



# Take The Leap

June 5-11, 2022

[2 Samuel 23:20-23](#)

## **MAIN POINT**

When we face challenges, we can trust God and rely on those He has placed in our lives.

## **INTRODUCTION**

What would you be thinking and feeling if a sudden calamity forced you to leave your home?

Sometimes life comes at us hard. We may see the problem looming on the horizon, or it may surprise us by coming out of nowhere. We can't always control the problem itself, but we can control how we respond. We'll look at a difficult period in David's life and consider how his response speaks into our own lives.

## **UNDERSTANDING**

**READ [2 SAMUEL 15:24-26](#).**

How did the events of David's sin with Bathsheba, lead to disharmony and, ultimately, betrayal in David's own family?

In [2 Samuel 15:13](#), David received news that shook him to the core. He learned that his son, Absalom had declared war against him. David was forced to acknowledge that he would not be reconciled to his son and his kingdom had splintered. This experience forced David to acknowledge his weaknesses and surrender to the Lord.

Why did David send the Ark of the Covenant back into the city?

What did David hope to accomplish by leaving the priests inside the city?

What do you see in David's words and attitude that reflect his trust in God?

**READ [2 SAMUEL 15:30-37](#).**

Why was David weeping?

What are some of the ways that the people who were with David supported him?

What was the mood and appearance of David, and those of the people with him, at the Mount of Olives?

How would the role assigned to Hushai help David?

What are the different roles that can be taken by helpful friends in times of difficulty?

David's faith left room for the fact that God might have a different plan than his own. He said that even if God chose not to fulfill that promise in that way, he would still make himself available to the Lord to do as He pleased. Jesus lived in a similar way, praying for God to

remove the cross from Him but submitting Himself to God's will ([Luke 22:42](#)). Continuing to trust God means both seeing with faith and submitting to God's will.

### **READ [2 SAMUEL 19:1-8](#).**

Even though Absalom had made himself David's enemy, David grieved when his son was killed. His own soldiers and supporters felt defeated when David grieved over a fallen enemy. Joab challenged David to step up as king and do his duty so that his men would not be discouraged.

**Why was David's reaction confusing and disheartening to his followers?**

**Was it wrong that David grieved over his son? How do we find the balance between feeling an emotion and responding with action?**

**To what extent does God expect us to set aside our own emotions and work for the good of others?**

### **APPLICATION**

**How can you entrust yourself to God the next time you face a setback?**

**How does asking for help from those around you require humility?**

**How can you make strategic requests of your friends when you are in need?**

**What are some responsibilities that you need to fulfill despite how you feel?**

### **PRAYER**

Ask the Lord to give all of us strength to endure the problems we face. Pray that He would surround you personally with godly men and women who will encourage, help, and walk with you during difficult periods of your life. Thank God for providing all of us with a loving and supportive community. Thank God that, by His might and our friends' care, we are never alone.

### **COMMENTARY**

#### **[2 SAMUEL 15:24-26](#)**

**15:24-26** A major portion of David's support at this time came from the religious community. Now in his own hour of need "Zadok was there" (v. 24), accompanied by "all the Levites, who were with him."

In the hastily arranged royal flight from Jerusalem the Levites were "carrying the ark of the covenant of God." David previously had been responsible for the entrance of the ark into Jerusalem (6:1-18). Yet now it seemed as if David would be responsible for the departure of the ark—God's very throne—from the home the Lord had chosen for himself. David deemed this utterly unacceptable, for it would mean the undoing of a sacred Torah promise-fulfillment. Accordingly, the king ordered Zadok to "take the ark of God back into the city" (v. 25). Zadok and the Levites apparently had carried the ark of the covenant in exile in order to buttress David's claim to the throne: David's possession of the ark would demonstrate that he alone possessed the divine favor necessary to rule Israel fitly. David, however, rejected this line of reasoning: the ark would not be used as a talisman or as a means of coercing the Lord to favor David. If the king "found favor in the Lord's eyes," then the Lord would bring him

back and let him “see it and his dwelling place again.” This response lays bare David’s heart for God and models a degree of submission to God’s will appropriate for all leaders of God’s people.

## **2 SAMUEL 15:30-37**

**15:30** Ascending out the Kidron Valley—a location that later played a significant role in the life of David’s descendant Jesus ([John 18:1](#))—David and his entourage “continued up the Mount of Olives” (v. 30) as they moved eastward toward the Jordan River. David made no attempt to hide his distress from his subjects. Covering the head and going about barefoot were both considered expressions of grief and despair in ancient Israelite society ([Jeremiah 14:3-4](#); [Micah 1:8](#)). Out of sympathy for their king, those accompanying David followed his example.

**15:31-32** Compounding David’s woes was the news that Ahithophel, David’s most valued counselor, was “among the conspirators with Absalom” (v. 31). Knowing that he himself was powerless to deny Absalom the benefits of Ahithophel’s wisdom, David offered a desperate plea to the Lord.

The very next recorded event following David’s prayer concerning Ahithophel was the king’s encounter with “Hushai the Arkite” (v. 32), who was awaiting David at an ancient worship site “at the summit” of the Mount of Olives. This narrative juxtaposition of David’s prayer with the appearance of Hushai is no accident: it is the writer’s demonstration that the Lord was answering David’s prayers even in exile. The Lord’s love for David was steadfast; as in David’s earlier years ([1 Samuel 18:12, 14, 28](#); [2 Samuel 5:10](#)), so now also the Lord was with David.

Hushai was obviously in sympathy with David and symbolically identified with the king’s plight by appearing before him with “his robe torn and dust on his head” ([1 Samuel 4:12](#); [2 Samuel 1:2](#)).

**15:33-37** David deeply appreciated the support of his wise friend, yet he realized that Hushai’s counsel was an asset best utilized away from the king’s presence. Knowing that each person who joined his entourage only added to the logistical problems of providing sufficient food, water, shelter, and protection, David forthrightly told Hushai that “if you go with me, you will only be a burden to me” (v. 33). Perhaps, as Gordon suggests, Hushai’s age—and therefore reduced capacity to travel quickly—was also a factor.

Ironically, however, if Hushai were to “return to the city” (v. 34) and declare his allegiance to Absalom, he might be of great value to David’s cause. Having been a leading member of David’s administration ([1 Chronicles 27:33](#)), he was likely to be treated as a valued asset in Absalom’s fledgling government. And if Hushai did succeed in gaining Absalom’s confidence, then he would be in a position to “help by frustrating Ahithophel’s advice.”

Hushai would not be the only mole in Jerusalem; joining him in the subterfuge would be “Zadok and Abiathar” (v. 35). However, there was a crucial difference between the role that Hushai would play and that which the others carried out. While all three of these men would reside in Jerusalem with Absalom, only Hushai would have a presence “in the king’s palace”; the priestly obligations of the others would keep them away from the king most of the time. Thus it would be up to Hushai to learn—and, hopefully, influence—the new government’s strategies regarding David. Once Hushai acquired this coveted information, he would then be responsible to tell Zadok and Abiathar anything of strategic value he might hear. In turn, their sons would be given this information and would act as couriers in relaying it to David.

Hushai accepted David's plan, though doing so involved a high degree of risk; if his true intentions were discovered, he would have been summarily executed. Hushai's willingness to put himself at risk for David's sake reveals the depth of commitment he had toward his king.

According to the writer, David escaped from the forces of Absalom by the narrowest of margins. After Hushai left David and made the one-mile walk back to the royal city—a journey of no more than half an hour—"Absalom was entering the city" (v. 37). At that vulnerable moment, David and his followers were separated from Absalom's forces by only one hill. Through his portrayal of this tenuous escape the narrator reaffirms the thesis that the Lord was with David, and he provides additional hope that the Lord would yet bring a good end to the present evil circumstances.

## **2 SAMUEL 19:1-8**

**19:1-4** As Joab made his way back to Mahanaim, he received a report that the king was overcome with grief (v. 1; [19:2, MT]). This information quickly spread among Joab's troops returning from their defeat of Absalom's rebels, with the result that their enthusiasm was soon depleted. Rather than the usual music and dancing ([Exodus 15:1, 20-21](#); [Judges 5:1](#); [11:34](#); [1 Samuel 18:6-7](#)), they "stole into the city that day as men steal in who are ashamed when they flee from battle" (v. 3). As the men passed through the city gate, they looked up into David's apartment and saw that the reports were true: the king had "covered his face" (v. 4) and was crying out for his "son Absalom."

**19:5-8** David's general Joab also saw the king dressed as a mourner and heard the wailing lament as he entered the city. David's highly public actions so incensed Joab that he immediately charged into the king's presence and began to rebuke him. Laying aside all formalities, Joab informed David with strong language that through his unseemly behavior he had "humiliated all" the men who had just saved his life and the lives of all his family (except Absalom, whom Joab neglected to mention). By yearning after a dead enemy, David also "made it clear" that he "would be pleased if Absalom were alive today and all of" his own troops "were dead" (v. 6). David was acting as though his loyal fighters—those who had risked their lives for the deposed king—meant "nothing to" him and that he hated "those who love" him. His reactions conveyed ingratitude and contempt for the very group of people whose support he needed most.

Not only was David's behavior wrong, but it also was foolish. The king had deeply offended his troops, and if he failed to act immediately, "not a man" would "be left with" him "by nightfall" (v. 7). In an effort to help David undo the damage he was doing to his own cause, Joab dispensed with normal courtly speech and tersely ordered the king to "arise, go out, and speak to the heart of [NIV, "encourage"] your men." If he failed to do this, a situation could arise that would likely "be worse for" David "than all the calamities" he had experienced from his "youth till now."

Joab's decisive actions both toward Absalom and David saved David's kingship. The king submitted to Joab's orders and descended from the chamber over the gate. There "in the gateway" (v. 8) area, the center of public and commercial life in any walled city, David "took his seat." As he sat there in silence, "all" his troops "came before him." As Gordon notes, "the act represents a return to normality."

While David's loyal forces stood with their king, the other "Israelites fled [NIV, "had fled"] to their homes" (v. 8).