

Week Twenty 30  
2 Samuel 14 - 24

— PASTOR'S —  
**BIBLE STUDY**

We ended our last class with the knowledge:

- ▶ There will be continuing consequences for David's sin
- ▶ Calamity will begin to snowball – get bigger and bigger
- ▶ In the end these consequences will break David
- ▶ We need to ask ourselves:
  - ▶ Why did Amnon rape Tamar?
  - ▶ Why did Absalom kill Amnon?
- ▶ They are a product of David's home – he himself raped Bathsheba and killed Uriah her husband

## Absalom is on the run going to Geshar


David loves Absalom

5 years have no passed since the rape of Tamar

2 Samuel 14 NIV

### Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

**14** Joab son of Zeruiah knew that **the king's heart longed for Absalom.** **2** So Joab sent someone to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought from there. He said to her, **"Pretend you are in mourning. Dress in mourning clothes, and don't use any cosmetic lotions. Act like a woman who has spent many days grieving for the dead.** **3** Then go to the king and speak these words to him."  
And Joab put the words in her mouth.

**4** When the woman from Tekoa went  to the king, she fell with her face to the ground to pay him honor, and she said, "Help me, Your Majesty!"

**5** The king asked her, "What is troubling you?"

She said, "I am a widow; my husband is dead. <sup>6</sup> If your servant had two sons. They got into a fight with each other in the field, and no one was there to separate them. One struck the other and killed him. <sup>7</sup> Now the whole clan has risen up against your servant: they say, 'Hand over the one who struck his brother so that we may put him to death for the life of his brother.' If I do not do so, then we will get rid of the heir and the only burning coal I have left, leaving no descendant on the face of the earth."

So the wise from Tekoa presents her a case. A family law case

<sup>8</sup> The king said to the woman, "I will do for you as you request, for I do not want to see you there as an avenger of blood. If you say so, I will do as you say. But if you do not say so, I will not do so. Now state your mind." So she said, "I will do as you say."

<sup>9</sup> But the woman from Tekoa said to the king, "Let my lord the king pardon me and my family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt."

<sup>10</sup> The king replied, "If anyone says anything to you, bring them to me, and they will not bother you again."

<sup>11</sup> She said, "Then let the king invoke the LORD his God to prevent the avenger of blood from adding to the destruction, so that my son will not be destroyed."

"As surely as the LORD lives," he said, "not one hair of your son's head will fall to the ground."

<sup>12</sup> Then the woman said, "Let your servant speak a word to my lord the king."

"Speak," he replied.

<sup>13</sup> The woman said, "Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son? <sup>14</sup> Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But that is what God desires; rather, he devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from

<sup>15</sup> "And now I have heard that you say, 'I will speak to the king because the people have murmured against me.' I will not speak to the king because I am afraid. <sup>16</sup> Perhaps the king will give my servant from the hand of the king, but he will not secure both me and my son from God's inheritance."

A repeat of what has already happened with David

<sup>17</sup> "And now your servant says, 'May the word of my lord the king secure my inheritance, for my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil. May the LORD your God be with you.'"

<sup>18</sup> Then the king said to the woman, "Don't keep your answer to what I am going to ask you."

"Let my lord the king speak," the woman said.

<sup>19</sup> **The king asked, "Isn't the hand of Joab with you in all this?"**

The woman answered, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything my lord the king says. **Yes, it was your servant Joab who instructed me to do this and who put all these words into the mouth of your servant.**

David finally picks up on what is taking place

<sup>20</sup> Your servant Joab did this to change the present situation. My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God—he knows everything that happens in the land.”

<sup>21</sup> **The king said to Joab, “Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom.”**

<sup>22</sup> Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, “Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant's request.”

<sup>23</sup> Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. <sup>24</sup> But the king said, **“He must go to his own house; he must not see my face.” So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.**

So, Joab sets off to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem

<sup>25</sup> In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. <sup>26</sup> Whenever he cut the hair of his head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels<sup>[b]</sup> by the royal standard.

<sup>27</sup> Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. His daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman.

<sup>28</sup> **Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face.** <sup>29</sup> **Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him.** So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. <sup>30</sup> Then he said to his servants, “Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire.” So Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

<sup>31</sup> Then Joab did go to Absalom's house, and he said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"

<sup>32</sup> Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, **"Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!"** Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death."

<sup>33</sup> So Joab went to the king and told him this. 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.**

It's been over 5 years since the rape of Tamar and death of Amnon

*It seems like the relationship has resumed*

*But, Absalom has brooded over this separation and inaction of his father.*

2 Samuel 15 NIV

### **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.** <sup>2</sup> 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." <sup>3</sup> Then Absalom would say to him, **"Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you."** <sup>4</sup> 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."**

<sup>5</sup> Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. <sup>6</sup> 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.**

We are now about 10 years out from the rape of Tamar

<sup>7</sup> **At the end of four<sup>[a]</sup> years, Absalom said to the king, “Let me go to Hebron (where he was born) and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD. <sup>8</sup> 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.’”**

<sup>9</sup> The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he went to Hebron.

<sup>10</sup> **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.’”** ’

A palace  
Insurrection

<sup>11</sup> Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. <sup>12</sup> While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for **Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown.** And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom’s following kept on increasing.

**Do you remember who Ahithophel the Gilonite was?**

**Bathsheba**

**In 2 Samuel 23 we read about David’s senior officers**

**Vignette 5**

31 Abi-Albon the Arbathite,  
 Azmaveth the Barhumite,  
 32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite,  
 the sons of Jashen,  
 Jonathan 33 son of [ ] Shammah the Hararite,  
 Ahiam son of Sharar [ ] the Hararite,  
 34 **Elphelet son of Ahasbai** the Maakathite  
**Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,**  
 35 Hezro the Carmelite,  
 Paarai the Arbite,  
 36 Igal son of Nathan from Zobah,  
 the son of Hagri, [k]  
 37 Zelek the Ammonite,  
 Naharai the Beerothite, the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah,

Bathsheba's Father

22<sup>nd</sup> in command

His, father Ahitophel,  
 was a counselor of  
 King David and a  
 man greatly  
 renowned for his  
 wisdom

### David Flees

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

Have we ever seen David flee from a fight?

David knows just like him Absalom will lead from the front. If he fights he will have to kill his son.

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.**

*They are marching towards Jericho*

*The 25 km-long Jericho-Jerusalem road was notorious for its danger and difficulty*

David needs a spy in Absalom's household to counter his counsels betrayal!

**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."<sup>[c]</sup>

**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 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."

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

<sup>30</sup> **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. <sup>31</sup> Now David had been told, “**Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.**” So David prayed, “LORD, turn Ahithophel’s counsel into foolishness.”

<sup>32</sup> 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.

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

**Hushai the Arkite** is David’s inside man

<sup>37</sup> **So Hushai, David’s confidant, arrived at Jerusalem as Absalom was entering the city.**

2 Samuel 16 NIV

Is there anyone in Saul's house I can show kindness too?

### David and Ziba

Mephibosheth is Jonathan's son, grandson of Saul

Do you remember the story?

**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.**'"

David is not only betrayed by Absalom but also Mephibosheth

**Then the king said to Ziba**, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours."

"I humbly bow," Ziba said. "May I find favor 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 (**DUNG**), though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left.

Shimei is a weasel of a man

(Sneaky and sly)

<sup>7</sup> As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you murderer, you scoundrel!" <sup>8</sup> 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!"

<sup>9</sup> 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."

<sup>10</sup> 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?'"

<sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> It may be that the LORD will look upon my misery and restore to me his covenant blessing instead of his curse today."

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> The king and all the people with him arrived at their destination exhausted. And there he refreshed himself.

#### **The Advice of Ahithophel and Hushai**

<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him. <sup>16</sup> Then Hushai the Arkite, David's confidant, went to Absalom and said to him, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

**17 Absalom said to Hushai, “So this is the love you show your friend? If he’s your friend, why didn’t you go with him?”**

David's  
Confidant  
is  
accepted

**18 Hushai said to Absalom, “No, the one chosen by the LORD, by these people, and by all the men of Israel—his I will be, and I will remain with him. 19 Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve the son? Just as I served your father, so I will serve you.”**

**20 Absalom said to Ahithophel, “Give us your advice. What should we do?”**

**21 Ahithophel answered, “Sleep with your father’s concubines whom he left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself obnoxious to your father, and the hands of everyone with you will be more resolute.” 22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he slept with his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel.**

## REMEMBER

### Nathan the Prophet

**Chapter 12: 11** “This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. **12** You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”

**23** Now in those days the advice Ahithophel gave was **like that of one who inquires of God**. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel's advice.

2 Samuel 17 NIV

**17 Ahithophel said to Absalom**, "I would<sup>[a]</sup> choose twelve thousand men and set out tonight in pursuit of David. <sup>2</sup>I would attack him while he is weary and weak. I would strike him with terror, and then all the people with him will flee. I would strike down only the king <sup>3</sup>and bring all the people back to you. The death of the man you seek will mean the return of all; all the people will be unharmed." **<sup>4</sup>This plan seemed good to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.**

David is in a fragile state of mind – a perfect time to attack

**<sup>5</sup>But Absalom said, "Summon also Hushai the Arkite**, so we can hear what he has to say as well." <sup>6</sup>When Hushai came to him, Absalom said, "Ahithophel has given this advice. Should we do what he says? If not, give us your opinion."

<sup>7</sup> Hushai replied to Absalom, “**The advice Ahithophel has given is not good this time.** <sup>8</sup> **You know your father and his men; they are fighters, and as fierce as a wild bear robbed of her cubs.** Besides, your father is an experienced fighter; he will not spend the night with the troops. <sup>9</sup> Even now, he is hidden in a cave or some other place. If he should attack your troops first, <sup>10</sup> whoever hears about it will say, ‘**There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.**’ <sup>10</sup> Then even the bravest soldier, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will melt with fear, for all Israel knows that your father is a fighter and that those with him are brave.

<sup>11</sup> “**So I advise you: Let all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba—as numerous as the sand on the seashore—**be gathered to you, with you yourself leading them into battle. <sup>12</sup> Then we will attack him wherever he may be found, and we will fall on him as dew settles

on the ground. Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive. <sup>13</sup> If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it down to the valley until not so much as a pebble is left.”

<sup>14</sup> Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “**The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel.**” For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

<sup>15</sup> Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, “Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do such and such, but I have advised them to do so and so. <sup>16</sup> **Now send a message at once and tell David, ‘Do not spend the night at the fords in the wilderness; cross over without fail, or the king and all the people with him will be swallowed up.’”**

**We will see Ahithophel was correct and he knew what the outcome would be:**

**<sup>23</sup> When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.**

2 Samuel 18 NIV

**18 David mustered the men who were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.** <sup>2</sup> David sent out his troops,

- **a third under the command of Joab,**
- **a third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and**
- **a third under Ittai the Gittite.**

The king told the troops, **"I myself will surely march out with you."**

<sup>3</sup> But the men said, **"You must not go out; if we are forced to flee, they won't care about us.** Even if half of us die, they won't care; but you are worth ten thousand of us. **It would be better now for you to give us support from the city."**



**4 The king answered,** “I will do whatever seems best to you.” So the king stood beside the gate while all his men marched out in units of hundreds and of thousands.

***The men know if he leads, David will have to kill his own son***

**5 The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai,**

**“Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake.”**

And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

**6** David's army marched out of the city to fight Israel, and the battle took place in the **forest of Ephraim**. **7** There Israel's troops were routed by David's men, and the casualties that day were great—twenty thousand men. **8** The battle spread out over the whole countryside, **and the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword.**

David took the fight to a terrain that gave him a tactical advantage

**9 Now Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak** *(the tree would have been a pistachio tree which has low branches)*, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. **He was left hanging in midair**, while the mule he was riding kept on going.

**10** When one of the men saw what had happened, he told Joab, **“I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.”**

**11** Joab said to the man who had told him this, **“What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have had to give you ten shekels<sup>[b]</sup> of silver and a warrior's belt.”**

**12** But the man replied, “Even if a thousand shekels<sup>[c]</sup> were weighed out into my hands, **I would not lay a hand on the king's son.**”

In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.<sup>[d]</sup>' <sup>13</sup> And if I had put my life in jeopardy<sup>[e]</sup>—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me."

<sup>14</sup> Joab said, "**I'm not going to wait like this for you.**" So he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart while Absalom was still alive in the oak tree. <sup>15</sup> **And ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him.**

<sup>16</sup> **Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops stopped pursuing Israel, for Joab halted them.** <sup>17</sup> They took Absalom, threw him into a big pit in the forest and piled up a large heap of rocks over him. **Meanwhile, all the Israelites fled to their homes.**

<sup>18</sup> During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King's Valley as a monument to himself, for he thought, "I have no son to carry on the memory of my name." He named the pillar after himself, and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

<sup>19</sup> **Now Ahimaaz (uh-him-ey-az) son of Zadok said,** "Let me run and take the news to the king that the LORD has vindicated him by delivering him from the hand of his enemies."

<sup>20</sup> **"You are not the one to take the news today,"** Joab told him. "You may take the news another time, but you must not do so today, because the king's son is dead."

<sup>21</sup> **Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.**

**24 Now David was sitting between the two gates.** And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate, to the wall, lifted his eyes and looked, and there was a man, running alone. **25** Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, *there is news in his mouth.*" And he came rapidly and drew near.

**26** Then the watchman saw *another* man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "There is *another* man, running alone!"

And the king said, "He also brings news."

**27** So the watchman said, [1] "I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok."

**228** So Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, [2] "All is well!" Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the king, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king!"

**29 The king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"**

Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant and *me* your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what *it was about.*"

**30** And the king said, "Turn aside *and* stand here." So he turned aside and stood still.

**31 Just then the Cushite came, and the Cushite said,** “There is good news, my lord the king! For the LORD has avenged you this day of all those who rose against you.”


**32** And the king said to the Cushite, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

**So the Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise against you to do harm, be like *that* young man!”**

### David’s Mourning for Absalom

**33 Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept.** And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!”

2 Samuel 19 NIV

**19**  **Joab was told, “The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.”** <sup>2</sup> And for the whole army the victory that day was turned into mourning, because on that day the troops heard it said, “The king is grieving for his son.” <sup>3</sup> **The men stole into the city that day as men steal in who are ashamed when they flee from battle.** <sup>4</sup> The king covered his face and cried aloud, “O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!”

<sup>5</sup> Then Joab went into the house to the king and said, “**Today you have humiliated all your men, who have just saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and the lives of your wives and concubines.** <sup>6</sup> You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that the commanders and their men mean nothing to you.

I see that you would be pleased if Absalom were alive today and all of us were dead. <sup>7</sup> **Now go out and encourage your men. I swear by the LORD that if you don't go out, not a man will be left with you by nightfall. This will be worse for you than all the calamities that have come on you from your youth till now.**

<sup>8</sup> So the king got up and took his seat in the gateway. When the men were told, "The king is sitting in the gateway," they all came before him.

**Meanwhile, the Israelites had fled to their homes.**

### **David Returns to Jerusalem**

<sup>9</sup> Throughout the tribes of Israel, all the people were arguing among themselves, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies; he is the one who rescued us from the hand of the Philistines.

But now he has fled the country to escape from Absalom; <sup>10</sup> and Absalom, whom we anointed to rule over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"

<sup>11</sup> King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: "Ask the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his palace, since what is being said throughout Israel has reached the king at his quarters?' <sup>12</sup> You are my relatives, my own flesh and blood. So why should you be the last to bring back the king?' <sup>13</sup> And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my own flesh and blood? May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you are not the commander of my army for life in place of Joab.'"

<sup>14</sup> **He won over the hearts of the men of Judah so that they were all of one mind. They sent word to the king, "Return, you and all your men."** <sup>15</sup> **Then the king returned and went as far as the Jordan.**

Now the men of Judah had come to Gilgal to go out and meet the king and bring him across the Jordan. **16 Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim**, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. **17** With him were a thousand Benjamites, along with **Ziba, the steward of Saul's household**, and his fifteen sons and twenty servants. They rushed to the Jordan, where the king was. **18 They crossed at the ford to take the king's household over and to do whatever he wished.**

When **Shimei son of Gera crossed the Jordan, he fell prostrate before the king** **19** and said to him, "May my lord not hold me guilty. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. **May the king put it out of his mind.** **20** For I your servant know that I have sinned, but today I have come here as **the first from the tribes of Joseph** to come down and meet my lord the king."

**21** Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said, "**Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for this? He cursed the LORD's anointed.**"

**22 David replied**, "What does this have to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? What right do you have to interfere? Should anyone be put to death in Israel today? Don't I know that today I am king over Israel?" **23** So the king said to Shimei, "**You shall not die.** **And the king promised him on oath.**

**24 Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, also went down to meet the king.** He had not taken care of his feet or trimmed his mustache or washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he returned safely. **25** When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king asked him, "**Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth?**"

**26 He said,** “My lord the king, since I your servant am lame, I said, ‘I will have my donkey saddled and will ride on it, so I can go with the king.’ **But Ziba my servant betrayed me.** **27** And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king. My lord the king is like an angel of God; so do whatever you wish. **28** All my grandfather’s descendants deserved nothing but death from my lord the king, **but you gave your servant a place among those who eat at your table.** So what right do I have to make any more appeals to the king?”

Who's telling  
the truth?

David  
doesn't  
know.

**29 The king said to him,** “**Why say more? I order you and Ziba to divide the land.**”

**30 Mephibosheth said to the king,** “**Let him take everything, now that my lord the king has returned home safely.**”

**31 Barzillai the Gileadite** also came down from Rogelim to cross the Jordan with the king and to send him on his way from there. **32** Now Barzillai was very old, eighty years of age. He had provided for the king during his stay in Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. **33** The king said to Barzillai, “Cross over with me and stay with me in Jerusalem, and I will provide for you.”

**34** But Barzillai answered the king, “**How many more years will I live, that I should go up to Jerusalem with the king?** **35** I am now eighty years old. Can I tell the difference between what is enjoyable and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats and drinks? Can I still hear the voices of male and female singers? Why should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? **36** Your servant will cross over the Jordan with the king for a short distance, but why should the king reward me in this way?”

37 Let your servant return, that I may die in my own town near the tomb of my father and mother. But here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my lord the king. Do for him whatever you wish."

38 The king said, "Kimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him whatever you wish. And anything you desire from me I will do for you."

39 So all the people crossed the Jordan, and then the king crossed over. **The king kissed Barzillai and bid him farewell, and Barzillai returned to his home.**

40 When the king crossed over to Gilgal, Kimham crossed with him. All the troops of Judah and half the troops of Israel had taken the king over.

41 Soon all the men of Israel were coming to the king and saying to him, "Why did our brothers, the men of Judah, steal the king away and bring him and his household across the Jordan, together with all his men?"

42 All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "We did this because the king is closely related to us. Why are you angry about it? Have we eaten any of the king's provisions? Have we taken anything for ourselves?"

43 Then the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king; so we have a greater claim on David than you have. Why then do you treat us with contempt? Weren't we the first to speak of bringing back our king?"

But the men of Judah pressed their claims even more forcefully than the men of Israel.



So we see in  
2 Samuel 20 NIV

### David's Officials

<sup>23</sup> Joab was over Israel's entire army;

Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and Pelethites;

<sup>24</sup> Adoniram<sup>[c]</sup> was in charge of forced labor;

Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder;


<sup>25</sup> Sheva was secretary;

Zadok and Abiathar were priests;

<sup>26</sup> and Ira the Jairite<sup>[d]</sup> was David's priest.


## It's been about 20 years

- David was 40+ years old when he took Bathsheba
- 20 years wen by
  - Rape of Bathsheba
  - Killing of Uriah
  - Rape of Tamar
  - Killing of Ammon
  - Insurrection of Absalom
  - Death of Absalom
- David is in his 60's, back in power, but a broken man



## David will spend his final 10 years obsessing about the Temple

- ▶ He will write 73 of the 150 Psalms
- ▶ He will plan every detail of the Temple
- ▶ Blueprints
- ▶ Raises the money to build it
- ▶ Cut the stones for the foundation, etc.
- ▶ Organizes the priesthood to run the temple
- ▶ But he will not be allowed by God to lay the first stone.



## We end with six vignettes

2 Samuel 21 – 24

The vignette-style narrative structure continues to  
be a powerful literary tool

While 2 Samuel contains a series of interconnected stories and episodes about King David's reign, finding an exact modern equivalent can be challenging. However, there are some contemporary works that employ a similar vignette-style narrative structure:

#### Modern Literary Examples

- Jennifer Egan's "A Visit from the Goon Squad"
  - This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is composed of 13 interconnected chapters, each focusing on different characters whose lives intersect over several decades<sup>1</sup>. Like 2 Samuel, it presents a mosaic of stories that collectively paint a broader picture of its world and themes.
- Elizabeth Strout's "Olive Kitteridge"
  - This novel-in-stories follows the life of Olive Kitteridge and the inhabitants of a small coastal town in Maine. Each chapter can be read as a standalone story, but together they form a cohesive narrative, similar to how 2 Samuel presents various episodes in David's life<sup>1</sup>.
- David Mitchell's "Cloud Atlas"
  - While more ambitious in scope, this novel consists of six interconnected stories spanning different time periods and genres. The structure allows Mitchell to explore recurring themes and motifs across seemingly disparate narratives, much like how 2 Samuel weaves together various episodes to portray David's reign<sup>1</sup>.

We are at the end of 2 Samuel

When we turn the page we see

## 1 Kings 1 NIV

In Psalm 90, which is attributed to Moses, he states: "The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away

**1 When King David was very old, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.** <sup>2</sup>So his attendants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin to serve the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm."

<sup>3</sup>Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful young woman and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. <sup>4</sup>The woman was very beautiful; she took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no sexual relations with her.

**David needs a successor to the throne. Who will become King?**

Read 1 Kings 1 - 5

