

# *Campaigning for Office*

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## 2 Samuel 15:1-26

- I. The account of Absalom here shows us many things that mark certain human behaviors as evil.
  - A. For example, exalting himself and running a campaign to promote himself, usurp the God-ordained authority, and place himself in the highest place of authority.
  - B. This is the way we run our country, and we think it is the right way to do it, after the manner of Absalom.
  - C. All politicians have to exalt themselves, and they do it exactly as Absalom did.
    1. They use any means to lower the opinion of the masses toward their opponent or the present authority.
    2. They present themselves as some kind of savior, with promises of justice, freedom, and utopia under their rule.
    3. They make it a kind of exclusive club if you are sympathetic and support them in their quest for power.
  - D. This is one bad mistake the founders of this country made when they designed the way our leaders and representatives are chosen.
    1. It was inevitable that it would all be motivated by greed and that only the most selfish, proud, and unscrupulous characters would end up in the highest offices of the country.
    2. That is why James Madison said that the whole thing depended upon the people being faithful to God and his law.
    3. But they should have known from history that the people would turn from God and that we would end up where we are now.
  - E. Any kind of self-exaltation is a sign of pride and selfishness, which are the roots of sin.

**Matthew 23:12** And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

1. This is God's word concerning such behavior and we need to learn to trust Him about this and not worry and fear because the wicked are exalted.

**Psalm 12:8** The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.

2. God's people suffer when anyone exalts himself.

**2 Corinthians 11:20** For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

3. When a man or woman exalts themselves and you fall in line behind them you are going to suffer for it.
  4. "Oh, but we only support those candidates who profess to be Christians and who are conservative."
  5. Absalom's campaign theme is justice and religion and he chose the house of God for his victory party.
- F. He used the press to promote himself and to deceive the people about how many were with him.

2 Samuel 15:10-12 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. And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. 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.

1. He sent spies throughout the country and appointed a signal so that they would all say that Absalom ruled in Hebron at the same time – so that just like TV or Facebook all the people would hear at the same time and therefore be convinced that it was true.
2. He didn't rule, he just announced it on the news that he was ruling and so the people took it as a fact.
3. He tricked people of reputation into showing up at his events in order to give the impression to the masses that he was had their approval.
4. It was all a sham, but it worked and he was soon really sitting in Jerusalem acting as the king.

- II. David did not campaign to be king in the first place, and he did not do anything to hold on to the position when an ungodly rebel rose up to try to take it from him.
- A. He simply held on to the promises of God in both times of his life.
  - B. He knew that Samuel had anointed him to be king long ago, but he never took it into his hand to exalt himself, or to gain authority over what God had already put in place. (Saul)
  - C. When Absalom rose up David had more promises to cling to.
    1. 2 Samuel 7 is all about God's promise to establish David's house and his throne forever.
    2. The promise came as David was trying to build a house for God.

2 Samuel 7:16-17 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

3. When the news came of Absalom's rebellion and intentions to take the throne and murder his father David surely remembered this promise of God to himself.
4. And at the same time, David must have been a little shaky about it since his awful sin had happened since God made that promise.

2 Samuel 15:25-26 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: 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.

- D. David fled Jerusalem, for Jerusalem's sake – not his own.
  1. He did not want the city to suffer violence and innocent people to be hurt or killed for his sake.

2 Samuel 15:14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

2. He did not flee for lack of support because the people with him were ready to fight, or do whatever he said.

2 Samuel 15:15 And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

3. David's enemies were far away – not in Jerusalem.

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.

- E. Absalom's victory seemed so easy – David just let him have the throne.

2 Samuel 15:23-24 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. 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.

1. When he got to Jerusalem the place was practically empty and there was not even a fight at all – he just walked in and moved into his father's house and took his place.
  2. But Absalom is not satisfied with that, he must destroy his father and anyone that even sympathizes with him.
  3. Before he destroys his father he must bring as much shame and disgrace and reproach upon him as he can by lying with his concubines in the sight of all Israel.
  4. This is the way evil people do – they cannot coexist with anyone who will not support them in their ungodly ways – they must destroy them.
- F. You have to wonder what these people thought now who have been listening to Absalom's silver tongue and sweet campaign promises as he does such evil in their sight.
- G. Absalom, just like Hitler and so many other evil, power-hungry despots throughout history, drunk on pride and such easy victories, made some fatal miscalculations.
1. He took his father's fleeing as cowardice and weakness – which it was not, but simply concern for the people and love for his own son.
  2. He thought that since he had assumed power that he had the support of the people – which he did not.
  3. Riding so high he thought himself invincible.
- H. His biggest mistake was in failing to recognize God in the whole matter.
1. He did not take into account that God had made his father king and that God had promised to establish David's throne forever.
  2. OR, he was deceived into thinking that his wicked self was the one appointed by God to take his father's place, which is also a possibility.