

## A Friend in Need

2 Samuel 15 – 19

### Key Actors in the Story (in order of appearance):

Cherethites, and Pelethites: David’s bodyguard, elite warriors personally loyal to King David.

Ittei the Gittite: captain of 600 Philistine warriors recently arrived from Gath, joining David’s personal military force. He leads one-third of David’s army against the army of Absalom (18:2).

Zadok and Abiathar: High priests who remained loyal to David and were part of “eyes and ears” during Absalom’s occupation of Jerusalem.

Ahithophel: Grandfather of Bathsheba; highly trusted counselor to David who defected to Absalom. He committed suicide.

Hushai the Arkite: David’s counselor who pretended to defect to Absalom; he gave counterproductive advice to Absalom while sending vital intelligence to David.

Ahimaaz (son of Zadok) and Jonathan (son of Abiathar): messengers from Hushai and their fathers to David.

Ziba: Chief steward of Saul’s estate and caretaker of Mephibosheth, Saul’s crippled grandson, now living in Jerusalem with David.

Shimei of Bahurim: a relative of Saul who curses David as he departs Jerusalem; he later repents.

Abishai: David’s nephew, Joab’s brother, and a commander in David’s army.

Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai: Allies of David in the Transjordan who provision him and his people upon their arrival.

Joab: David’s nephew (his mother was Zeruah, David’s half-sister) and chief military commander. He is also Abishai’s brother, and cousin of Amasa. Joab killed Absalom and Amasa.

### I. Telling the Story: “Meeting Scenes”

Theme: Who is going to prove to be \_\_\_\_\_ to David?

### II. Lessons for Life

#### A. Decision Making Under Fire

##### 1. Good decisions made by David

- Tactical withdrawal from Jerusalem
- Keeping options open – did not abdicate the throne; just vacated it for a time
- Generous offer to release Ittei from service obligations
- Direction to Zadok and Abiathar to maintain the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem
- Deployment of Hushai and intelligence network
- Forbearance and forgiveness of Shimei
- Military plans for conquest of Absalom’s army

##### 2. Questionable/Poor Decisions made by David

- Assigning Mephibosheth’s property to Ziba on the sole basis of Ziba’s testimony.
- Failing to honor and salute his troops following the defeat of Absalom and his army.

##### 3. Factors involved in David’s decision making

- \_\_\_\_\_ and dismay at Absalom’s revolt (15:30)
- \_\_\_\_\_ for the safety of those loyal to him (15:14)
- Deep \_\_\_\_\_ (15:30; 18:31-19:4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ in the disloyalty of a close advisor (15:31)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (16:14)
- Sense of \_\_\_\_\_ (Ittei)

- Practicality – need for \_\_\_\_\_
- Military \_\_\_\_\_ and leadership qualities/experience
- Commitment to and trust in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God

#### 4. Principles for Decision Making Under Fire

- It is very difficult for individuals who are under emotional duress to make sound decisions. Advice: When in crisis, try to \_\_\_\_\_ making important decisions.
  - Decisions made in a crisis or emotional duress often yield \_\_\_\_\_ results.
    - Those choices that are \_\_\_\_\_-driven tend to reflect poor judgment
    - Those choices that are \_\_\_\_\_-driven tend to reflect good judgment.
  - People who are in emotional distress need to \_\_\_\_\_ their feelings; they do not need to be \_\_\_\_\_ by them. Though it is difficult, it is still possible to act on the basis of principle (Ezek. 24:15-18).
  - Anyone finding himself in an emotionally-charged crisis should seek the \_\_\_\_\_ of wise friends who are not themselves so emotionally engaged.
  - Good decisions combine \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Sam 15:31-34).
- B. Principles on Friendship: The grace that we need for healing and growth comes from God; but it is most often mediated through \_\_\_\_\_. The church should be a community of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Friends add richness to life and are valuable resources in times of difficulty (Ecc. 4:9-12; Prov. 17:17). \_\_\_\_\_ good friends (Prov. 12:26; 13:20). (The best way to gain a friend is to \_\_\_\_\_ a friend.)
  - When trouble comes, \_\_\_\_\_ for help. Give your friends the privilege of serving \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ for you. (Understand, we \_\_\_\_\_ coming to each other's assistance.)
  - There are different \_\_\_\_\_ of friendship (Prov. 18:24).
  - In a crisis, there are different levels of \_\_\_\_\_. Those who rally to the side of a friend in trouble cannot be expected to sustain a high level of support indefinitely (Gal. 6:2, 5).
  - A "friend in need" is best served by a \_\_\_\_\_ of people who take on different responsibilities.
    - "Friends" to whom you should not entrust yourself (\_\_\_\_\_)
      - Ahithophel – \_\_\_\_\_ (disloyal) "friends"
      - Siba – \_\_\_\_\_ "friends"
      - Abishai – \_\_\_\_\_ "friends" (or those who fan/feed your selfish-impulses)
    - Friends that everyone needs
      - Ittei – those who are literally \_\_\_\_\_ and protective
      - (People) – those who share in our \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom 12:15)
      - Zadok and Abiathar – those who \_\_\_\_\_ us before God
      - Hushai – those who will do "the \_\_\_\_\_ work"
      - Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai – those who tend to the \_\_\_\_\_
      - Joab – those who will tell us the \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov. 27:6, 17; Eph. 4:15)