

Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 24, 2 Sam. 15-17 – David Runs for His Life Again Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 24, 2 Sam. 15-17 – David Runs for His Life Again, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Robert Chisholm **analyzes** 2 Samuel 15-17, **focusing** on David's flight from his rebellious son Absalom. The **lecture explores** Absalom's rebellion, David's response, and the actions of loyalists and enemies. **Key figures** such as Ahithophel and Hushai are examined for their roles in shaping events, particularly Ahithophel's ultimately thwarted counsel. The narrative **highlights** God's providence in protecting David despite his trials and the interwoven themes of loyalty, betrayal, and divine judgment. Finally, the **lecture draws parallels** between events in 2 Samuel and earlier biblical accounts.

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Chisholm, Session 24 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → 1 Samuel).



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3. Briefing Document: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 24, 2 Sam. 15-17 – David Runs for His Life Again

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes, ideas, and facts from the provided source, along with relevant quotes:

Briefing Document: 2 Samuel 15-17

Overview: This document summarizes Dr. Robert Chisholm's lecture on 2 Samuel 15-17, focusing on the rebellion of Absalom against David and the various responses and events that unfold. The lecture is framed as a narrative of "David Runs for His Life Again" (chapter 15) and "The Lord Thwarts a Curse and a Counselor" (chapters 16 & 17).

Key Themes & Ideas:

1. Rebellion and Its Echoes:

- Absalom's rebellion against David is presented as a significant crisis for David. This recalls David's earlier flight from Saul, highlighting a recurring theme of David's life being threatened by those who seek to usurp his power.
- The text draws a parallel between Absalom's rebellion and Abimelech's earlier rebellion in Judges 9. Chisholm notes, "the hearts of the people of Israel are after Absalom, as it were, going after him just as the Shechemites went after this very evil man Abimelech back in the time of the Judges." This intertextual link suggests a doomed fate for Absalom, based on the earlier failure of Abimelech.

1. David's Flight and Humility:

- David's flight from Jerusalem is portrayed as a period of intense distress, marked by weeping and a covering of his head. "David continues up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he goes. His head is covered and he's barefoot. And all the people are with him, weeping as they go." This highlights his emotional burden and vulnerability.
- David demonstrates humility and acceptance of potential divine discipline. He refuses to use the Ark of the Covenant as a magical charm and instead says, "If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. But if he says, I'm not pleased with you, then I am ready. Let him do to me whatever seems good to him." He submits to the will of God.

1. **Loyalty vs. Betrayal:**

- The story contrasts the treachery of Absalom (David's own son) with the loyalty of others, particularly Ittai the Gittite, a foreigner who insists on staying with David: "as surely as the 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." This is presented as a foil to Absalom's rebellion.
- The character of Ziba, who initially appears loyal but is later revealed to be deceptive, highlights how self-serving individuals can exploit a crisis, even while appearing to serve a just cause.

1. **Divine Providence and Human Action:**

- David's prayer for the Lord to turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness is a central point.
- The text emphasizes that God works through human agents and "practical steps," such as David's establishing a spy network. The character of Hushai is crucial in this, demonstrating how God may choose to answer prayers through a person acting as an instrument of divine will. Chisholm notes, "David has prayed to the Lord, but notice how he takes practical steps. He sees God's providence working and he realizes that sometimes God answers prayers through people."

1. **Curses and Blessings:**

- The cursing of David by Shimei, a Benjaminite, is seen as another test of David's faith and character. Instead of retaliation, David considers that the curse may be part of God's discipline: "If he's cursing because the Lord said to him, curse David, who can ask, why do you do this?"
- David hopes that because Shimei's curse is based on false accusations, "it may be that the Lord will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today." He believes the false accusations might even cause God to bless him further.
- **Deception and Strategy:** Hushai's deceptive loyalty to Absalom is a key strategic element. His ambiguous words, "Long live the king, long live the king," are meant to deceive Absalom while maintaining loyalty to David. This highlights the use of deception for a greater good and portrays Hushai as a wise individual.
- Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom to sleep with David's concubines is portrayed as fulfilling Nathan's earlier prophecy of divine discipline against David.

1. The Lord's Intervention:

- The narrative makes it clear that the Lord is ultimately orchestrating events. Hushai's advice is favored over Ahithophel's because, "For the Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster to Absalom."
- The story of the messengers who escape and warn David is paralleled with Rahab hiding the spies in Jericho. This underscores that "David is on the Lord's side in this matter," while Absalom is cast in the role of the enemy.

1. Consequences and Loss:

- Ahithophel, humiliated by the rejection of his advice, commits suicide: "Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed...and he hanged himself." This shows the high stakes and the drastic measures taken in a culture of honor and shame.
- Absalom's decision to follow Hushai's plan gives David time to regroup.

Key Quotes:

- *"The hearts of the people of Israel are after Absalom...just as the Shechemites went after this very evil man Abimelech back in the time of the Judges."* (Intertextual comparison highlighting Absalom's doomed fate)
- *"as surely as the 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."* (Ittai's statement of loyalty, contrasting with Absalom's actions).
- *"If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, he will bring me back...But if he says, I'm not pleased with you, then I am ready. Let him do to me whatever seems good to him."* (David's humble submission to God's will.)
- *"David has prayed to the Lord, but notice how he takes practical steps. He sees God's providence working and he realizes that sometimes God answers prayers through people."* (Emphasizing the balance of divine will and human action.)
- *"For the Lord had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster to Absalom."* (Highlighting God's intervention in the events.)

Conclusion:

These chapters from 2 Samuel depict a time of profound crisis for David, marked by betrayal, flight, and the threat of death. However, through his humility, faith, and the actions of loyal individuals like Ittai and Hushai, and through divine providence, David is able to escape the immediate danger posed by Absalom. The Lord's hand is seen guiding events to thwart evil counsel and protect David, even in the midst of divine discipline. The narratives provide insight into the complexities of power, loyalty, and divine intervention, all while highlighting God's covenant relationship with David and his eventual restoration.

4. Study Guide: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 24, 2 Sam. 15-17 – David Runs for His Life Again

2 Samuel 15-17 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. Why does David flee Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 15?
2. Who is Ittai the Gittite, and what role does he play in David's departure from Jerusalem?
3. Why does David refuse to bring the Ark of the Covenant with him as he flees?
4. What does David ask God to do in regard to Ahithophel?
5. How does Hushai offer to help David?
6. What gifts does Ziba bring to David, and why?
7. How does Shimei, a man from Saul's clan, react to David's escape?
8. What advice does Ahithophel give to Absalom in chapter 16?
9. What are the key points of Ahithophel's advice to Absalom in chapter 17?
10. How does Hushai counter Ahithophel's advice to Absalom?

Quiz Answer Key

1. David flees Jerusalem because his son Absalom has gained the support of the people of Israel and is moving to take over the kingdom. David fears for his life and the well-being of his people if Absalom captures him in the city.
2. Ittai the Gittite is a Philistine mercenary who is loyal to David and offers to stay with him, in contrast to Absalom's rebellion. He is a foil to Absalom's actions, showing that even a foreigner can be loyal while David's own son is not.
3. David refuses to bring the Ark of the Covenant, not wanting to see it as a tool for safety. He places his trust in God's will, whether it means restoration or further discipline, recognizing the Ark as a symbol of God's presence rather than the Lord himself.

4. David prays that God will turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness. He is acknowledging Ahithophel's wisdom but is also acknowledging God's power to intervene.
5. Hushai offers to help David by returning to Jerusalem and feigning allegiance to Absalom. This allows him to be a spy within Absalom's court and frustrate Ahithophel's advice.
6. Ziba brings donkeys loaded with food and wine, telling David they are for the king's household. He falsely accuses Mephibosheth of disloyalty to gain favor with David.
7. Shimei curses David, pelting him with stones and dirt, because he believes David is a murderer and has unjustly taken the kingdom from Saul's family. He embodies the Benjamite hostility against David.
8. Ahithophel advises Absalom to sleep with David's concubines in order to solidify his claim to the throne. This is meant to publicly demonstrate that he has taken over and there is no return.
9. Ahithophel's advice in chapter 17 is to immediately pursue David with a small force, kill only David, and then bring the people back. He believes this is the fastest way to end the rebellion.
10. Hushai counters Ahithophel's advice by suggesting Absalom gather a large army from all of Israel to overwhelm David. He also appeals to David's combat expertise as well as the fierce nature of David's soldiers to dissuade Absalom from acting quickly.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the contrasting characters of Ittai the Gittite and Absalom in 2 Samuel 15, focusing on their respective loyalties and how they highlight the themes of loyalty and rebellion.
2. Discuss the role of divine intervention and human agency in 2 Samuel 15-17, paying particular attention to David's prayer about Ahithophel's counsel, Hushai's actions, and the outcome of their strategies.
3. Compare and contrast the different reactions to David's flight: examine the motivations of characters like Ziba, Shimei, and the people of Israel, as well as David's own responses.
4. How do the events in 2 Samuel 16-17 underscore the theme of God's judgment and discipline? Consider both David's sin and his response as you craft your analysis.
5. Evaluate the significance of the intertextual connections between the story of the spies in Jericho (Joshua 2) and the story of the spies in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 17). How does this connection help to characterize the figures of David and Absalom?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Absalom:** David's son who leads a rebellion against his father to usurp the throne of Israel.
- **Ahithophel:** A highly respected counselor to David who later joins Absalom's rebellion; known for his wisdom and good counsel.
- **Hushai:** A loyal friend and confidant of David who pretends to support Absalom in order to thwart Absalom's plans by offering counter advice.
- **Ittai the Gittite:** A Philistine mercenary who is loyal to David, demonstrating allegiance despite not being an Israelite.
- **Zadok and Abiathar:** Priests who are loyal to David and help him by maintaining a communication network and spying against Absalom.
- **Ziba:** The steward of Mephibosheth who falsely accuses his master of disloyalty to gain favor with David.
- **Shimei:** A man from Saul's clan who curses David, believing David murdered Saul and took his throne unjustly.
- **Ark of the Covenant:** A sacred chest that held the tablets of the Ten Commandments, symbolizing God's presence and covenant with Israel.
- **Kidron Valley:** A valley east of Jerusalem that David crosses when fleeing the city.
- **Mount of Olives:** A mountain ridge east of Jerusalem where David ascends and mourns during his flight.
- **Mahanaim:** A city in Transjordan where David gathers support after fleeing Jerusalem.
- **Ein Rogel:** A spring outside of Jerusalem where the spies, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, stay.
- **Intertextuality:** The relationship between texts, where one text references, echoes, or alludes to another.

5. FAQs on Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 24, 2 Sam. 15-17 – David Runs for His Life Again, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: David's Flight and the Rebellion of Absalom

- Why does David flee Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 15?** David flees Jerusalem because his son, Absalom, has successfully rallied support and is moving to usurp the throne. A messenger informs David that "the hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom," indicating a widespread defection from David's rule. Fearing for his life and the safety of his loyal followers and the city, David decides to evacuate in order to avoid a violent confrontation and retain the option of fighting another day.
- What is the significance of Ittai the Gittite's loyalty to David?** Ittai the Gittite, a foreign mercenary who recently joined David's ranks, displays unwavering loyalty by refusing David's offer to stay behind and join Absalom. He pledges his allegiance to David, declaring that he will follow David wherever he goes, even to death. Ittai's loyalty is significant because it serves as a stark contrast to Absalom's betrayal of his own father and highlights that true loyalty is not based on familial or national ties, but on faithfulness. It emphasizes the moral contrast between Absalom's self-serving ambition and Ittai's selfless commitment.
- Why does David decide to send the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem?** David sends the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem because he understands that the Ark is a symbol of God's presence, not a guarantee of divine protection. Instead of relying on the Ark for success, David humbly submits to God's will, recognizing that his fate is in God's hands. David states that if he finds favor in the Lord's eyes, he will be allowed to return to see it, but he is equally ready to accept God's judgment if God is displeased with him. This decision highlights David's spiritual maturity and his trust in God's sovereignty over outcomes.
- How does David create a spy network to counter Absalom's rebellion?** David cleverly establishes a spy network by strategically placing loyal individuals within Absalom's court. He sends Hushai back to Jerusalem to feign allegiance to Absalom and frustrate the advice of Ahithophel. Additionally, he utilizes priests Zadok and Abiathar along with their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, as messengers to relay information about Absalom's plans. This intricate system is designed to provide David with crucial information from within enemy territory and help him to plan his response to the rebellion.

- **What role does Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, play in David's flight?** Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, presents himself as loyal to David and brings David gifts and supplies, insinuating that his master Mephibosheth has betrayed him and is hoping to regain his grandfather Saul's kingdom. David accepts this explanation and gives Ziba all of Mephibosheth's property. However, Ziba's actions are later revealed to be self-serving as he seeks to capitalize on the chaos for personal gain, making the accusation about his master false. This emphasizes that appearances can be deceiving and that even in times of crisis, deception and manipulation are present.
- **How does David respond to Shimei's cursing and stoning?** David responds to Shimei's cursing and stoning with remarkable humility and restraint. Instead of retaliating, David interprets Shimei's actions as a possible form of divine discipline. He prevents his soldiers from attacking Shimei, stating that if the Lord has told him to curse, then it is an act that should be allowed to run its course. David's acceptance of what is happening to him suggests that he understands that he is under God's discipline for his past sins but also believes he is innocent of the particular charges Shimei levies against him. David leaves his vindication in God's hands.
- **How does Hushai undermine Ahithophel's advice to Absalom?** Hushai undermines Ahithophel's advice through a calculated strategy of delay. Ahithophel advises an immediate, targeted attack on David and his small band of followers. Hushai cleverly uses the fear of an ambush, coupled with the potential for losses, to persuade Absalom to postpone immediate action. He argues for a more cautious approach of raising a massive army from all Israel to overwhelm David with sheer numbers. By appealing to the concern for public perception, Hushai's advice, which is meant to buy David time to escape and regroup, is chosen by Absalom.

- **What is the significance of Ahithophel's suicide at the end of Chapter 17?**

Ahithophel's suicide by hanging underscores the devastating effect of shame and the crushing blow of having his advice rejected. Ahithophel was considered a wise counselor whose advice was akin to receiving a divine oracle, therefore, being overruled humiliated him and showed his hubris. His suicide is also significant because it fulfills David's prayer that the Lord would make his advice foolish. It also reflects his pride and inability to cope with the loss of influence, highlighting a stark contrast between his character and David's humility and trust in God. His death eliminates an influential opponent and marks a major turning point in the rebellion in David's favor.