

A QUESTION OF LOYALTY 2 SAM. 15:10-37

2 Sam. 15:13-16:14 is a record of David's flight from Jerusalem and David's encounters with various individuals / groups as he fled. The encounters all revolve around the concept of loyalty.

1. Absalom: loyalty to himself

2 Samuel 15:10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, **Absalom reigneth in Hebron.**

Absalom begins with elements of perceived integrity:

- Sister Tamar dishonored
- Justice (or is it vengeance?) for Tamar
- Flight to Geshur
- Desire to return to Jerusalem & David

Then "suddenly:"

- Treason – stealing hearts
- High treason – plotting against his own father
- Gathering an army & counselors
- Dishonoring his Dad's concubines

2 Samuel 15:16 And the king went forth, and all his household after him. **And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house.**

2 Samuel 16:20 Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, **Give counsel** among you what we shall do. **2 Samuel 16:21** **And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines,** which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. **2 Samuel 16:22** So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

As all rebels:

- Not against rape just rape of his family
- Not against treason just treason against him
- Not against lying just being lied to!
- Not against deceit just being deceived

"Rebels who ascend the throne by rebellion, have no patience with other rebels and their rebellion."

2. Ahithophel: loyalty right now / to the winner

Ahithophel has other names: Judas & Benedict Arnold

2 Samuel 15:12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, **from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices.** And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom. **2 Samuel 15:13** And there came a messenger to David, saying, **The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.**

2 Samuel 15:30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. **2 Samuel 15:31** And one told David, saying, **Ahithophel is among the conspirators** with Absalom. And David said, **O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.**

2 Samuel 16:23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, **was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.**

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3. Ittai⁺⁺⁺: loyalty to the Lord & then to the Lord's servant

2 Samuel 15:17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off. **2 Samuel 15:18** And all his servants passed on beside him; **and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.**

This group of men were crack troops – some of David’s best troops

But they were not Jewish by descent

They were Philistines -possibly of Sea People descent – and **maybe** of questionable loyalty

2 Samuel 15:19 Then said the king to **Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile.** **2 Samuel 15:20** Whereas thou camest but yesterday, **should I this day make thee go up and down with us?** seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee.

No blood loyalty but...!

2 Samuel 15:21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, **As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.** **2 Samuel 15:22** And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him. **2 Samuel 15:23** And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

Ruth 1:16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: **for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Ruth 1:17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.**

Ruth 2:11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. **Ruth 2:12** The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee **of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.**

This is no blind loyalty

David’s sins were known

David’s weaknesses were known

David’s failures were known

1 Kings 1:5 Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. **1 Kings 1:6** **And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?** and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom.

This was loyalty to God & His word → & therefore to His anointed king

4. David: a chastened / humbled loyalty to the Lord

2 Samuel 15:23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness. **2 Samuel 15:30** And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. **2 Samuel 15:31** And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

2 Samuel 15:25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: **if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: 2 Samuel 15:26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.**

Habakkuk 3:17 **Although** the fig tree shall not blossom, **Neither** shall fruit be in the vines; The labour of the olive **shall** fail, And the fields **shall** yield no meat; The flock shall be **cut off** from the fold, And there shall be **no** herd in the stalls: **Habakkuk 3:18** **Yet** I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. **Habakkuk 3:19** The LORD God is my strength, And he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, And he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

5. Zadok & the Ark⁺⁺⁺: loyalty to a higher calling

2 Samuel 15:24 And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. **2 Samuel 15:25** **And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city:** if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: **2 Samuel 15:26** But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. **2 Samuel 15:27** The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. **2 Samuel 15:28** See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. **2 Samuel 15:29** Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

David's reasoning:

- **Ark belongs in Jerusalem**
- **Ark is holy & not personal property**
- **Ark must not be used / misused / abused for personal gain but used as God intended**
- **Plus God can use you in Jerusalem**
- **Even if I don't return, God's work goes on**

6. Hushai the Archite: loyalty in a difficult place

2 Samuel 15:32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head: **2 Samuel 15:33** Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me: **2 Samuel 15:34** But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. **2 Samuel 15:35** And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. **2 Samuel 15:36** Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

2 Samuel 15:12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

2 Samuel 15:37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 16:16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king. **2 Samuel 16:17** And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?