

## November 13

**Scriptures:** Read 2 Samuel 15

**Key Verse:** “If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back... let Him do to me as seems good to Him.” (2 Samuel 15:25, 26)

### Overview

Once Absalom had been restored to his father’s good grace, he used his position to begin a campaign to win over the people’s loyalty and subtly undermine, in their eyes, his father’s effectiveness as a ruler. Like a shrewd politician, he did not openly accuse the king of doing anything wrong, but he insinuated that if he were in control he would do a better job, especially in the area of bringing justice to the land (15:4).

Absalom tried to impress the people with the pretense of being king, humble, and truly concerned about their problems. In order to appear a man of dignity and authority, he acquired chariots and horses and gathered about himself fifty men to act as his personal entourage (15:1). In his appearance (14:25), lifestyle, and public relations, he outwardly looked as though he would be the perfect king. All over the country he cleverly got people to support him.

Until the moment of his well-plan insurrection, Absalom deceived his father into thinking he was loyal and religiously minded. He asked his father for permission to go to Hebron, using the excuse of paying a vow he had made to the Lord (15:7). David unsuspectingly sent him with peace, yet peace was far from Absalom’s mind (15:9). There in Hebron, the place of his birth, where he no doubt had many supporters, he launched his rebellion. He had himself proclaimed king and had the news spread throughout the land.

When David heard of Absalom’s uprising, he fled from Jerusalem (15:14). Considering David’s strength and courage, it is unlikely that his flight was a result of cowardice. Rather, it was a well-thought-out action. David did not want any harm to come to his family nor did he want the city of Jerusalem to be under siege. This must have been heartbreaking for him; his own son, whom he dearly loved, had deceived him and begun a large scale revolt. His trusted advisor, Ahithophel, for some unknown reason betrayed him (15:12; Psalm 41). Possibly Ahithophel, who was Bathsheba’s grandfather (11:3; 23:34), did this in revenge for David’s sin against her and Uriah.

Deeply grieved, David, with his family and faithful army, crossed the Kidron valley immediately east of Jerusalem, between the city and the Mount of Olives, but he sent the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. David understood that having the Ark go before him did not guarantee him success (e.g. 1 Samuel 4:3; 10-11). The Ark merely symbolized God’s presence, and therefore it belonged in the royal city to show all Israel that God was their true King.

They headed east into the wilderness that David knew so well from his years as an outlaw. From the top of the Mount of Olives, with Jerusalem still in sight, David wept because of the terrible circumstances, yet he also worshipped God and, in prayer, committed the matter into His hands. Immediately after his prayer (15:31), God answered by sending him Hushai, a faithful friend and advisor, whom David then planned to use as a spy to discover Absalom’s plans.

David recognized that what had befallen him was a punishment for his sin, as Nathan had foretold. He threw himself into the merciful hands of God and trusted in Him to do what was best in accordance with His will. God always knows what is best for His servants. We, like David, must submit to Him, wait on Him, and trust in Him.

### **Prayer**

Lord, grant that we may find favor in Your eyes so that Your purposes will be fully realized in our lives. We also pray for our families; keep them loyal to You and keep us in harmony one with another.