:1-12)

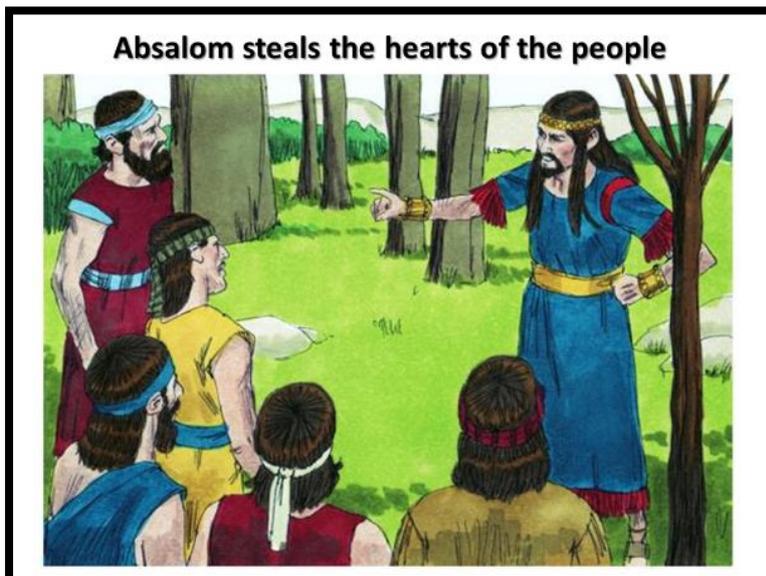
- Absalom gets himself a chariot and has 50 men running in front of him

[PowerPoint 2 – Chariot]



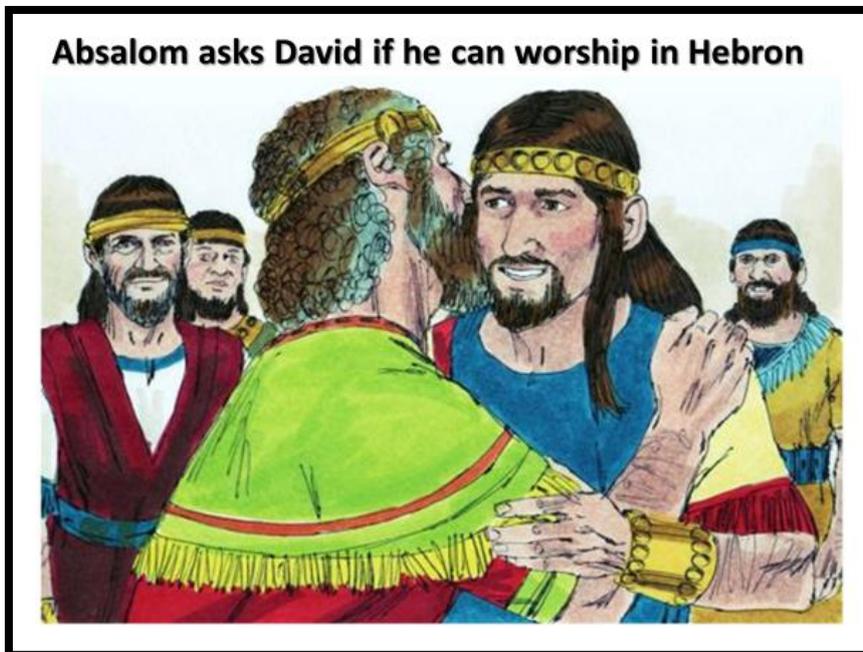
- In today's world – it would be like a **Hollywood celebrity** having a **Lamborghini** and a huge **entourage following them around**
- There's only one reason for **Absalom to have a chariot**
- And that's to **act like the king** – it's pure **showmanship**
- And he behaves like he's on a **presidential election campaign**
- He **hangs out at the city gate**
- And as **people come to get an audience with King David** – so he can **judge their complaints** –

[PowerPoint 3- steals the hearts]



- Absalom tells them v3-4 “Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you. 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.”
- **What a salesman he is – selling himself as the answer to their problems**
- **If only Absalom were King instead of David**
- His **self-promotion doesn't stop there**
- **Just like a presidential candidate – he **endears himself** to the **people****
- He **presses some flesh**
- A **hug and a kiss** to **every citizen** who walks by
- **4 years he does this for** – this is one **huge campaign**
- And his **mission is successful**
- See end of v6 – **he stole the hearts of the people**
- Absalom's **deception doesn't stop there though**
- See v7

[PowerPoint 4 – To Hebron]



- **After 4 years Absalom goes to his father, David – and he **makes out** he needs to **fulfil a vow** he **made to God** when he was **in exile** – the **vow** he **apparently made** was that **if the Lord allowed** him to **return from exile** to Jerusalem – he **made a vow** he would **worship the Lord** in Hebron**
- **What a wonderfully spiritual boy he is?**
- **David's none the wiser – v9** – he tells Absalom ‘**go in peace**’
- **David doesn't know** - that these will be the **last words** he ever says **to Absalom** his son
- **But Absalom's not going to **worship** in Hebron**
- He's going to **gather support** to **take over** his **father's kingdom**
- See v10 – he sends **secret messengers** to all the tribes of Israel to get ready and **when** they **hear the trumpets** – they are to declare that **Absalom is king in Hebron**
- To **make matters worse** – v12 – **David's chief adviser** and counsellor, **Ahith-ophel joins Absalom's** team
- **Ahith-ophel is Bathsheba's grandfather**
- **Absalom's got everything he needs to take over** as King

- How can Absalom do this to his own father?

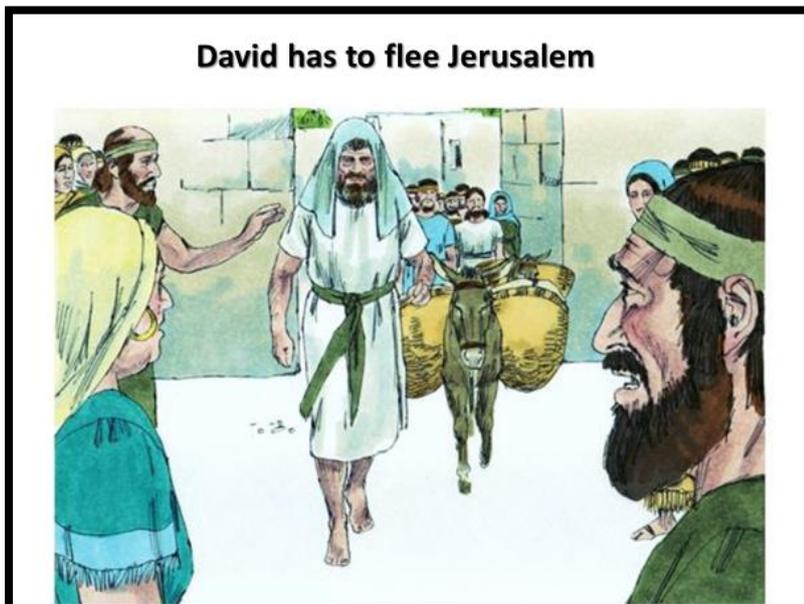
Application:

- That's what sin does
- One sin leads to another and another – Absalom **killed his brother**, Absalom is **ambitious** and **ruthless** – no-one, not even his father is **going to stop his desire to become king** – and he's not going to wait until his **father passes away**. He **wants it all now** – and it doesn't matter who or what the **casualties** are.
- Once we stop taking our sin seriously – it's a slippery slope
- We can kid ourselves – it's okay I know what I'm doing, I can control this,
- As God warned Cain back in **Genesis 4:7**
- If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.
- **Sin desires to have us.** It's **crouching** at our door.
- If we let sin rule us – we become an Absalom – and there's **no limits**
- And there will be huge consequences.
- What sin is crouching at our door right now?
- If we open the door to that **sin** – it **will affect our life** and the **lives of others** around us – as we'll see with Absalom
- Please don't open the door to **that sin** – you're considering

David escapes with faithful friends (2 Sam 15:13-37)

- **Absalom's actions** don't just affect him
- He's only **thinking** about himself being king and the **power he will have**
- But his actions affect David and the rest of the **family** – **and the nation!**
- See v14

[PowerPoint 5 – David flees]



- **David** has no choice but to **flee** with the remainder of his **family**, his **household** and **servants**
- Why is this **happening to David**?
- Didn't God forgive David for his **adultery** with **Bathsheba**?
- Yes of course **God forgave him**
- But with sin – there are always **consequences**

- **God told David** – the **consequence** of his **sin with Bathsheba** would be **strife** in his **household** (2 Samuel 12:10-12)
- And here it is...

Application

- Why couldn't God just forgive David – and remove the consequences
- Well – God doesn't remove the consequences because it's the **consequences** that **show David and us** – why we need to have a heart for God and follow Him
- **David never repeated** the **sin of adultery again** – because he **knew the consequences**
- If we don't have consequences, we'll be **tempted to repeat the same sin**
- As David leaves Jerusalem – he has some **loyal people with him** – **ironically** many of them are **foreigners** -
- But it's a tragic scene
- The **great King David** – the **hero of Israel** – is leaving the city – before he is **killed** by his own son
- That's not the way it was **supposed to be**
- See v23
- The whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. The king also crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.
- **David is a broken man**
- **Zadok the priest** and the **Levite** tribe were with David. And they had the **ark of the covenant**. They offered **sacrifices to God** until everyone left the city.
- But look what David does in v25-26

[PowerPoint 6-2 Sam 15:25-26]

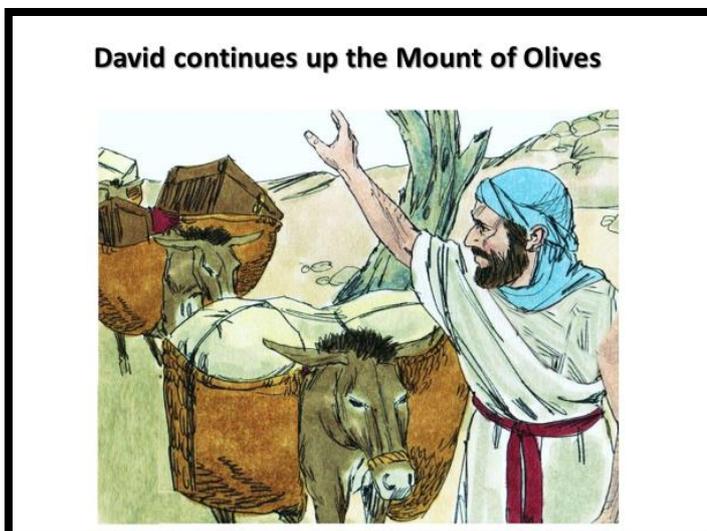
[Read verse]

²⁵ Then the king said to Zadok, "Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, He will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. ²⁶ But if He says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to Him."

2 Samuel 15:25-26

- **David is trusting in God** – not in the ark. The ark was not some 'lucky charm'. **David put his fate in God's hands.**
- **David trusts that God will do whatever seems good to Him**

[PowerPoint 7 – Mount of Olives]



- Yet v30 - **David continues** up the **Mount of Olives** weeping
- Why is he weeping here?
- He's weeping over his own sin and its **consequences**
- And he's weeping over his son, **Absalom's sin**, and their consequences
- And then **David prays** – v31
- That the **Lord will turn Ahith-ophel's counsel into foolishness**
- He's saying - okay – I've **lost** the **wisest man** I have to advise me – he's **changed sides** – but **God can make his advice foolish** – when he **advises Absalom**
- **David** may be **broken** – but in his **brokenness** – he **still has God** – and he **turns to Him**
- There's a lesson for us here – **we have God with us all the time** – we can rely on His strength – not our own

Application

- This journey through the **Kidron Valley** and up the **Mount of Olives**
 - **Should remind us** of another King, who was **heavily burdened**
 - **King Jesus!**
 - He **crossed the Kidron Valley** and went into a **garden** – **Gethsemane** – at the **foot of the Mount of Olives** - to **pray** – also overcome by the **burden of sin** – NOT His own sin – because He was sinless – but overcome by the **burden of humankind's sin** – which was about to be **put on Him on the cross**
 - Out of love for us – He **did the Father's will** – and he took the **weight** of our **sin** – on Himself – so we could go free from the **punishment of our sins**
 - **King David, here, traces the footsteps** that **King Jesus will make** a **1000 years later**
-
- When David arrived at the **summit** of **Mount of Olives**
 - The **Lord supplied** some **help** for him
 - David is greeted by an aide, **Hushai** – v32
 - **David** came up with the **plan** of **sending** his aide, **Hushai**, back to **Absalom** to **pretend** to be **Absalom's servant**, with the **idea of frustrating Ahith-ophel's advice to Absalom**.

How David deals with Adversity (2 Sam 16:1-14)

- **Help continues** to come David's way at the start of **chapter 16**
 - He is met by **Ziba** who has a string of **donkeys** for the King's household to ride - and **food to refresh everyone** from their **journey** through the wilderness.
 - **Ziba** is the **servant** of **Mephibosheth** (**Jonathan's son** and **Saul's grandson**)
 - Ziba reports that **Mephibosheth favours Absalom** and that he is against David, **hoping** now that his **grandfather, Saul's kingdom** will be **restored**.
 - This **does seem surprising**, even hard to believe; **because David** had previously shown Mephibosheth great kindness back in 2 Samuel 9. We'll find out in a couple of weeks though - that **Ziba was lying** about Mephibosheth (see 2 Samuel 19:24-30).
 - But David takes Ziba's words at face value and he **reacts** just how Ziba hoped he would; **giving all that belonged to Mephibosheth to Ziba**.
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- Then in v5 – a man named **Shimei** (a member of Saul's family) **threw stones** and **cursed David**, calling him a murderer; and very much **supporting Absalom!**
 - **Job's brother Abishai** was ready to cut off Shimei's head.
 - But David says no!
 - His **reasoning** is that his own son, Absalom, is **trying to kill him**, so why should he **worry about some guy, like Shimei**, cursing him; and **perhaps God has told Shimei to do this away!**

- And besides, what Shimei is saying is untrue, David had always treated Saul and his family with respect and what happened to Saul was brought on by Saul himself.
- However, Shimei is right that **God had allowed** this to **happen to David** though, but not for the reasons that Shimei thought.
- Instead of retaliating against Shimei; **David says** in the **key verse** –
- [PowerPoint 8-2 Sam 16:12]
[Read verse]
It may be that the Lord will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.
2 Samuel 16:12
- **David knew** the **Lord's hand governed** the **future as well as the present**. **David relied** on **God's covenant** and **knew that if he continued** to **do right in the present**, **God would** **make good out of this bad situation**.
- **God has a knack of doing that** – **bringing good out of bad**. (e.g. **Joseph** in Egypt; **Esther** in Persia; **Jonah** in the **big fish**; **Daniel's friends** in the **furnace**; **Daniel** in the **lions' den**)

How we deal with Adversity (Romans 8:28; Hebrews 12:4-11)

- So how do we deal with adversity in our lives?
- How do we deal with the consequences of our sins?
- I'd like to **suggest 2 ways** we can deal with adversity
- The **1st** – like David did – is to **trust God can still make good out of bad...**
- When David says in 16:12 may be that the LORD will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse
- David is trusting God can still make good out of bad –
- The **Apostle Paul says something similar in Rom 8:28**

[PowerPoint 9-Rom 8:28]

[Read Verse]

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose

Romans 8:28

- **God's sovereignty** and ability to **manage every aspect of our lives** is demonstrated in the fact that all things work together for good to those who love God, though we must face the sufferings of this present time (Romans 8:18). **God is able to make even our sufferings work together for our good and His good**.
- If we're doubting - that God can make good out of a bad situation
- We need look no further than the **Cross of Jesus**
- The **bad** that the **Romans and the Jews did** in **putting to death Jesus** – the Messiah – the Son of God – the Saviour of the World
- That bad – they did – **God turned into good** – by **Jesus dying for our sins instead of us dying!**
- **God turned a bad Friday for Jesus**– into a Good Friday for us – so we could have our sins forgiven

- God is able to work all things, not some things; all things – the good, the bad and the ugly. **He works them for good together, not in isolation.** This promise is for those who love God - and God manages the affairs of our life because we are called according to His purpose. [example – my first marriage breaking up – led me to follow Jesus – and led me to ministry]

The **2nd way to deal with adversity** is to **remember** that **God disciplines His children**. Yes, **David** had been **forgiven** – but with sin comes **consequences** - which were part of disciplining David.

Here's how the **writer of Hebrews** puts it in Hebrews 12:4-11

[PowerPoint 10-Heb 12:4-7]

[Read verses]

⁴ In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."

⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?

Hebrews 12:4-7

[PowerPoint 11-Heb 12:8-11]

[Read verses]

*⁸ If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! ¹⁰ They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. **Hebrews 12:8-11***

- **God disciplines us because he loves us, just like earthly parents discipline their children.** David was disciplined by God here in this chapter.
- **As Hebrews 4:11 says – discipline doesn't seem pleasant at the time but instead rather painful, [as David can vouch for].** However, later on it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace as we submit our lives to God -
- **David submits** to God in this chapter – and **accepts the consequences** and the **discipline**.
- We'll have to **tune in next week** – to see how things pan out for David.
- But let's **take home today** – that whatever you're going through in your life – right now
- **Trust God** – and hang on to what David said in the midst of his turmoil
- **It may be that the LORD will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today.**

Let's pray...